

SWA Accessibility Plan

Version:	7
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Approval board:	Local Academy Council
Date of approval:	March 2026
Review period:	Annual
Date of latest review:	March 2026
Next review date:	March 2027
Legislation or regulation:	Equality Act 2010: Schedule 10, Paragraph 3 Disability Discrimination (prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) (England) Regulations 2005

Version Control Document

Date	Version No.	Reason for Change	Author
02/02/2022	5	New SENDCo has created a new Access Plan.	Jo Peck
26/02/2025	6	Plan updated	Jo Peck / Julie Evison-Williams
10/02/2026	7	Plan Updated	Julie Evison-Williams / Louise Smith / Alan Walker

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1. INTRODUCTION

This plan is to address the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and to further the aims of the vision statement by 'continuing to improve all aspects of the physical environment of the Academy site and other resources so that all disabled students can take full advantage of the education and associated opportunities provided by the Academy.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

'A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

2. PLAN OBJECTIVE

To create an environment which enables disabled students to participate fully in the Academy community by identifying and eliminating barriers that prevent this.

3. SCOPE

The framework provides a consistent outline for all Meridian Trust Academies to follow to create their own Accessibility Plan.

4. EQUALITY ACT 2010

4.1 The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of an Academy to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a student or potential student in:

- relation to admissions
- the way it provides education for its students
- the way it provides students access to any benefit, facility or service
- excluding a student, or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The protected characteristics are:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- 5.1 When performing their duties, all staff and academy councillors will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and Equality Act (2010).
- 5.2 Compliance with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) is central to all Academy policies and procedures.
- 5.3 Every student has an entitlement to the best education they can receive regardless of any disability they might have.
- 5.4 Any student attending a Meridian Trust Academy will have access to all available opportunities including extra-curricular activities, events and Academy trips.
- 5.5 The Academy provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum in order to meet individual learning requirements.
- 5.6 The Academy recognises and values parents' and carers' understanding of their child's disability and will work closely with them in order to ensure the child can have access to maximum opportunities within the Academy.
- 5.7 The Academy recognises parents', carers' and the child's right to confidentiality.

6. ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes
1	To continue to improve the physical environment to enable better access for students with disabilities.	Review of furnishings, classroom layouts and timetables to ensure full access for all.	Annually	Site Manager SENDCO	All students can access a full timetable and appropriate teaching spaces.
2	Further DDA installations.	Some fire exits have a step down that wheelchair users would not be able to access independently.	TBC	Site Manager	SWA Site Manager to assess and ensure alternative route is available Accessible fire route is in place
		VI signage not in place		Site Manager	Signage suitable for all.
		Sports Hall door needs to be left unbolted during the day to enable wheelchair access. To be closed at the end of the school day.		PE Team / Site Manager	Wheelchair users will independently be able to move in and out of the Sports Hall.
		No suitable fire escape for wheelchair users in the Sports Hall. Recommend a ramp is put in place outside one of the doors.		Site Manager	Wheelchair users will be able to exit the Sports Hall safely in the event of a fire. Suitable compliant ramps to be installed
3	Review, maintain and service all DDA installations.	Daily checks of automated doors and ramps around site. Hoists, if in place, to be checked daily and serviced annually.	Daily site checks Annual	Site Manager Site Manager / External contract	All DDA installations are working effectively and enabling access. School equipment certified

4	The Academy is aware of the access needs of disabled children, staff and parent/carers	Each student that is physically disabled has a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) that is updated yearly or if a change occurs in their condition/disability.	Annually	SENDCO and Trust External H&S Consultant	All PEEPs in place for disabled students and all staff aware of all students' access needs
		Complete confidential information of all staff and Academy Councillors to ascertain access needs.	As recruited	School PA and Site Manager	Ensure the access needs of all adults regularly on site are met
		Check admissions forms (student, parent/carer or staff) to ascertain access needs and identify whether these needs are being met.	As received	Admissions Staff / SENDCO	All stakeholders able to declare need and participate fully all Academy activities.
		Attend transition meetings with primary feeder schools.	Term 3	Vice-Principal / SENDCO	Ensure the access needs of all students are met before they join SWA
		Work with external professionals including OT, physiotherapists, specialist teachers, etc.	Ongoing	SENDCO	Ensure the access needs of all students are met
5	All Academy staff are trained on access issues	Provide up to date information and training on disability equality for all staff.	Annually	Vice Principal	Raised confidence of staff and Academy Council in commitment to meet access needs.
		All contractors conducting repairs and maintenance must abide to HSE Health and Safety and access standards	Ongoing	Site Manager Health & Safety Officer	Ongoing improvements in access to all areas of the site.

6	Improve signage and visibility for vision impaired people around the site.	Site survey to establish coverage of external lighting.	Ongoing	Site Manager	Vision impaired people feel safe in the grounds.
		Replace external lighting that is insufficient.	Ongoing	Site Manager	Effective lighting in place.
		Replace bulbs immediately when blown.	Ongoing	Site Manager	Access around the site is easier for all.
		Ensure signage is clear and appropriate. Please see strategies suggested in action 1.	Annual Review	Site Manager	Signage and visibility are suitable for all.
7	Ensure all paths, ramps and communal areas are free of foliage, overgrowth and fallen leaves.	Site team to complete weekly checks to ensure the site is free of obstructions.	Weekly Check	Site Team & External contract	Students have free and easy access of all paths and communal areas.
8	Ensure that all students and visitors with disabilities can be safely evacuated	Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for all disabled students (as point 4).	Annually	SENDCO	All disabled students and staff working with them are safe and confident in event of fire (or other situations where evacuation is deemed necessary).
		Review evacuation Procedures to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities.	Annually	Vice Principal/Site Manager	
		All Fire Marshals have up-to-date training.	Annually	Site Manager/Principal	
9	Appropriate and sufficient parking for students and visitors with disability	Parking for visitors with disabilities now at various sites around the school	Ongoing review	Principal / Site Manager	Sufficient parking for disability vehicles with appropriate access for all students and visitors.

10	Ensure all Fire Escape routes are suitable for all students	HSE advice on accessibility of exit routes and fire doors, particularly for wheelchairs. PEEPS stipulate who is responsible for the evacuation of disabled students from each classroom. (see points 3 and 7)	Ongoing	Trust External H&S Consultant PEEPS - SENDCo	All staff, students and visitors (including disabled) able to have safe independent escape in emergency situations. Ongoing work improvements Ensure all Academy staff are aware of their responsibilities.
11	Access to disabled toilets within 40 metres of any classroom	Disabled toilets available throughout the school. New additional facilities are now in place in the Science and PE areas.	Ongoing	Site Manager	Disabled toilet access available throughout Academy
12	Ensure that the edges of all steps in the Academy are visible	Maintain the edges of each step. (See point 1).	6 monthly	Site Manager	All steps are visible to all members of the Academy. Implementing an ongoing plan of action to check 6 monthly

7. ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes
1	Ensure all staff have training on appropriate disability issues	Identify staff training needs relating to disability issues. Arrange appropriate training for staff. Liaise with Leadership Team to ensure opportunities for SEND training are part of school CPD programme	Annually Ongoing Ongoing	SENDCO	Raised level of awareness of students' disabilities ensuring curriculum is appropriate to students' requirements.
2	Ensure all staff are aware of disabled students' curriculum access	Training for all staff on specific curriculum requirements for disabled students. Maintain SEND register including strategies for teaching	Ongoing Termly	SENDCO	All staff informed of requirements on a regular basis. All staff know how to access SEND register and strategies for teaching.
3	Increase confidence of teaching (and support) staff in adaptive teaching strategies and reasonable adjustments	Training on adaptive teaching strategies to be delivered to all staff.	Ongoing	SENDCO Vice Principal	Raised confidence of staff in use of adaptive teaching strategies, enabling increased student participation. Improved staff understanding of potential barriers to learning.
4	Ensure all staff are aware of and able to use relevant software and resources	Run training sessions on use of relevant software.	Ongoing	SENDCO	Wider use of SENDCO resources in mainstream classes

5	Enable disabled students to have full access to extra-curricular activities and Academy trips	Provide support/advice to lead staff of extracurricular activities, trips and residential visits. Identify potential areas of difficulty. Organise additional activities for disabled students if required.	Ongoing	SEND CO Trips Lead	All students in Academy able to access activities, receiving full educational entitlement.
6	Review all curriculum areas to include disability issues	Include specific reference to disability equality in all curriculum reviews. Make all staff aware of disability equality through staff training.	Ongoing	Vice Principal	All students are aware of the challenges and equality related to disability.
7	Review PE curriculum to ensure disabled students continue to have access to physical education	Ensure PE provision within the Academy is available for all students	Ongoing	HoD PE SEND CO	All students are able to access Physical activities.
8	Graduated approach used to assess students' needs and plan support	All staff can identify student needs (academic and pastoral) and make referrals using the SEND referral form APDRs reviewed 3 times/year Student progress data reviewed	Ongoing Termly As available	SEND CO SEND Team All staff	Student needs are met and resources are directed where most needed.

9	Exam access arrangements in place for all students	EAA training delivered to all staff SEND staff member to complete annual CPD training All staff to identify EAA for students in their curriculum areas and facilitate reasonable adjustments in class	Annually Annually Ongoing	SENDCO SEND team All staff	Exam access arrangements in place for all students who require them.
10	Ensure SEND areas (indoor and outdoor) continue to meet the needs of students	Review room 25, room 21, courtyard and sensory room facilities and use. Explore use of the school mobile.	Ongoing	SENDCO	Appropriate school areas/resources for interventions (academic and pastoral), lunchtime, & time away from the classroom.

8. IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFORMATION

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes
1	Review information shared with parents and carers to ensure it is accessible	Ask parents and carers about access needs when students are admitted to school and review regularly. Produce information in a format which parents can access. Increase number of face-to-face information events for parents.	Ongoing	Vice Principal / SENDCO	All parents and carers receive Academy information in a format they can access.
2	To provide written information to students in an appropriate format.	Continue to develop methods of presenting information for students when they are admitted to the Academy, in discussion with parents and carers.	Ongoing - review annually	All staff	All students can access written information appropriately.
3	Ensure all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats	Ensure training for all staff on accessible formats.	Annually	Vice Principal, SENDCO	All staff aware of student, parents and carers preferred methods of communication.
4	Include discussion about access to information in all academic mentoring meetings/ADPRs/annual reviews as appropriate	Ensure preferred method of communication is used. Disseminate strategies to all staff through training and via SEND register	Ongoing	Tutors through academic mentoring SEND team	To ensure all students can access the curriculum. To ensure all staff are aware of the relevant strategies and how to implement them.

9. PARENTAL GUIDANCE

- 9.1 Academies must not discriminate against disabled students for a reason relating to their disability. They should promote the inclusion of disabled students in their admission arrangements and in all aspects of Academy life.

Accessibility Plans and 'Reasonable Adjustments'

Academies will vary widely in how accessible they are to individual disabled students. Parents and carers should check what provision is in place and what is being planned when considering which Academy they would like their child to attend.

Every Academy must have an Accessibility Plan which shows how they intend to improve accessibility for disabled students. The plan must be published, and you can ask to see it. It will outline how the Academy will:

- improve the physical environment
- make improvements in the provision of information
- increase access to the curriculum

Academies can also increase access for individual students by making 'reasonable adjustments'. These can be simple changes, for instance, making sure lessons are on the ground floor if one of the students uses a wheelchair and the Academy does not have a lift.

They may also be able to offer assistance during assessments or exams, so that students are assessed fairly during their course.

You should always talk to the Academy to discuss what it can reasonably do to include your child.

Improvements to the Physical Environment

Changes to the physical environment that an Academy could make to increase access might include:

- lighting and paint schemes to help visually impaired children
- lifts and ramps to help physically impaired children
- carpeting and acoustic tiling of classrooms to help hearing impaired students

Improving the Way Information is Delivered to Students with Disabilities

Information that is normally provided in writing (such as handouts, timetables and textbooks) can be made more accessible according to individual needs.

Increased Access to the Curriculum

Adjustments that could help disabled students have better access to the curriculum might include:

- changes to teaching and learning arrangements
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- support from other students

Assistive Technology

Technology suited to your child's needs can help them learn faster and more easily. This can increase their access to the curriculum. Examples of technology that can help include:

- touch-screen computers, joysticks and tracker balls
- easy-to-use keyboards
- interactive whiteboards
- text-to-speech software
- Braille-translation software
- software that connects words with pictures or symbols

Some Academies may already have this kind of technology available or may be planning to get it. Arrangements for distributing resources and funding for equipment vary throughout the UK. If your child has an EHCP, the help on their plan must be provided. This may include special equipment.

Academy Transport

The same basic rules apply to all children. But LAs can make a decision to provide transport on a case-by-case basis for a disabled child. Your LA will assess your child's needs when making a decision, taking into account your child's health and/or disability and their age. If your child is offered transport, the vehicle should have the relevant equipment to suit your child's needs - for example ramps or lifts.

Most local councils also provide escorts on Academy transport if needed.

You may be able to get help with your own costs for taking your child to an Academy school. Your LA will be able to tell you if this is possible.

Some LAs have different transport policies concerning students going to special Academies.

If Your Child Cannot Attend School for Medical Reasons

If your child can no longer attend the Academy because of health problems, your Local Authority is responsible for helping them to continue their education.

Contact Us:

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