

Discovery Special Academy

3-year Accessibility Plan

2024 - 2027

Purpose

Under the Equality Act 2010 all schools/academies should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Scope

The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or educational visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;

Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the academy, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;

Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the academy and academy events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with other related TVE policies and guidance documents.

Ethos and values

The Trust Board of Discovery Special Academy (Tees Valley Education) and Local Advisory Board) is fully committed to meeting the requirements of both the Equality Act 2010, as applicable to those staff, pupils and members of the public who have restricted:

Mobility

Manual dexterity

Ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
Ability, memory, or ability to learn,
concentrate or understand

Physical co-ordination

Continence

Speech, hearing or eyesight Cognitive
Risk perception or physical danger

We have made a clear commitment in our values, vision and ethos statement that we are a fully inclusive academy and respect and celebrate diversity and difference.

The Trust Board devolves responsibility to the Head Teacher to **make any and all reasonable adjustments** as necessary to the academy and its infrastructure, so that:

- No person accessing the academy site is served less favourably by way of their disability, or unable to access any necessary part of it.
- Any person with a disability is able to play a full and active part in all aspects of academy life.
- Any pupil with a disability has equal and full access to all aspects of the curriculum and its delivery, as well as extra-curricular activities.
- No pupils' standard of attainment or achievement should be compromised as a result of disability.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan must be reviewed every three years and approved by TVE Trust Board and published on the academy website.

At Discovery Special Academy, the accessibility plan will form part of the Finance and Resource Committee work and will be monitored by the Head

Teacher and evaluated by the Co-CEO's and relevant Trust Board members. The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support a number of TVE policies.

Management and process

The accessibility plan will be managed and co-ordinated on a day to day basis by the Academy Business Manager, SEND Inclusion Officer and the Deputy Head Teacher / SENDCo, ensuring that:

- The individual needs of pupils will be assessed prior to admission to the academy
- Relevant staff will work closely with parents and other agencies to agree the most appropriate support for pupils with disabilities. Multi-agency meetings will be held as necessary to share knowledge and information and review the effectiveness of provision.
- Every effort will be made to include pupils with a disability into all activities, and where possible, we may provide aids and devote additional resources to ensure this is the case.
- Any strategies put in place will be shared with those affected, monitored for effectiveness and adjusted accordingly as a result of changing circumstances.
- Information on the specific needs of pupils with a disability will be disseminated to all relevant staff either in hard copy, by email, or in person.

Physical Access

There is excellent physical accessibility to all areas within Discovery Special Academy. The buildings within the academy site has the following features:

- Non-stepped access/egress
- Adequate space in circulation areas
- Disabled access toilets and changing facilities

- Disabled access to all communal and eating areas
- Hand railing in corridors

This is be further enhanced by:

- Assessing the safety needs for pupils with a disability (P.E.E.Ps) that may affect their physical or emotional well-being. This will inform further modifications as reasonably practicable.
- Continually reviewing the environment of the academy and the way we plan, prepare and deliver the curriculum, adapting to the needs of new users of the academies facilities.

The requirements of the DDA will be taken into account when planning any changes to the premises (including minor improvements) as we develop and expand the academy facilities.

Organisation and access to the curriculum

The academy has an ethos of making pupils feel safe and treating all stakeholders with dignity, regardless of their disability. All pupils have access to a diverse and enriching curriculum, which may be modified where necessary, according to individual need. We will also undertake the following actions:

- Developing an understanding of disability with all pupils through positive role models across the curriculum
- Developing language that emphasises the person rather than the disability
- Continually reviewing our extra-curricular and enrichment provision to ensure all pupils with a disability can be included and where this is not possible, provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.
- Where reasonably practicable, prescribed medical procedures will be followed to ensure equality of access for pupils, carried out by appropriately trained staff.
- Avoiding using stereotypes

Improving information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors

- Any learning materials provided to pupils will be modified by teaching staff to take account of their disabilities and maximise progress. Ongoing CPD will be given to staff in response to our self-evaluation and particular needs of needs
- Where there is a physical modification needed to improve information sharing (e.g. projector software for visual impairment, radio-aid for hearing impairment) we will work with relevant agencies to seek funding and train staff and pupils.
- We will accommodate parents with a disability or other needs to the best of our ability by providing additional services as needed. e.g. ensuring there is a sign language interpreter at meetings, ensuring text is provided in large print, allocating a key member of staff to communicate essential information where literacy is a barrier.

Discovery Special Academy – 3 year Accessibility Plan 2024-27

Strand 1: Improving the Physical Environment Objectives	Actions	Outcomes	Monitored / actioned by	Evaluated by / when
<p>All new build work and alterations to existing buildings will consider the needs of people with a disability and/or sensory impairment.</p> <p>(See new build plans, minutes from meetings)</p>	<p>Audit needs as part of any arising site works.</p> <p>Delegated Academy Budget</p>	<p>Improved access to Sandy Flatts Lane site with full access to all parts of the academy.</p> <p>Academy temporary accommodation, and new build, fully complies with Fire Regulations and Health & Safety Regulations and DDA.</p>	<p>Senior Leadership Team and ABM</p>	<p>Eddisons</p> <p>Redcar fire safety team</p>
<p>Create an additional permanent classroom to accommodate nursery provision which is currently in a temporary unit.</p> <p>(See new build plans, minutes from meetings)</p>	<p>Work with Portakabin to develop additional teaching space. Furnish and set up new classroom.</p>	<p>Children have access to the facilities and spaces required to ensure holistic development.</p>	<p>Senior Leadership Team and ABM</p>	<p>SLT/ABM summer 2025</p>

Strand 2: Improving access to the curriculum Objectives	Actions	Outcomes	Monitored / actioned by	Evaluated by / when
<p>Ensure all staff have full information about pupil needs</p> <p>Ensure all staff are aware of the routes of enquiry should they need to access further information</p>	<p>Update care plans for children with a disability and incorporate diagnoses into all relevant documents.</p> <p>Ensure that the classroom is optimally organised for disabled/medical/sensory needs of pupils.</p> <p>Review transition arrangements to include earlier and continued links with the Early Years Support service and local special secondary settings; identify additional transition opportunities for pupils who may need further support transferring to the academy or to other provisions.</p>	<p>Remove barriers to learning and participation; All staff are fully aware of pupil needs and updated with any changes. As a result of this, pupils' needs are effectively met upon entry to Discovery Special Academy. All pupils with a disability have full access to the curriculum and are making progress in line with their expectations.</p>	<p>Senior Leadership Team</p>	<p>Local Advisory Board/Challenge Board (Ongoing)</p>
<p>Review and update training needs for pupils with specific communication difficulties (e.g. hearing impairment/visual impairment/speech delay)</p>	<p>Termly or Annual review of pupils by specialist staff; strategies followed by staff; identify staff who require additional training; Implement training.</p>	<p>All staff are fully aware of needs of pupils in the academy and these pupils are making expected progress.</p>	<p>Senior Leadership Team</p>	<p>Local Advisory Board/Challenge Board (Ongoing)</p>

Ensure all exam concessions are identified and implemented in accordance with JCQ requirements (from year 9).	Audit needs of pupils; Implement testing; Share and plan with staff	All pupils and parents are clear when exam concessions apply; there are effective management arrangements in place to support pupils' disabilities and learning needs	Senior Leadership Team	Local Advisory Board/Challenge Board (Ongoing)
<p>Consider the roles of staff and ensure all teachers and support staff are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully skilled in differentiation for pupils with a disability • fully skilled in communicating with pupils using verbal, PECS and Makaton as a means of communication 	<p>The roles and deployment of staff are reviewed annually in line with Job descriptions, performance management and career progression. Provision of any relevant updates via CPD on learning difficulties and disability.</p> <p>Monitoring through work scrutiny (Ongoing)</p>	Removal of all barriers to learning and participation; Staff are confident fulfilling the roles for which they are employed and all pupils with a disability have appropriate differentiation and are making expected progress.	Senior Leadership Team	Local Advisory Board/Challenge Board (Ongoing)

Ensure pupils with a disability which affects behaviour (i.e ADHD) and SEMH needs have appropriate & effective provision to enable them to access the curriculum	<p>Commission external providers where necessary (Ongoing)</p> <p>Evaluate behaviour needs of pupils and adjust curriculum to promote improved behaviour/rewards (ongoing)</p> <p>Review progress (ongoing)</p> <p>Training programme for specialist Behaviour and Pastoral staff (Ongoing)</p> <p>Delegated Academy Budget</p>	<p>Removal of all barriers to learning and participation; pupils whose behaviour is as a result of their disability receive specialised support to improve their behaviour and access a curriculum appropriate to their need, making expected progress.</p> <p>Accurate records are maintained; improved data assists with whole school planning.</p>	Senior Leadership Team	Local Advisory Board/Challenge Board (Ongoing)
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Providing information for disabled or sensory impaired pupils in alternative formats	<p>Typical info. to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • home learning tasks eg reading • worksheets • teacher marking / feedback • pupil notices / news • displays in the academy <p>How?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written information to be available in larger font sizes • pictorial supporting images to be used where possible • use of colour to differentiate and make text easier to read • worksheets etc. to be provided which meet the need of individual • PECS symbols / Makaton signs • discussed verbally with pupils 	Removal of potential barriers to learning	<p>Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>All teaching and learning staff</p>	<p>Local Advisory Board/Challenge Board</p> <p>(Ongoing)</p>
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Strand 3: Improving provision of information to all stakeholders	Actions	Outcomes	Monitored / actioned by	Evaluated by / when
Increased availability of written material in alternative formats (when requested).	<p>Include statement on website that all official documents could be produced in alternative formats, including translation. (Ongoing)</p> <p>Delegated Academy Budget</p>	All parents are aware of this service.	Senior Leadership Team	Local Advisory Board (ongoing)
Improve accessibility of information available to parents	<p>Continue to redevelop website with easier interface and improved accessibility with web optimisation including translating facility</p> <p>Delegated Academy Budget</p>	Parents report they find it easier to find information they need.	Senior Leadership Team	Local Advisory Board/Challenge Board
Ensure medical needs of pupils are well understood and plans are in place for them.	Annual audit of medical needs (SLT and pastoral team each September, then ½ termly)	All relevant staff are aware of pupils' medical needs and plans are clear and implemented effectively. Staff training is implemented where necessary.	Senior Leadership Team and all staff	Local Advisory Board (Ongoing)

	<p>Identify and implement training plan for first aiders and named key workers. (CA/CT Ongoing)</p> <p>Follow graduated response for pupils with significant medical conditions where this impacts on cognition (Ongoing)</p> <p>Close working with external agencies, including NHS, CYPCC</p> <p>Delegated Academy Budget</p>	<p>More reliable medical tracking system in place offering enhanced features. Savings would be made if purchased across the TVE trust.</p>		
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Strand 4: Equality Act / Public Sector Equality Duty - Whole academy actions	Actions	Outcomes	Monitored / actioned by	Evaluated by / when
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Discovery Staff and Trust Board member training	<p>All Trust Board members will be aware of, and have a full understanding of TVE Policies and will receive the necessary training/inset to allow them to fulfil their role as Trustees effectively.</p> <p>All staff to be trained (or refresher) on Asthma/Epi Pen. All relevant staff trained in Paediatric First Aid. Training in any other Health/disability issues as identified (eg Diabetes, Epilepsy).</p> <p>Relevant TAs Safe lifting / handling refresher training.</p> <p>Staff to be informed of how and where to locate Equality and other related policies.</p>	<p>TVE Trust Board members will be confident that robust procedures are in place, as specified in TVE Policies, and have the remit to scrutinise where necessary.</p> <p>Staff confident and competent to safely support the needs of all pupils.</p>	Senior Leadership Team	<p>Local Advisory Board (Ongoing)</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Review of whole academy and TVE policies</p> <p>E.g. Accessibility</p> <p>Academy trips</p> <p>Extended academy</p> <p>Equality</p>	All policies to be reviewed annually or when specified, and approved by TVE Trust Board members before wider circulation and publication	Policies in place which support pupils/staff/parents to be fully implemented in all aspects of academy life	Senior Leadership Team and trust senior leadership team	Ongoing

Data collection, monitoring evaluation, implementation	Progress of all pupils to be analysed termly and reported to TVE Trust Board, DfE and shared with staff, other stakeholders and parents.	Children with disabilities or sensory needs make good progress and have access to a personalised curriculum	Trust Board, Senior Leadership Team and other nominated staff across TVE staff	Local Advisory Board (Ongoing)
Provide information for parents in alternative formats, when required	<p>Typical information to consider:</p> <p>Provide parents with info. in various formats (i.e. Text) and languages.</p> <p>Teachers available to discuss with parents should they be struggling to access information</p> <p>Interpreter used when required.</p>	Improved communication with parents/carers.	Senior Leadership Team and all staff	Local Advisory Board (Ongoing)