

Accessibility Policy

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We empower | We respect | We care



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1 Executive summary

Committed to:

Increasing the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the curriculum of the Academy that they attend.

Improving the physical environment of each academy to increase the extent to which students with disabilities and their parents/carers can take advantage of education and associated services.

Improve the delivery to students with disabilities and their parents/carers of written information through assistive technology and other means to ensure they receive written information within a reasonable time and in formats that make communication possible.

2 Introduction

2.1 Diverse Academies Trust is committed to providing premises which are suitable and sufficient for all educational purposes and which provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum for students and young people, irrespective of special need or disability.

2.2 Diverse Academies Trust Covid 19 risk assessments take into account issues of accessibility and these are reviewed regularly to ensure that they meet Equality legislation.

2.3 The Accessibility policy appendix (academy plan) in each academy considers provision for disabled students as stated in the Equality Act (2010) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015). It operates alongside the SEND policy, is consistent with it in terms of principles and approaches to resourcing.

2.4 The Accessibility policy appendix (academy plan) must include:

- a) Increasing the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the academy curriculum;
- b) Improving the physical environment of academies to increase the extent to which students with disabilities can take advantage of education and associated services; and
- c) Improving the delivery to students with disabilities of written information that is provided to students who are not disabled. This should be done within a reasonable period of time and in formats which take account of views expressed by the students or parents about their preferred means of communication.

3 Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 states:

3.2 A **'disabled student'** is defined as someone who 'has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

3.3 **Discrimination:** A responsible body discriminates against a disabled person if:

- a) For reasons that relate to their disability, it treats them less favourably than it treats or would treat others to whom that reason does not or would not apply.
- b) It cannot show that the treatment in question is justified.

3.4 **Reasonable steps:** The duty to take reasonable steps (to ensure that there is no discrimination intended as an 'anticipatory' duty and does not simply apply once an individual student presents him or herself.

4 Scope and purpose

4.1 All students with disabilities should have access to education. Wherever practicable, Diverse Academies will:

- a) Advise on the statutory responsibilities of education bodies in the preparation of accessibility strategies and accessibility plans
- b) Increase the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the academy curriculum
- c) Promote improvements in the delivery to students with disabilities of written information that is provided to students who are not disabled
- d) Encourage improvement in the physical environment of academies to increase the extent to which students with disabilities can take advantage of education and associated services.

4.2 Diverse Academies Trust recognises that many of its students, visitors and staff, whether disabled or otherwise, have individual needs when using the academy and its facilities. However,

we also recognise that for some students, the nature of their disabilities may mean that they experience specific difficulties related to accessing education, and the physical environment. As part of the on-going commitment to the delivery of an inclusive educational service, we will endeavour to ensure that students with disabilities receive the same standards of education as those students without disabilities.

4.3 In the light of this, Diverse Academies Trust will:

- a) Inform all staff that our policy for the provision of educational services ensures the inclusion of students with disabilities. Such communications will address the legal obligation of staff, and the respective Academy.
- b) Provide appropriate disability awareness training for staff, which will explain the respective academy policy towards students with disabilities and the effective implementation and monitoring of it.
- c) Address acts of disability discrimination via existing conduct codes, where appropriate.
- d) Encourage suppliers and contractors, to adopt similar policies towards students with disabilities, i.e. use of reasonable adjustment for individuals.

4.4 In order to ensure that the educational services it provides effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities Diverse Academies Trust will:

- a) Consult with students with disabilities, parents, staff and disability organisations.
- b) Plan to make access improvements to enable people with disabilities to use its services. Furthermore, each academy within the Trust will effectively communicate its availability to both students and staff.
- c) Regularly review whether its education (and other) services are both accessible and effective and take appropriate action.
- d) Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis.
- e) Operate an accessible complaints procedure whereby people with disabilities can make improvement suggestions and request assistance.

5 Responsibility for implementing the policy

The Diverse Academies Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring individual academy compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Principal of each of its Academies.

6 Review of this policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust, we will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.