



Accessibility Policy

Policy type	Statutory
Author/Reviewer	Keith Curtis, Head of Facilities
Approved by	Adrian Ball, CEO
Date of approval	
Date of next review	01/05/2026
Review cycle	ANNUAL Policies will be reviewed in line with DEMAT's internal policy schedule and/or updated when new legislation comes into force
Description of changes	No changes are required in this cycle.



Accessibility Policy

In the development of this policy, consideration has been given to Equality and Diversity and Data Protection.

Equality and Diversity

The Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT) is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. The Trust aims to create a supportive and inclusive working environment in which all individuals are able to make the best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit. We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age; race; sex; disability; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; religion, faith, or belief (Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics). The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff and Governors treat visitors, volunteers, contractors, and former staff members.

Data Protection

DEMAT will process personal data of staff (which may be held on paper, electronically, or otherwise). DEMAT recognises the need to treat this data in an appropriate and lawful manner, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

	Version	Date
Date approved by DEMAT Standards and Ethos Committee	1	20 Nov 2018
Date on which DEMAT consulted with the unions if applicable	1	Not applicable
Effective date as determined by DEMAT	1	20 Nov 2018
Policy review by DEMAT (no statutory revisions required as of April 2025)	3	April 2025
Policy to be reviewed annually from date last approved by Trust CEO	3	01/05/2026



For all questions in relation to this policy please contact the DEMAT School Performance Director on
01353 656760.



Policy Contents

	Page Number(s)
1. Purpose of the Plan	3
2. Definition of Disability	3
3. Legal Background	3
4. Documents and Policies	3-4
5. School Brochure/Prospectus and Vision Statement	4
6. Review and Evaluation	4-5
7. *Section 1: Vision Statement	6
8. *Section 2: Aims and Objectives	7
9. *Section 3: Access Audit	8

***Sections 1-3 - All information from these sections should be used by academies to populate a site- specific accessibility plan**

Application of the Policy

This policy is to be used by all employees employed by The Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust.



DEMAT Accessibility Policy

1. Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to show how to increase the accessibility of our academies for disabled pupils/staff/parents/visitors over time. DEMAT is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents, and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional, and cultural needs. Each academy must complete an accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

2. Definition of Disability

According to the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if:

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

3. Legal Background

Under the Equality Act 2010 all schools (academies) must have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the DDA. The effect of the laws is the same as in the past, meaning that 'Schools cannot lawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation'.

This plan was drawn up based on information supplied by the Local Authority, and with pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school, and will advise other academy planning documents.

This Accessibility Plan sets out the proposals of the DEMAT academy to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the academy's curriculum, which includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the academy, such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits;
- Improving the environment of the academy to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information, which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.



4. Documents and policies

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with other academy policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum Policy
- Equality Objectives
- Single Equality Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behavior Management Policy
- School Development Plan
- Asset Management Plan/Suitability Survey

5. Academy Brochure/Prospectus and Vision Statement

The Academy's Complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

Training

Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

Plan Availability:

The academy makes the Accessibility Plan available in the following ways:

- A copy is posted on the school's website
- Paper copies are available from the front office

6. Review and Evaluation:

It is a requirement that our Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported annually. Below is a set of action plans showing how priorities identified in the Plan will be addressed. The plan is reviewed annually.



Sections 1-3 - All information from these sections should be used by the academy to populate a site-specific accessibility plan.

All academies are required to have an accessibility plan, although this can be published as part of another document. The checklist here is designed to help academy leaders and governors when writing and reviewing their accessibility plans. It is based on Department for Education advice on the Equality Act 2010.

What to cover	Tips	✓
Accessibility plans must set out how the school will: • Aim to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum • Improve its physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided • Improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils	An audit could help you identify potential barriers to access and what you could do about them. For example: • Are all the shelves in the library accessible to all? • Is there adequate lighting in all areas? • Is information provided in large print, Braille, etc.? • Do the curriculum and resources include examples of people with disabilities?	
Policy introduction	What is the purpose of the policy? What legislation does it comply with? How does it help the school meet its aims and values?	
Details of how you will make the school's curriculum, physical environment and information more accessible for people with disabilities	This section of the policy could include: • Targets • The strategies that will be employed to meet these targets • Timescales • Who is responsible for particular targets/strategies • Success criteria	
Monitoring and evaluating the plan	When was the plan approved? When will it be reviewed? By whom?	



Accessibility plan

Section 1: Vision statement

Jesus told his followers that, *"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock."* Matthew 7:24

At Orchards C of E Academy, we enact this vision through

- Our school principles: **Be kind, Work hard, Aim high**
- Our school values: **Ambition, Perseverance, Respect, Responsibility**

So that ALL of our children may build the foundations to create successful futures.

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools 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.

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan will be reviewed every 3 years or where operational needs dictate and approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Head.

At Orchards Church of England Academy the plan will be monitored by the Headteacher and the SENDCO and reviewed at least every 3 years. The plan will also be shared with the school's hub director and compliance team.

The current plan will be appended to this document which will be published on our school website.

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with other academy policies, strategies and documents:

Behavior Policy
Code of Conduct
Equality and Diversity Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Site Management Policy
Special Educational Needs Policy



School Development Plan Asset Management Plan/Suitability Survey

At Orchards Church of England Academy we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment to develop the potential of each child, to provide learning opportunities where that child may take increasing responsibility for their learning. In this way we hope to develop the whole person. We see education as a tool that will bring learning for life.

Aims:

- To improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities where appropriate. This covers reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- To increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability. This includes, expanding and making reasonable adjustments to 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 school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
- To improve and make reasonable adjustments to the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples may include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

As a school, we will work closely with the local authority and the Diocese of Ely. Orchards Church of England Academy also maintains close working relationships with the following specialist services:

- Occupational Therapists
- Speech and Language specialist
- Specialist Teachers
- Access and Inclusion
- YOUnited
- CAMHS
- School Nurse
- Cambridgeshire's Virtual School for Looked After Children
- Educational Psychology Service
- Educational Welfare Officer
- Sensory Support Teachers
- Physiotherapists
- Community paediatricians
- Other advisory services and charities.

Regular staff training will focus on creating an inclusive environment for all of our children. Where more specific needs are identified, bespoke training will be delivered by competent persons in a timely manner to ensure that all of our pupils' needs are being met within school.



Should there be any concerns with the schools compliance in the carrying out of actions stated within the policy and plan; issues can be raised by following the schools complaint procedure as laid out in the Complaints Policy.



Section 2: Aims and Objectives

Our aims are to:

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability
- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment
- Improve the delivery of written information to students.

The table below sets out how the school will achieve these

goals.

Aim	Current good practice <i>Include established practice and practice under development</i>	Objectives <i>State short, medium and long-term objectives</i>	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success Criteria
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	Routines and structures are embedded in all that we do, creating a safe and predictable learning environment.	Provide staff with suitable training to be able to support all children - including those with disabilities.	Ensure staff training on medical needs is current	SENCO	Sept 26 and then ongoing	Training from external professional meets the changing needs of the school
	Pre-teaching, keep up and catch interventions are deployed to prevent children from falling behind.	Ongoing CPD to improve the quality and impact of teaching and learning within an inclusive classroom	Ensure children with disabilities are correctly identified	SENCO		
	Oracy is embedded	To ensure correct	CPD for staff around impactful teaching and	SLT	Sessions run throughout the academic year	List of children with medical / educational needs is accurate and



Section 2: Aims and Objectives

	throughout our curriculum to promote inclusion and aid understanding. The curriculum is broken down into small, manageable steps to allow for children to succeed. Teachers consider cognitive load when teaching. Vocabulary and new knowledge is explicitly taught. Retrieval practice is utilised to help children to retain new information. Classroom environments are tidy, uncluttered and supportive towards the pupils' learning. The school's behaviour curriculum is taught to the children at regular intervals so that they know what good learning looks like. AfL is used extensively to	identification of pupils with additional needs / disabilities To work with parents to better understand how best to support their children	learning as well as assessment for learning and checking for understanding is ongoing Parent workshops / sessions planned into academic calendar to provide opportunity for parents to share knowledge of children with staff	SENCO	Sessions at least once a term	up-to-date Staff more confident to adapt their lessons according to the feedback they are receiving as they teach. Parent voice shows positive outlook for working with school
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Section 2: Aims and Objectives

	allow for teachers to adjust their lessons accordingly to ensure all students understand new learning. Adaptations such as use of equipment or digital devices is implemented to aid learning where necessary. Regular staff training ensures that the needs of our children are understood and met in class.					
Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	Corridors clear and obstacle free Surfaces monitored and maintained to a high standard externally Internal floors maintained to reduce hazards Door regularly checked to ensure they operate	Accessibility around, into and within building is compliant and allows for all pupils to successfully and safely transition throughout the school site Visual support is provided to help support children who find reading and writing more difficult.	Site manager to continue to complete site walks to ensure site is complaint Staff to continue with best practice around supporting all children	Site manager SLT	Ongoing Ongoing	Site is accessible for all Children accessing their learning



Section 2: Aims and Objectives

	correctly with ease Classroom layout allow for ease of access for pupils. Resources are clearly labelled Raised threshold or sides of ramps are clearly highlighted to reduce risk of fall. Tiled surfaces are flat Foliage is kept under control to ensure ease of access into building Visual timetables, Now and Next boards, visual cues used to support children					
Improve the delivery of written information to pupils	Explicit vocabulary taught to pupils Oracy embedded in all lessons - in particular as a scaffold to writing Imagery used to support	Ensure suitable fonts are used for children with visual impairments Use of technology to support pupils where needed	Support for pupils is in place (where needed) School audit of signage	SENCO Site manager	Ongoing Ongoing	Children accessing curriculum Correct signage in place



Section 2: Aims and Objectives

	understanding Classroom environments are clear and free from clutter. Working walls support children's learning and aren't messy Use of class Dojo to allow pupils and parents to be able to translate information easily Use of technology to support understanding Follow advice from external specialists for individual children	Ensure signage around school is clear and easy to locate, read and understand	Audit of children to ensure that all staff are aware of children with increased needs Staff understand that as a school we have a SEND first approach in everything that we do - regular CPD to embed message and practice.	SENCO SLT	Ongoing Ongoing	Parents feel supported by school. Needs of children being met within classroom Staff understand our SEND first approach and know how to adapt their approaches to support all children
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Section 3: Access audit

Feature <i>For example:</i>	Description	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by
Number of floors	Single floor throughout school	Ensure entrances are accessible and that if entrance is raised/lowered to path level, that ramps are present for access	Site manager	Audit of thresholds completed by Sept 26 Ongoing monitoring as part of site checks
Corridor access	Corridors tidy and safe for movement around building	Corridors checked for obstructions. Flooring checked for safety / wear and tear. Doors to and from corridor open effectively and thresholds are suitable for all students to use to gain access	Site manager	Ongoing monitoring
Lifts	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Parking bays	Disabled parking bays clearly identified and demarcated	Disabled parking bays by front and rear entrance are clearly demarcated and located as close to entrances as possible	Site manager	Demarcation completed by Sept 26 then ongoing monitoring



Section 3: Access audit

Entrances	Entrances to school are suitable for all children and adults	Ensure entrances are free of obstacles and are wide enough to allow access for walking aids / wheelchairs	Site manager	Audit to be completed before Sept 26 and then ongoing monitoring
Ramps	Any threshold or change in level to be fully accessible.	Ensure that ramps are installed and clearly marked to allow for access where thresholds are at different levels. Where this is not possible, a secondary route needs to be clearly identified.	Site manager	Audit to be carried out by Sept 26 and then ongoing monitoring and review
Toilets	Toilets throughout school suitable to meet the needs of all stakeholders. 4 larger, individual toilets located throughout school. Changing room located in school.	Ensure that adequate toilet and changing facilities are present in school to support all of our stakeholders. Changing room to be maintained to a high standard of cleanliness and fully operational	Site manager Cleaning team	Toileting and changing facilities check daily. Any remedial work quickly identified and completed.
Reception area	Area clear of obstruction, well lit and signage easy to read.	Audit of reception area to ensure it is clear and accessible for all stakeholders. Any signage to be in a large font for ease of reading	Office team	Audit before Sept 26
Internal signage	All internal signage to be visible and supportive to all individuals to allow for ease of access around the school building	Site manager and HT to audit signage	Site manager and HT	Commence Sept 26



Section 3: Access audit

Emergency escape routes	Clear signage present to support adults in children in the event of a fire / emergency within school building	Signage to be produce as per fire risk assessment. Fire doors checked regularly and are also wide enough to allow for evacuation of all stakeholders.	Site manager	Ongoing audit and maintenance
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