



Accessibility

SCHOOL POLICY & PROCEDURE

Accessibility	
Document Revised:	December 2021
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Next Review Date:	November 2024

Accessibility Policy and Plan - School

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Accessibility Policy and Plan - School

Statement of Intent

At Talbot House Trust (North East) Limited (the Trust), we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that all children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment.

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan and this is a statutory document and will be appended to this policy. This Act replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning, "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:

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

The aims of this policy are 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 the other pupils. Failure to do this, is a breach of duties under the Equalities Act 2010).
 - This covers teaching, learning, and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools 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 school, 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 learners, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include; handouts, emails and social media about the school and school events. Information will be made available in various formats within a reasonable timeframe.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to inform other school planning documents with intention to provide a projected plan for a three-year period ahead of the next review date. The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's equality objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. The Trust is committed to providing an environment that enables a culture of inclusion as well as 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. The plan is for improved access for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. It contains relevant and timely actions to meet the aims of the policy as detailed above and relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information.

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1. Legal Framework, Legislation and Policies

This document should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Fire Risk Assessment
- Health & Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy & Procedure
- School Development Plan

2. Roles and Responsibilities

This policy and the plan for physical accessibility relates to the Health and Safety Policy, which remains the responsibility of the Chief Executive (CEO), delegated to the Head of Development and Deputy Chief Executive.

- 2.1 Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all governors' will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.2 The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website and will be monitored through the Non Education Committee and our Health and Safety partners.
 - Ofsted may monitor the Accessibility Plan during inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

3. Current Good Practice

We ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers prior to admission.

- 3.1 For parents and carers of children already at the school, we collect information on disability as part of a survey of parents' views, or in conjunction with a letter home about a parents' evening.
- 3.2 Parents evening transport is provided for those who require it, as well as flexibility with transport to and from other meetings.
- 3.3 We advocate for parents and carers who have capacity issues wherever possible.

4. Physical Environment

Disabled pupils are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities and adjustments will be made to ensure this is possible, where reasonably practicable.

- 4.1 Some aspects of extra-curricular activities present particular challenges, for example:
 - lunch and break times for learners with social/interaction impairments
 - school trips for learners with medical needs and those with physical impairments

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- 4.2 Disabled learners have full access to primary facilities but they have limited access to the rest of the school if they have a physical disability as there is no disabled access to the first floor.
- However, learning environments are available in the lower part of the school and can be accessed by physically disabled learners.
 - We have a number of lower floor rooms which are in only partial regular use, therefore these rooms could be deployed for anyone with access issues to the first floor.
 - We have disabled personal facilities onsite. When changes to the physical environment are made, we ensure that accessibility issues are considered and reasonable adjustments are made wherever possible.

5. Curriculum

There are currently no areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum do present particular challenges, and will be addressed on an individual basis.

6. Information

We use a number of different forms of communication in order to ensure that disabled pupils, parents and staff, can express their views and hear the views of others.

7. Access Audit

The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked.

- 7.1 The main entrance to the school has a ramped access and wide doors fitted. The reception area is accessible to all via a key card system, and administration staff access this area to support anyone who requires attention. Access to the hall and dining area are wheelchair accessible, as are all of the downstairs classrooms, therapy suites, gym, hall and dining areas. Disabled toilets are also available on this level.
- 7.2 There are disabled toilet facilities available in the therapy corridor, which can be accessed either via an external ramp to the entrance, or via reception internally. They are fitted with a handrail and a pull emergency cord. The therapy corridor contains three self contained rooms which could be redeployed at short notice for anyone with physical access requirements, as classrooms.
- 7.3 Primary and Aces are both on the ground floor of our two-storey building with wide corridors and several access points from outside. Primary was refurbished in May 2014, with Aces being refurbished in Summer 2018. There are toilet facilities specifically designed for use by people who have disabilities, all on ground floor level and have been fitted with wider doors.
- 7.4 The bungalow is in a single storey building with access via two sets of stone steps and standard size door. Visitors and young people access this part of the school via a flag stoned area with handrails, or via gated access to the side of the property over grass. Inside the building, the rooms are all on one level and there are separate toilet facilities. Most doorways are standard width apart from the room adjacent to the kitchen.

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8. Management, Coordination and Implementation

When areas within the building are refurbished they will be designed with appropriate access for disabled persons wherever it is practicable.

9. Review

The Senior Management Team reviews this policy every 3 years. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff following its update. The next scheduled review date for this policy will be November 2024.

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Appendix 1

Accessibility Plan

Action	Strategy	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Improvement to disabled access to reception from outside.	Install a handrail and surround for the ramp. Resurface the reception walkway with a level surface.	By Summer 2022.	Head of Development and Maintenance Team.	Once a new surface is laid and the ramp surround is built with a handrail.
For any new building work incorporate planning for access requirements.	All contractors to meet access standards according to the equalities act.	Ongoing.	As above.	Projects will be designed by professional architectural organisations.
To make the school more accessible to hearing impaired pupils.	BSL and Makaton expertise.	Ongoing	SMT, Senco and school staff.	Individuals with such a disability have the same access to education or employment as none.
Access to Bungalow	Install a ramp to the bungalow.	As required	HOD and Maint Team.	Pupils and staff who require ramp access are able to use the bungalow.
Widen Doors	When doors are replaced, ensure that where possible wheelchair friendly width doorways are installed.	As required.	HOD and Maint Team.	Wheelchair access to all rooms and corridors.
Pupils with communication difficulties.	As above with PECS and other visual aids to communication.	Ongoing	SMT, Senco and school staff.	Individuals with such a disability have the same access to education or employment as none disabled.