



Accessibility Policy & Plan

Review Date	Reviewer	Approved by	Adopted	Implementation
September 2022	D Stewart	Local Academy Council	October 2022	October 2022
September 2025				

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

Hermitage Academy is part of the North East Learning Trust and both are aware of the general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Accessibility Plan has been drawn up in consultation with stakeholders and covers the period from September 2021 – August 2024.

We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all students, staff, parents/carers, and visitors regardless of their age, education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional, and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

- Improve awareness of Equality and Inclusion.
- Improve 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.
- Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that students with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied students; (If the school fails to do this, they are in breach of the Equality Act 2010). 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 students in accessing the curriculum.
- Improve the delivery of written information to students, staff, parents/carers, and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and any events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.
- Work with appropriate organisations to ensure accessibility is appropriate for all students, staff, and visitors.

Action Plans relating to these key aspects of accessibility are included in this policy and these plans will be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis. New plans will be drawn up every three years.

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We acknowledge that there is a need for ongoing awareness raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter.

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies, and documents:

- Curriculum
- Equality Duty and Objectives
- Staff Development
- Health & Safety (including off-site safety)
- Special Needs
- Behaviour
- School Development Plan
- Teaching and Learning File
- Complaints procedure

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the school, which is undertaken regularly by the Trust. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this first Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The audit will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan.

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Accessibility Plan September 2022 – August 2025

As detailed in the accessibility plan introduction, the fundamental principles of Equality within the school have been applied during the implementation of this policy.

EQUALITY			
Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Desired Outcome
Accessibility Plan and Equality statement to become an agenda item at the Summer Term meeting of the Local Academy Council.	Head of School to ensure that this is added to the Local Academy Council agenda and School Council once a year.	Annually.	Current legislation will be adhered to.
Training to raise awareness of equality disability issues.	Discuss perception of issues with staff/governors to determine the status of the school. Provide training for governors, staff, students, and parents/carers.	Annually, and as and when appropriate.	The whole school community will be aware of issues relating to access.

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	Staff meeting - annual training at start of each academic year and through the year, as appropriate.		
SEND Policy to be revised and updated annually.	<p>Policy to be rewritten by the Trust</p> <p>Annual training for staff at the start of the academic year and through the year as appropriate.</p> <p>Governor training – TES Online Training SEND Code of Practice.</p>	<p>Reviewed annually</p> <p>Completed annually, and as and when appropriate.</p>	Staff and governors are aware of new and up-to-date legislation.

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Improving the delivery of written information to students with a disability

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to students is available to disabled students. Examples might include handouts, textbooks, and information about school events. The information should take account of students' disabilities and students and parents/carers preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable timeframe.

In planning to make written information available to disabled students we need to establish the current level of need and respond to changes in the range of need. We will identify agencies and the source of such support and materials to make the provision available when it is required. The school ICT infrastructure will enable us to access a range of material supportive to need.

Written information			
Targets	Strategies	Time	Desired Outcome
Make available school brochures, newsletters, and other information and in materials, for parents/carers in alterative formats (when needed).	Review all current the school publications and promote the availability in different formats for those that require it. The school will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats.	Ongoing.	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual formats

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Written material will be made available in alternative languages (when needed).	The school will seek to translate key information when it is required.	As required.	The school information will be available for all.
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Improving access to the physical environment of the school

The school is continuing to develop. We have a wide range of equipment and resources available for day-to-day use. We keep resource provision under constant review. The school's Improvement Planning process is the vehicle for considering such needs on an annual basis.

Physical Environment			
Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Desired Outcome
Accessible car park.	Reserved bay when required.	Complete	Sufficient disabled parking Easy wheelchair access into main building from car park so wheelchair users can access the site independently

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Accessible toilets.	To provide access to a unisex toilet for disabled students and staff.	Complete	Disabled staff, children and visitors have access to toilet and washroom facilities.
Ensure access to reception area to all.	To provide access to the reception area for all, including wheelchair users.	Complete - Wheelchair are easily accessible through main door and access to reception desk.	Disabled parents, carers and visitors feel more welcome.
To ensure any recently built and future new build projects are physically accessible to all.	H&S Officer appointed will ensure compliance with building regulations accessibility	In place at trust and school level	Inspected during accessibility audit. Reviewed as new projects are planned.

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Ensure all disabled students can be evacuated safely.	Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) for staff and students with difficulties.	Complete - shared with staff.	All disabled staff and students working alongside are safe in the event of a fire.
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Improving access to the curriculum

At Hermitage Academy we will continue to review and adapt the curriculum as necessary depending on the individual needs of our students. The Senior Leadership team work alongside the SENDCO, staff and parents/carers to ensure all children are encouraged to reach their full potential, in all areas of the school.

Curriculum			
Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Desired Outcome
All school activities are planned to ensure the participation of the entire range of students.	Review out of the school provision to ensure compliance with legislation.	As required.	Increase in access to all the school activities for all disabled students.
Ensure staff are aware of disabled children curriculum access.	Set up a system of individual access plans for disabled students, when required. EHCP and SEN Support plans. Information sharing with all agencies involved with the child, review meetings etc.	As required.	All staff are aware of individual needs

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Use ICT to support learning.	Make sure software installed where needed.	As required.	Wider use of SEN resources in classrooms
All educational visits to be accessible to all.	Guidance for staff in place to make sure trips are accessible and ensure appropriateness of all venues.	As required.	All students in the school able to access all educational visits and take part in a range of activities.
Review PE curriculum to ensure PE is accessible to all.	Gather information and accessible PE and disability sports.	As required.	All children have access to PE and can excel.
Continue training for teachers and support staff on various aspects of SEN including differentiation when required.	SENDSCO to review the needs of children with specific issues, provide all relevant training according to staff needs. CPD will be planned by SLT in response to needs.	Ongoing.	All staff trained and confident with issues linked with accessibility and Inclusivity with regards to accessing the curriculum. We recognise that this is an ongoing process, and the needs and expertise will change.

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Classrooms are optimally organised and appropriate additional equipment is provided to promote the participation and independence of all pupil and adults alike. When applicable.	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and specialist equipment to support the learning process in individual classes according to the needs of the individual student.	Ongoing.	Lessons will start on time without the need to adjust accommodate the needs of individual students.
Access arrangements to meet individual needs when taking tests etc. will be applied for and support provided when required.	SENDCO and appropriate staff will ensure appropriate testing and reports are provided to apply for access arrangements.	Ongoing.	All students will have their individual needs met and any barriers to achieving their full potential will be removed.

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