Accessibility Plan

October 2026	Most Recent Review
September 2027	Date for Review

Introduction

This Accessibility Policy and Plan is drawn up in compliance with the current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

Diamond Wood Community Academy is committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their 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. We plan, over time, to ensure the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school.

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Whilst age and marriage/civil partnership do not apply to pupils in the same way as staff, schools commonly reference all protected characteristics.

General Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) has three main elements:

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics – between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The duty to have “due regard” to equality considerations means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.

Specific Duties

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability. The DfE non-statutory guidance states that this duty can be summarised as follows:

- Where a pupil with a disability is placed at a disadvantage compared to other pupils, the school must take reasonable steps to reduce or remove that disadvantage through reasonable adjustments.

- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a pupil with a disability when it would be reasonable to do so and where such an aid would alleviate a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled pupils.

- Schools are not subject to the reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features, as this is addressed through accessibility planning duties.

- Accessibility considerations will be incorporated into safeguarding, educational visits, risk assessments and emergency evacuation planning.

Reasonable Adjustments

Factors a school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment, may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route. Cost will play a major part in determining what is reasonable. For example, a small rural primary school may not be able to provide specialised IT equipment for any pupils with disabilities who may need it and may not be reasonable for the school to provide that equipment. On the other hand, a much larger school might reasonably be expected to provide it.

The guidance states that many pupils with a disability will have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and auxiliary aids provided by the LA and may not require anything further. However, if a pupil with a disability does not have an EHCP (or the EHCP doesn't provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school (after the relevant provisions come into force). The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the accessibility planning duties and the existing EHCP provisions which are part of education legislation, under which Local Authorities have a duty to provide auxiliary aids to pupils with an EHCP of special education need. In addition to the duty to consider reasonable adjustments for particular individual pupils with disabilities, schools will also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for pupils with disabilities generally.

Accessibility Planning

Accessibility plans at Diamond Wood Community Academy are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities
- Improving access to digital information, online resources and school communications for pupils, parents/ carers and visitors with disabilities.

The school will provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will review them regularly. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the School Development plan.

Increasing the Extent to Which Pupils with Disabilities Can Participate in the Curriculum

The curriculum covers teaching and learning and wider provision embracing after school clubs; leisure, sporting and cultural activities; and school trips. Planning for improved access to the curriculum includes consideration of school and classroom organisation and support, timetabling, curriculum options, deployment of staff and staff information and training. Curriculum audits can support the school to review patterns of achievement and participation by pupils with disabilities in different areas of the curriculum, e.g. the inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities in PE, and then to identify actions to increase participation
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Improving the Physical Environment of Schools

This strand of the planning duty covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities lighting, heating, ventilation, floor coverings, signs, interior surfaces, room décor and furniture. Improvements to physical access include ramps handrails, washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds and communication aids. The provision of 'quiet' areas and improvements to the physical safety of the environment, indoors and outdoors, may also enhance access for children with learning disabilities. Improved access in existing buildings can often be achieved by rearranging room space, removing obstructions from walkways, changing the layout of classrooms, providing designated storage space or re-allocating rooms to particular subject specialisms.

Physical aids to access education cover ICT equipment, desks, chairs, writing equipment, science equipment etc. e.g. enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept keyboards, communication

aids, switches, photocopying enlargement facilities, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor co-ordination and poor hand/eye skills such as specialist pens and pencils.

Improving the Availability of Accessible Information to Pupils with Disabilities

This part of the duty covers planning to make written information normally provided by the school to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to those with a disability (including those with significant low reading acquisition levels). This might include alternative formats such as large print, the use of ICT and the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or in sign language. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and views expressed by pupils or their parents about their preferred means of communication. The school should consider how all information normally provided in a written format including work sheets, timetables, schools SATS papers, newsletters, information about school events, trips and extra-curricular provision could be made accessible to all those with a disability.

References: Equality Act 2010 and current Department for Education guidance relating to disability discrimination, accessibility and SEND.

Advice for school leaders, school staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities
http://preview.tinyurl.com/5wpx9aa

Equality Act Guidance downloads from the Equality and Human Rights Commission – includes Guidance for education providers – what the equality law means for you as an education provider.
http://preview.tinyurl.com/3md47tk

Resources Planning to increase access to schools for pupils with disabilities. National Assembly of Wales. Although this document is dated (2004) it still includes useful information for all schools looking for information on how to develop an Accessibility Plan. Http://preview.tinyurl.com/5uoa604

Improving Curriculum Access

Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timeframe
Increase staff expertise in adaptive teaching to ensure all pupils, including those with SEND and disabilities, can access an ambitious curriculum.	• Be aware of staff training needs on curriculum access • Assign CPD for dyslexia, and Autism Awareness adaptive teaching and recording methods • Online learning modules if required	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of the pupils with disabilities with regards to accessing the curriculum	

Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timeframe
All out-of-school activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	• Review all out-of-school provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All out-of-school activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements	On-going
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	• Provide a language rich environment • Use visual timetables either class or individual	Classrooms, resources and teaching approaches enable pupils with SEND and disabilities to access learning successfully through appropriate reasonable adjustments.	On-going
Training for Awareness Raising of Disability Issues	• Provide training for governors, staff, pupils and parents • Discuss perception of issues with staff to determine the status of school	Whole school community aware of issues relating to Access	On-going and as required
Ensure classroom support staff have specific training on disability issues	• Be aware of staff training needs • Staff access appropriate CPD • Online learning modules if required	All staff aware of individual's needs	As required
Review PE curriculum to ensure PE accessible to all	• Gather information on accessible PE and disability sports • Advice from inclusive sports specialists	All to have access to PE and be able to excel	As required
Review information to parents'/carers/ pupils to ensure it is accessible	• Provide information and letters in clear print in "simple" English/translated if possible • School office will support and help parents to access information and complete school forms • Provide translators where possible • Ensure website and all documents accessible via the school website can be accessed by the pupils with vision impairments • Use of child friendly SEND support plan review formats	All parents/carers and pupils receive information in a form they can access	On-going
Make available school brochures, school newsletters	• Translated documents where necessary	All school information available for all	On-going

Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timeframe
and other information for parents in alternative formats			
Review documentation with a view to ensuring accessibility for pupils with vision impairments	• Get advice from Hearing and Vision support Service on alternative formats and use of IT software to produce customised materials	All school information available for all	As required
Raise the awareness of adults working at and for the school on the importance of good communication systems	• Arrange training courses	Awareness of target group raised	As required
The school is aware of the access needs of pupils with disabilities, staff, governors, parents/carers and visitors	• To create individual accessibility arrangements and support plans for pupils with disabilities where required. • Provide individual risk assessments for visits • Be aware of staff, governors and parents access needs and met as appropriate • Through questions and discussions, find out the access needs of parents/carers • Consider access needs during recruitment process • Ensure staff aware of Environment Access Standard	SEN Support Plans in place for pupils with disabilities and all staff aware of pupils' needs All staff and governors feel confident their needs are met Parents have full access to all school activities Access issues do not influence recruitment and retention issues	As required Induction and on-going if required Annually Recruitment process
Layout of school to allow access for all pupils to all areas	• Premises audits identify and address accessibility barriers as they arise - Yellow strip mark step edges are in place.	Re-designed buildings are usable by all	As required
Improve signage and external access for pupils with vision impairments people	• Premises audits identify and address accessibility barriers as they arise - Yellow strip mark step edges are in place.	pupils with vision impairments people feel safe in school grounds	

Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timeframe
Ensure all pupils with disabilities can be safely evacuated	• Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for all pupils with difficulties • Develop a system to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities	All pupils with disabilities and staff working alongside are safe in the event of a fire	As required
Ensure accessibility of access to IT equipment	• Alternative equipment in place to ensure access to all hardware • Liaise with VI/HI information with regard to the pupils with vision impairments and deaf or hearing-impaired pupils	Hardware and software available to meet the needs of children as appropriate	As required
Ensure hearing equipment in classrooms to support deaf or hearing-impaired	• Seek support from LA deaf or hearing-impaired unit on the appropriate equipment	All children have access to the equipment	As required
All fire escape routes are suitable for all	• Make sure all areas of school can have wheelchair access • Egress routes visual check	All disabled staff, pupils and visitors able to have safe independent egress	Ongoing and as required, as appropriate. Weekly by SENDCo

This Accessibility Plan should be read alongside:

- Accessibility Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Information Report
- SEND Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Academy Improvement Plan