



L.E.A.D. Academy Trust

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# Sycamore Academy Accessibility Plan

## Policy/Procedure management log

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## 1. Aims

Schools are required under the [Equality Act 2010](#) to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

Our academy aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

At Sycamore Academy we aim to meet the obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the academy aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times).
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of academy societies).

At Sycamore Academy, we are committed to fostering an environment where every student feels safe, valued, and respected. Our core principles and values relating to equality and inclusion include:

### 1. Respect for Diversity

We celebrate the differences that make each individual unique. This includes differences in race, ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, and more. We believe diversity enriches the learning experience and prepares pupils to thrive in a global society.

## 2. Equal Opportunities

Every student deserves the same chance to succeed. We ensure that learning opportunities, extracurricular activities, and school resources are accessible to all, regardless of background or ability. We work to remove any barriers that could limit a student's potential.

## 3. Inclusion in Practice

Inclusion is not just a concept—it's a daily practice. Our classrooms are inclusive spaces where teaching is differentiated to meet varied needs. We actively support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and collaborate with families and specialists to provide tailored support.

## 4. Zero Tolerance for Discrimination

We have clear policies in place to prevent and address any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment. Staff and pupils are encouraged to speak up and act when they witness unfair treatment.

## 5. Student Voice and Participation

We believe pupils should have a say in decisions that affect them. Through student councils, surveys, and regular dialogue, we ensure all voices are heard—especially those who may feel marginalized.

## 6. Staff Training and Awareness

All staff receive training on equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure they understand unconscious bias, cultural competence, and how to promote a welcoming environment for all.

Our academy is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

Our academy's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

This accessibility plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives. We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of [schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010](#).

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice and under](#) the Equality Act 2010, 'long-term' means something which has lasted or will last for a year or more or for the rest of the affected person's life and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting visual impairments which cannot be treated with visual aids, such as by wearing spectacles or contact lenses or hearing, severe disfigurement and long-term health conditions such as ASD, ADHD, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy. Cancer, HIV and multiple sclerosis are considered to meet the definition at the point of diagnosis, irrespective of the level of impairment.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, altering processes or requirements or the provision of an auxiliary aid.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association

### 3. Action plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim	Current good practice	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability.	<p>1. Differentiated Instructions. Tailored lessons to meet the diverse needs of students. This can include adjusting the pace, content, or teaching methods. Use of a variety of instructional strategies, such as visual aids, dual coding and hands-on activities.</p> <p>2. Assistive Technology. Technology tools such as enlarging electronic devices or alternative input devices like talking tins.</p> <p>3. Accessible Teaching Materials. Reading materials are available in multiple formats, such as large print or coloured background. Visual aids like dual coding, graphic organizers, and mind maps to simplify complex information.</p> <p>4. Inclusive Classroom Design. Classrooms are physically accessible, with wider aisles and accessible desks. Spaces for quiet work and areas for sensory breaks are available, helping pupils with sensory sensitivities or attention difficulties.</p> <p>5. Flexible Assessment Methods. A range of assessment types to accommodate different learning styles and disabilities. Extended time on tests or assignments and breaks during testing. Pupils are allowed to demonstrate understanding in ways other than traditional exams, such as through practical tasks or creative projects.</p> <p>6. Use of Peer Support. Pupils with disabilities can be paired with peer buddies or mentors who can offer assistance with reading, note-taking, or understanding instructions. Collaborative group work is encouraged so that pupils with diverse needs are included and social inclusion is promoted.</p> <p>7. Professional Development for Teachers. Ongoing training for teachers on disability awareness and strategies for creating an</p>	<p>To identify pupils who may need additional provision.</p> <p>Achieved and ongoing</p>	<p>Liaise with Nursery providers to review admissions before the start of academic year or in year transfers.</p>	<p>Head Teacher SLT SENDCO</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Appropriate procedures/resources are in place</p>
		<p>To review policies to ensure they include inclusive and reflective practice.</p> <p>Partially achieved and ongoing</p>	<p>Monitor, evaluate and review current statutory policies</p>	<p>Head teacher SENDCo Governing Body</p>	<p>May 2028</p>	<p>Policies reviewed to ensure curriculum meets the needs of all pupils.</p>
		<p>To establish close liaison with parents of pupils with additional needs and disabilities.</p> <p>Achieved and ongoing</p>	<p>Promote engagement, collaboration and participation with parents/carers and school.</p>	<p>Head Teacher SLT SENDCo</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Engagement and involvement</p>

<p>inclusive environment. Guidance on how to use assistive technology, adapt materials, and implement individual accommodations is also provided.</p> <p>8. Alternative Communication Systems. Communication boards or symbol-based communication for pupils who have difficulty with verbal communication. Sign language or gestures where appropriate are also being used. Pupils are allowed to communicate in the way that works best for them, whether that's through writing, symbols, gestures, or other means.</p> <p>9. Scaffolded Learning. Tasks are broken down into smaller, manageable steps with clear instructions. Additional resources or mini-lessons for pupils who need extra support to grasp complex concepts can be provided.</p> <p>10. Visual and Auditory Supports. Visual timetables, charts, and diagrams reinforce learning and provide structure. Auditory cues, such as verbal instructions or audio recordings are used for pupils with visual impairments.</p> <p>11. Social-Emotional Support. Strategies to help with anxiety, frustration, or self-regulation, including relaxation techniques, mindfulness, or social skills training following researched based emotion coaching like Zones of Regulation. A positive, supportive environment where pupils feel comfortable asking for help.</p> <p>12. Flexible Grouping. Pupils are organised into flexible groups based on ability or need, so that all pupils have the chance to work with different peers and benefit from diverse perspectives. Collaborative activities allow pupils with disabilities to contribute in ways that highlight their strengths.</p> <p>13. Clear and Consistent Instructions. Clear, step-by-step instructions, repeated or rephrased if necessary. A combination of spoken and written instructions cater to different learning preferences.</p> <p>14. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles. Multiple means of representation are offered (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic) to</p>	<p>Pupils are in receipt of a broad and balanced curriculum.</p> <p>In progress and ongoing</p>	<p>Review curriculum, resources, training of teachers and support staff.</p>	<p>Headteacher SLT Subject Leaders</p>	<p>September 2026</p>	<p>To respond to curriculum evaluation and needs of pupils and act accordingly. To seek advice and support from specialist teachers.</p>
	<p>To review SEND provision and attainment of pupils.</p> <p>In progress and ongoing</p>	<p>Analyse data on termly basis. Conduct Learning walks and observations.</p>	<p>SENDCo</p>	<p>Termly</p>	<p>All pupils make progress from their starting point in line with their abilities.</p>
	<p>The curriculum should reflect and include people with disabilities in order to foster positive self-image, self-worth, acceptance, respect, and pride, while also raising aspirations.</p> <p>In progress and ongoing</p>	<p>Review curriculum</p>	<p>Head Teacher Subject Leaders SLT</p>		<p>Pupils with disabilities feel empowered, have appositve self-image have high aspirations and are proud of themselves.</p>

<p>present information. Multiple means of action and expression, allow pupils to demonstrate what they've learned in various ways.</p> <p>15. Use of Classroom Aids and Support Staff. Teaching assistants or special education staff support individual pupils in accessing the curriculum. Classroom assistants are trained to effectively support pupils with specific disabilities, such as those with autism, dyslexia, or physical impairments.</p> <p>16. Sensory and Environmental Considerations. A sensory-friendly environment is created taking into consideration the sensory needs of individual pupils where possible. Lighting, noise, and seating arrangements are suitable for pupils with sensory processing issues where possible. Noise-canceling headphones or earplugs for pupils with auditory sensitivities enable them to reduce the overstimulation from sound. Adaptive seating options, such as wobble cushions to cater for pupils with attention or movement needs.</p> <p>17. Modified Classroom Activities. Physical activities and PE lessons can be adapted to ensure pupils with mobility impairments or other physical disabilities can participate. Experiments, field trips, and other activities are modified to ensure full participation by all students, regardless of ability. Assistive resources such as adapted writing tools like thicker triangular pencils, or modified art supplies allow pupils with motor disabilities to engage in creative tasks.</p> <p>18. Parent and Family Involvement. Collaboration with families help staff understand the specific needs of pupils and develop individualised strategies for learning and support. Open communication between teachers and parents is encouraged to ensure that accommodations are effectively implemented both in school and at home.</p> <p>19. Self-Advocacy and Independence Skills Pupils with disabilities are taught to self-advocate for their needs and are to ask for support when necessary. Pupils are encouraged to use strategies or accommodations independently, fostering self-reliance and confidence in their ability to learn.</p>	<p>Promote the involvement of disabled pupils in school life.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To provide resources necessary such as wheelchair access, software for visually impaired, alternative communication strategies.</p>	<p>SENDCo Head teacher SLT</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Variety of planned activities and adaptations that reflect the needs of pupils.</p>
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	<p>20. Access to Enrichment Activities.</p> <p>Pupils with disabilities can participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, and sports by making necessary accommodations (e.g., providing sign language interpreters, adaptive equipment, or specialized coaching). After-school programs, arts performances, and field trips can be adapted to allow full participation.</p> <p>21. Transition Support. Additional support during transitions. Transition plans consider the specific needs of pupils with disabilities, helping them navigate changes in their learning environment.</p>					
Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	<p>1. Building Entrances and Exits. All main entrances and emergency exits are at the same level of the ground allowing accessible entry and exit. There are no steps or stairs to and from the main entrances. Doorways are wide enough for wheelchair users.</p> <p>2. Corridors, Hallways, and Common Areas. Corridors and hallways are wide enough for wheelchair users to pass safely. Smooth, Non-Slip Floor and level, smooth surfaces with anti-slip treatments to prevent accidents. No uneven transitions between flooring types. Clear Pathways. Hallways, staircases, and exits are clear of obstructions, furniture and clutter. Handrails have been installed along stairs. All areas are well-lit, especially stairwells and entrances to help visually impaired pupils navigate safely.</p>	<p>Maintain access to physical environment.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Conduct Termly audits to assess accessibility and identify areas for improvement and report to the Head Teacher. (Appendix 1)</p>	<p>Site Manager Business Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Accessibility barriers identified and removed.</p> <p>Accessibility is improved.</p>

	<p>3. Classrooms and Learning Spaces. Different height desks and chairs are available to accommodate pupils using wheelchairs or with other mobility needs. Seating can be arranged to allow space for mobility aids and ensure pupils with disabilities are not isolated.</p> <p>4. Toilets and Changing Facilities. Accessible Toilets are available on both levels as well as in the Enhanced Provision. Accessible toilets have sufficient space for maneuvering and necessary grab rails. Changing benches are available for pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). Emergency alarms are within easy reach in accessible toilets and regularly maintained.</p> <p>5. Outdoor and Recreational Areas. 2 paths lead to 2 accessible playgrounds. Smooth, step-free access to 2 playgrounds, sensory paths and other outdoor learning spaces. Shaded and sheltered seating for pupils who may need rest areas due to health conditions or disabilities is available on 1 playground.</p> <p>6. Stairs, Elevators, and Lifts. The second floor is accessible via a lift with tactile buttons and sufficient space for wheelchairs. Stair edges have colour-contrasting strips to help visually impaired pupils navigate safely.</p> <p>7. Transportation and Parking. Clearly marked, wide parking spaces close to building entrance. Safe, step-free areas for pupils with disabilities to be dropped off or picked up by school transport or parents.</p> <p>8. Maintenance and Monitoring. All accessibility features (e.g., ramps, lifts, accessible toilets) are kept in working order with regular checks. A system has been implemented where staff can</p>	<p>Identified real-world barriers experienced by pupils with disabilities and their families.</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Introduce pupil and parent accessibility audits at least once per year.</p> <p>Report outcomes to the Head Teacher and SENDCo.</p>	Business manager	September 2026	<p>Real-world barriers that cannot always be identified by staff will be raised and removed.</p> <p>The site will become more accessible.</p> <p>The sense of mutual respect and belonging for parents and pupils will increase.</p>
		<p>Ensure a faster resolution and accountability for maintenance issues.</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Establish the digital maintenance log and response tracker.</p> <p>Monitored on a half termly basis by the business manager.</p>	<p>Site Manager</p> <p>Business manager</p>	Ongoing	<p>Accessibility barriers identified and removed faster.</p> <p>Accessibility is improved.</p>



	<p>report broken or inaccessible features (e.g., blocked paths or faulty lifts).</p> <p>9. Emergency Procedures. Individual evacuation plans (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)) for pupils who may need assistance in an emergency are in place. Visual alarms (flashing lights) have been installed.</p> <p>10. Inclusive Design and Future Planning. For any new construction or renovation, we engage with disability specialists to ensure that buildings are inherently accessible.</p>	<p>Expand shaded and rest areas in outdoor spaces.</p> <p><b>In progress</b></p>	<p>A canopy to be designed, purchased and installed in the outdoor space of the Enhanced Provision.</p>	<p>SENDCo Business Manager</p>	<p>September 2026</p>	<p>The garden in the Enhanced Provision has a canopy that will make the outdoor space accessible to pupils with disabilities throughout the year.</p>
<p>Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability.</p>	<p>1. Adaptation of Written Materials. Materials in large font sizes for visually impaired pupils. High-contrast colour combinations (e.g. black text on a white or light brown background) to aid readability. Simplified versions of texts using plain language and supporting images for pupils with learning disabilities or cognitive impairments. Use of fonts like Arial, Comic Sans, or OpenDyslexic to make text more accessible to pupils with Dyslexia. Italics or dense blocks of text are also avoided for pupils with Dyslexia. Long texts are broken down into smaller, manageable sections with headings and bullet points. Bolding, colour coding, or boxes are being used to emphasize important points or instructions.</p> <p>2. Alternative Formats. Educational videos have accurate subtitles or closed captions for pupils with hearing impairments. Our SENDCo is a qualified Teacher of the Deaf and provides strategies and support to staff with pupils with Hearing Impairment. British Sign Language (BSL) or other relevant sign language support for pupils who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or have communication difficulties.</p> <p>3. Use of Technology and Assistive Tools. Pupils with writing or motor difficulties are allowed to dictate responses. Screen magnifiers or electronic magnifying devices to enlarge digital or printed text are being used to support pupils with Visual</p>	<p>Create clear and purposeful displays.</p> <p><b>In progress and ongoing</b></p>	<p>Teaching displays and whiteboards are kept clear and well-organized to reduce sensory overload and distraction.</p> <p>Colours will be carefully chosen to reduce sensory overload.</p>	<p>Teaching staff Subject leaders SLT</p>	<p>January 2026 ongoing</p>	<p>Information from teaching displays will be easier accessible for pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties.</p>
		<p>Establish clutter free learning environments.</p> <p><b>Achieved and ongoing</b></p>	<p>All areas around school will be clutter free. Information will be easily accessible.</p>	<p>Teaching staff Subject leaders SLT</p>	<p>January 2026 ongoing</p>	<p>The learning environment will be distraction free and not sensory overstimulating to enable access to the information.</p>

<p>Impairment. Visual and auditory content is used on interactive whiteboards to appeal to multiple learning styles.</p> <p>4. Classroom Communication and Instruction.</p> <p>Staff speak slowly and clearly, using plain language where needed and repeat or rephrase when necessary. Diagrams, pictures, videos and visual organizers support verbal explanations. Frequent check-ins or asking pupils to repeat instructions in their own words to ensure comprehension are strategies that ensure pupils understand the learning objectives, stay engaged with the task, and receive clarification when needed—particularly supporting those with communication, language, or processing difficulties. Use of consistent structures for lessons and routines help pupils know what to expect and reduce cognitive load. Visual timetables with pictures or symbols provide predictability and reduce anxiety for pupils with autism or processing difficulties.</p>		<p>Information on entrances and exits of the building are clear and accessible to pupils and parents/carers with disabilities and learning difficulties.</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Use large, high-contrast, and tactile signage (including Braille and BSL) at all entrances and exits. Ensure signage includes visual symbols for those with learning or language difficulties.</p>	<p>Business manager Site manager</p>	<p>January 2026 ongoing</p>	<p>The site will be accessible to more pupils and their families.</p>
<p>5. Peer and Adult Support. Teaching Assistants support pupils with disabilities in accessing, interpreting, and responding to information. Pupils are paired with supportive peers for collaborative tasks.</p> <p>6. Multisensory Teaching Approaches. Practical activities, manipulatives and hands-on experiments support understanding. Deliver content using multiple sensory channels to reinforce learning (e.g., reading aloud while showing diagrams). Use of memory aids to help pupils retain information more easily like songs, rhymes and mnemonics.</p> <p>7. Assessment and Feedback Accessibility. Allow oral responses, video submissions, or multiple-choice formats as alternatives to traditional written assessments. Feedback is provided in simplified written form or alternative ways based on the pupil's needs. Additional time and flexibility in assessment environments can be offered to reduce pressure and allow for processing time.</p> <p>8. Inclusive Policies and Planning. All pupils with additional needs have an individualized Learning Plan that include reasonable adjustments in place and information regarding the pupil's needs. Parents and carers are involved in planning and reviewing methods</p>		<p>Office staff will learn basic conversation BSL signs.</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Basic BSL lessons delivered to Office staff.</p> <p>Display with basic conversation signs will be created and displayed in the office area, accessible to office staff as a reminder.</p> <p>Access to BSL interpreters booked for meetings.</p>	<p>Office staff SENDCo/ToD</p>	<p>September 2026 ongoing</p>	<p>The school office will be accessible to Deaf people and people with hearing impairment.</p>

<p>of delivering information to support consistency at home and school. Teachers and support staff access training in inclusive communication techniques and disability awareness.</p> <p>9. Environmental Adjustments</p> <p>Carpets and acoustic ceiling panels have been used to reduce the reverberation time. Quiet zones are available to help pupils with hearing impairments or sensory processing difficulties. Signs, symbols and pictures around the room reinforce spoken instructions and support orientation.</p> <p>10. Encouraging Self-Advocacy and Independence. Pupils are encouraged to signal when they do not understand or need information in a different format. The use of personal assistive technologies are allowed and supported where appropriate (e.g. iPads).</p>					
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#### **4. Monitoring arrangements**

This document will be reviewed every **3** years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

It will be approved by the Sycamore Academy Governing Body.

#### **5. Links with other policies**

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit

Feature	Description	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by
Access to both levels				
Corridor access				
Lifts				
Parking bays				
Entrances				
Ramps				
Toilets				
Reception area				
Internal signage				
Emergency escape routes				

## Appendix 2: Accessibility plan checklist

This checklist is based on the [DfE's advice on the Equality Act 2010](#).

WHAT TO COVER	TIPS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your accessibility plan must set out how your academy aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum</li> <li>• Improve its physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided</li> <li>• Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils</li> </ul>	<p>An audit could help you to identify potential barriers to access and what you could do about them. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are all the shelves in the library accessible to all?</li> <li>• Is there adequate lighting in all areas?</li> <li>• Is information provided in large print, Braille, etc.?</li> <li>• Do the curriculum and resources include examples of people with disabilities?</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy introduction	<p>What is the purpose of the policy? What legislation does it comply with? How does it help your academy meet its aims and values?</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Details of how you will make the academy's curriculum, physical environment and information more accessible for people with disabilities	<p>This section of the policy could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targets</li> <li>• The strategies you will employ to meet these targets</li> <li>• Timescales</li> <li>• Who is responsible for particular targets/strategies</li> <li>• Success criteria</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and evaluating the plan	<p>When was the plan approved? When will it be reviewed? By whom?</p>