



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN

2023-26

Date Adopted: December 2023

Author/owner: Operations, Audit and Risk Committee, a Subcommittee of the Board of Trustees

Anticipated Review: Triennial

Table of Contents

1. About this policy	3
2. Aims.....	3
3. Legislation and guidance.....	4
4. Action Plan	5
5. Monitoring arrangement	5
6. Links with other documents and policies	5
7. Appendix 1: Accessibility Audit Tool.....	5
8. Appendix 2: Detailed Physical Access Check List	13
9. Appendix 3: The Action Plan	21

1. About this policy

This policy gives guidance to schools regarding the provision of access to all aspects of Tarka Learning Partnership resources and strategy. The main tool for its delivery is through the Accessibility Plan (Appendix 3) which provides a format for addressing the statutory duties of The Equality Act 2010 and The Children and Families Act 2014.

Whilst this policy covers all schools within the Trust it will be the school's context that informs their Accessibility Plan.

2. Aims

This policy seeks to:

- **improve the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education** (this includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education).
- **increase access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum** (this includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits).
- **improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils** (this will include making written information available to disabled pupils and their families taking into account the parents' preferred format).

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an Accessibility Plan and it will be through this plan that these aims are achieved.

All our schools aim to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

We are committed to ensuring our schools are socially and academically inclusive, which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents, volunteers 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 aim to include all users of the schools, including those with disabilities and protected characteristics, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this include:

- promoting a welcoming environment for all
- following the Tarka Learning Partnership's admissions and recruitment policies and in adherence with equal opportunities; which do not discriminate against people with disabilities or protected characteristics or treat them unfavourably
- raising awareness of The Equality Act amongst staff, Trustees and School Community Boards (SCB) through a programme of training; acknowledging the need for ongoing training in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter
- planning the physical environment of our schools to cater for the needs of all users of the school, including those with disabilities

- finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full life of the school, including; a full curriculum, extra-curricular clubs, school excursions and residential trips, devising teaching and learning strategies to remove barriers to learning, having high expectations, working in partnership with parents and local agencies
- examining the curriculum, library and reading books to ensure there are examples of positive images of diversely represented individuals and groups, including people with disabilities
- providing written information in a form which is user friendly and where needed, providing alternative forms of communication to convey information, for example, face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations, visually supported text, etc
- using language which does not offend in its literature and raising awareness within the school of the importance of language
- effective monitoring through gathering views of stakeholders
- gathering the views of pupils through a variety of systems including, collective worship, the school council, Personalised Plan (SEND), pupil reviews
- systems in place for staff, SCB representatives and parents to communicate their views and opinions on a variety of matters; admissions information, parent- teacher meetings, SEND reviews, induction/transition meetings and home visits, parent questionnaires etc. It will be important to adapt and develop these communication procedures to ensure the voice of people with disabilities is regularly listened to and involved in the life of the school, to ensure disabled people are informing future plans.

3. Legislation and guidance

This document combined with the school Accessibility Plan 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 they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

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, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

4. Action Plan

Following the use of the Accessibility Audit Tool (Appendix 1) and the Detailed Physical Access Check List (Appendix 2) each school should identify key actions and lay out a clear Plan (Appendix 3) for how these actions will be addressed over specified time scales. The whole school action plan should link with the Accessibility Plan review timescale of every three years.

The format of the Action plan is contained in the Appendices (Appendix 3).

5. Monitoring arrangement

The Trust Accessibility Policy will be reviewed every 3 years by Trustees.

The School Accessibility Plan will be reviewed every 3 years by the school, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by the school headteacher and SENCo. It will be shared with the School Community Board and collated by the Trust who will share it with Trustees.

6. Links with other documents and policies

The Accessibility Plan will be drawn up with reference to other school improvement documents:

- The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy and SEND Information Report
- Whole School Behaviour & Anti-bullying Policy
- Teaching and Learning/Curriculum Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Improvement Plan
- Admission Policy
- Policy for school trips

7. Appendix 1: Accessibility Audit Tool

This accessibility audit tool has been designed for schools to use when developing their Accessibility Plan. The use of this tool will help schools feel confident about meeting the expectations and requirements within the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and the Equality Act 2010.

The areas shaded sit within the statutory guidance.

ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT TOOL FOR EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

School/setting	Date of completion
Name of person(s) completing audit	Role of person(s) completing audit

1. Is our school/setting compliant with the Equality Act 2010?

	Question	Yes ✓	If yes – where can the evidence be found?	No ✓	If no - action to be taken
1	Do you have an Accessibility Plan?				
2	Was your Accessibility Plan co-produced with children/young people with SEND, their families and other stakeholders?				
3	Is everyone in your setting aware of the Equality Act 2010?				
4	Do you have evidence that your setting does not treat pupils/students less favourably and takes reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils/students at a disadvantage in comparison to their peers?				
5	Do you have evidence that your school community endeavours to see the child/young person with SEND first and their disability second? (e.g. disability awareness training, education				

	plans which build on a child/young person's strengths as well as addressing their difficulties)				
6	Have you published your SEN information report?				
7	Is your SEN information report linked to the Local Offer?				

2. Do we increase the extent to which CYP with a disability can participate in the curriculum?

1.	Do all our staff have high aspirations and expectations of CYP with SEND?				
2.	Are CYP with SEND included in pupil/student forums e.g. school councils				
3.	Do we ensure that transition from setting to setting is carefully planned and personalised for CYP with SEND?				
4.	Do staff have regular and updated access to training of a high quality to meet the learning needs of CYP with SEND?				
5.	Are CYP and their families fully involved in the review of individual plans regarding curriculum access?				
6.	Do we use a graduated approach when meeting the needs of CYP with SEND?				
7.	Do we use the 'assess, plan, do review' cycle to inform the graduated approach?				

8.	Is the attainment gap between CYP with SEND and those without SEND being reduced over time?				
9.	Is the progress made by CYP at 'SEN support' and with an EHC plan as good as that made by CYP nationally?				
10.	Do we ensure that home learning is accessible to all CYP with SEND?				
11.	Are cover staff, including supply teachers, clear about the additional needs of CYP and how to meet these needs?				
12.	Are staff given time to plan for pupils/students who need a highly differentiated/individualised curriculum?				
13.	Do CYP with SEND have access to appropriate information technology?				
14.	Do all additional adults, build positive relationships, support flexibly and facilitate independent learning?				
15.	Are auxiliary aids used (and maintained) to ensure that CYP with SEND are included in the curriculum?				
16.	Do curriculum pathways ensure that CYP are ready for their next stage of education, work and training?				
17.	Is the curriculum suitable and suitably tailored for CYP with SEND ensuring breadth and balance as well as implementing strategies to support CYP prepare for adulthood?				

18.	Are CYP needs assessed quickly and appropriate provision put in place?				
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3. Is our setting physically accessible?

	Question	Yes ✓	If yes – where can the evidence be found?	No ✓	If no - action to be taken
1	Are our buildings adapted to ensure that the majority of areas are physically accessible for CYP with disabilities?				
2	If adaptations are not possible have we found creative solutions to ensure inclusion e.g. moving classes to accessible classrooms?				
3	Are pathways around the setting and parking arrangements safe, easily accessible and well signed?				
4	Are emergency and evacuation systems accessible to all e.g. do alarms have both visual and auditory components?				
5	Are accessible toilets and changing facilities located appropriately and not used for other purposes e.g. storage?				
6	Are calm low sensory areas available in the setting?				
7	Are our rooms (including classrooms) optimally organised for CYP with a physical disability?				

8	Are classroom interiors adapted to ensure access to all areas for CYP with sensory needs e.g. using drapes to reduce noise levels and removing clutter to ensure safe access?				
9	Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?				
10	If needed, and possible, are classroom partitions installed in open plan areas to ensure access for CYP with sensory difficulties?				
11	If intercom messages are used are they always relayed to CYP with hearing impairments?				
12	Are all signs and symbols in Braille for CYP with visual impairments and in picture form for those with communication and learning difficulties?				
13	Are highly visible markings used to ensure the safety of CYP with a visual impairment?				
14	Do we consult with CYP with SEND regarding the accessibility of classrooms, toilets and changing facilities?				

4. How accessible is information, advice and guidance?

	Question	Yes ✓	If yes – where can the evidence be found?	No ✓	If no - action to be taken
1	Are our SEN Information Report and Accessibility Plan online and in hard copy (for those families who do not have internet access)?				
2	Do we promote Devon Information, Advice and Support Service' (DIAS) and Independent Support?				
3	Do we work with parent/carers and young people to ensure that your website is presented in a family friendly way?				
4	Do we hold review/ planning meetings at times when parents are able to attend?				
5	Have we developed communication channels and review processes that enable two-way information sharing with families?				
6	Is information available in a variety of languages?				
7	Is information available in a variety of formats including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'easy read' - large print - symbols - audio? 				

8	Are staff familiar with IT used to share information with people with disabilities?				
9	Do we ensure that CYP know exactly who they can contact for information, advice and support?				
10	Do we give CYP and their families information about Family Information Service (FIS), the Local Offer and SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)				
11	Do we signpost families without the internet to One Stop Shops and libraries to access information and the Local Offer?				

8. Appendix 2: Detailed Physical Access Check List

Consider each question from the perspective of each type of disability

1 of 9 Approach and Car Parking

	Question	Yes	No	Action
1	Is the building within convenient distance of a public highway?			
2	Is the building within convenient distance of public transport?			
3	Is the building within convenient distance of car parking?			
4	Is the route clearly marked/found?			
5	Is the route free of kerbs?			
6	Is the surface smooth and slip resistant?			
7	Is the route wide enough?			
8	Is it free of such hazards as bollards, litter bins, outward opening windows and doors or overhanging projections?			
9	Is it adequately lit?			
10	Is it identified by visual, audible and tactile information?			
11	Is there car parking for people with reduced mobility?			
12	Is the car parking clearly marked out, signed, easily found and kept free from misuse?			
13	Is the car parking as near the entrance as possible?			
14	Is the car parking are suitably surfaced?			
15	Is the route to the building kept free of snow, ice and fallen leaves?			
16	Is the route level? (ie no gradient steeper than 1:20 and no steps)			

2 of 9 Routes and external level change including ramps and steps

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is there a ramp, with level surfaces at top/intermediate/bottom?			
2	Is it wide enough and suitably graded?			
3	Is the surface slip resistant?			
4	Are there kerbs and are there edges protected to prevent accidents?			
5	Are there handrails to one or both sides?			
6	Are there (alternative) steps & ramp			
7	Identified by visual/tactile information?			
8	Are there handrails to one or both sides?			
9	Are ramps and steps adequately lit?			
10	Are treads and risers consistent in depth and height?			
11	Are all nosings marked and/or readily identifiable?			
12	Are landings of adequate size and are they provided at intermediate levels in long flights?			

3 of 9 Entrances – including Reception

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is the door clearly distinguishable from the façade?			
2	If glass is it visible when closed?			
3	Does the clear door opening or one leaf when opened permit passage of a wheelchair or double buggy?			
4	Does it have a level or flush threshold, and a recessed matwell?			
5	Is there visibility through the doorway from both sides at standing and seated levels?			

6	Is there a minimum 300mm wide wheelchair manoeuvre space beside the leading edge of the door to clear doorswing?			
7	Can the door furniture be used at both standing and seated height?			
8	Can it be easily grasped and operated?			
9	If the door has a closer mechanism does it have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed closure action? • Slow-action closer? • Minimal closure pressure? 			
10	If the door is power-operated does it have visual and tactile information?			
11	If the door is security-protected is the system suitable for use by and within reach of people with sensory or mobility impairments?			
12	If there is a lobby, do the inner and outer doors meet the same criteria?			
13	Do lobby layouts enable all users to clear one door before going through the next?			
14	Are signs designed and positioned to inform those with visual impairments and wheelchair users with reduced eye levels?			
15	Does the lighting installation take account of the needs of visually disabled people?			
16	Are floor spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slip resistant, even when wet? • Of a quality that is sympathetic to acoustics – ie not so ‘hard’ as to cause acoustic confusion? • Firm for wheelchair manoeuvre 			
17	Are junctions between floor surfaces arranged in a way that avoids presenting tripping hazards and causing visual confusion?			

18	Is any reception point suitable for approach and use from both sides by people in standing and seated positions?			
19	Is it fitted with an induction loop?			
20	For those progressing to other parts of the building is information provided by signs, supported by tactile information such as a map or model?			

4 of 9 Horizontal Movement and Assembly

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is each corridor/passageway/aisle wide enough for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre and for other people to pass?			
2	Is each corridor etc free from obstruction to wheelchair users and from hazards to people with impaired vision?			
3	Do any lobbies allow users (including wheelchair users) to clear one door before approaching the next with minimal manoeuvre			
4	Is turning space available for wheelchair users?			
5	Do natural and artificial lighting avoid glare and silhouetting?			
6	Are there visual clues for orientation?			
7	Do floor surfaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow ease of movement for wheelchair users? • Avoid light reflection and sound reverberation? 			
8	Are direction or information signs (including means of escape) visible from both sitting and standing eye levels, and are they in upper and lower case, and large enough type to be read by those with impaired vision?			

9	Are there tactile signs and information for those with impaired vision?			
10	Is the maintenance of these items checked regularly?			
11	Is lighting designed to meet a wide range of needs?			
12	Is sufficient circulation space allowed for wheelchair users?			
13	Is it maintained clear of obstructions which could create hazards for people with visual disabilities?			
14	Are seating arrangements/spaces suitable for use by people with visual disabilities?			
15	Are all areas for assembly/meeting equipped with an induction loop system?			

5 of 9 Doors

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Do the doors serve a functional/safety purpose?			
2	If glass, are they visible when shut?			
3	Can people standing or sitting in a wheelchair see each other, and be seen from either side of the door?			
4	Does the clear opening width permit wheelchair access			
5	On the opening side of the door is there sufficient space (300mm) to allow the door handle to be grasped and the door swung past a wheelchair footplate?			
6	Is any door furniture/handle at a height for standing/sitting use?			
7	Are door/handles clearly distinguished?			
8	Can the door furniture/handles be easily operated/grasped?			
9	If door closers/mechanisms are fitted do they provide the following:			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • security linkage? • delay-action closure? • Slow-action closure? • Minimum closure pressure? 			
10	Is door/mechanism function checked regularly?			

6 of 9 Toilets

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is WC provision made for people with disabilities?			
2	Do all lavatory areas have slip-resistant floors?			
3	Are all fittings readily distinguishable from their background?			
4	Are all door fittings/locks easily gripped and operated?			
5	Can ambulant disabled people manoeuvre and raise and lower themselves in standard cubicles?			
6	Is provision made for wheelchair users in disabled toilets?			
7	Is wheelchair approach free of steps/narrow doors/obstructions etc?			
8	Is the location clearly signed?			
9	Is there sufficient space at entry to the compartment for wheelchair manoeuvre and door opening?			
10	Are the door fittings/locks and light switches easily reached and operated?			
11	Is there an emergency call system and is someone designated to respond?			
12	Can the emergency call system be operated from floor level?			

13	Is the wheelchair WC compartment large enough to permit manoeuvre for frontal lateral/angled/backward transfer, with or without assistance?			
14	Are the fittings arranged to facilitate these manoeuvres			
15	Are handwashing and drying facilities within reach of someone seated on the WC?			
16	Is the tap appropriate for use by someone with limited dexterity, grip or strength?			
17	Are suitable grab rails fitted in all the appropriate positions to facilitate use of the WC?			
18	Is the manoeuvring area free of obstruction, eg boxed-in pipework/radiators/cleaner's equipment/disposal bins/occasional storage, etc and is any difficulty caused by the activity of service contractors?			
19	If there is more than one standard layout WC compartment provided, are they handed to offer a left-sided approach and a right-sided approach?			

7 of 9 Fixtures and Fittings

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is any server/counter accessible to all users, including those with hearing impairments?			
2	Is it possible for people with disabilities to serve as volunteers?			
3	Where there are display stands, bookstalls etc are they visible/reachable/accessible by people with disabilities?			

4	In any eating/meeting space do tables, chairs and the layout allow for use by wheelchair users and other people with disabilities?			
5	In any staff accommodation is it suitable for use by people with disabilities including wheelchair users with slip-resistant floor, reduced level kitchen units and sink and lever action taps?			
6	Are all relevant locations clearly signed?			

8 of 9 **Information**

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is the building equipped to provide hearing assistance?			
2	Does lighting installation of the building take into account the needs of people with visual disabilities?			
3	Are there large-print versions of information about the building/activities available?			
4	Is there braille information available for people with visual disabilities?			

9 of 9 **Means of Escape**

	Question	Y	N	Action
1	Is there a visible as well as audible fire alarm system?			
2	Are final exit routes as accessible to all, including wheelchair users, as are the entry routes?			

3	Is there a 'management evacuation strategy' for staff, pupils and visitors, and are staff trained in evacuation procedures?			
4	Is the evacuation strategy checked regularly for its effectiveness?			
5	Are evacuation routes checked routinely and regularly for freedom from combustible materials/obstacles/locked doors?			
6	Are all fire warning devices and detectors checked routinely and regularly			

9. Appendix 3: The Action Plan

Good practice examples in highlighted yellow

AIM	CURRENT PRACTICE GOOD Include established practice, and practice under development	OBJECTIVES State short, medium and long-term 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>Examples:</p> <p>Our school offers a differentiated curriculum for all pupils</p> <p>We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum</p> <p>Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities</p> <p>Curriculum progress is tracked for all pupils, including those with a disability</p> <p>Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs</p> <p>The curriculum is reviewed to make sure it meets the needs of all pupils</p>					
Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	<p>Example:</p> <p>The environment is adapted to the needs of pupils as required. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramps • Elevators • Corridor width • Disabled parking bays • Disabled toilets and changing facilities • Library shelves at wheelchair-accessible height 					

AIM	CURRENT PRACTICE GOOD Include established practice, and practice under development	OBJECTIVES State short, medium and long-term objectives	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO COMPLETE ACTIONS BY	SUCCESS CRITERIA
Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability	<p>Example:</p> <p>Our school uses a range of communication methods to make sure information is accessible. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal signage • Large print resources • Braille • Induction loops • Pictorial or symbolic representations 					