

# Willows Academy Trust



## Accessibility Plan (2020-23)

<b>Approved by:</b>	CEO
<b>Date:</b>	11 Oct 22
<b>Minute no:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Signature of Chief Executive:</b>	J. Haigh
<b>Version:</b>	v3
<b>Review cycle:</b>	Annual
<b>Publication:</b>	Public

VERSION CONTROL			
VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	CHANGES
DRAFTv2	Nov 2019	DD	Draft format submitted for approval. Approved for publication subject to the inclusion of each school's plan as an appendix
V2.1	Oct 20	DD	Updated to include each school's plans as appendices. Annual review and update required.
v2.2	June 21	DD	School plans updated. No other changes. Approved by BofD.
DRAFT v3	April 22	DD	Circulated to headteachers for schools to review and update their plans.
V3	Oct 22	DD Headteacher	School Accessibility Plans reviewed and updated by headteachers and local governors. No other changes to the content of the policy. Approved by CEO for publication. Content noted by directors.

# Willows Academy Trust Accessibility Plan

## Contents

1. Aims
2. Scope
3. Legislation and Guidance
4. Publication
5. Consultation
6. The Accessibility Audit
7. Roles & Responsibilities
8. Links with other Policies
9. Monitoring and Review Arrangements
10. Raising Concerns

**Appendix 1:** Accessibility Action Plan - Shardlow Primary School

**Appendix 2:** Accessibility Action Plan - Sawley Junior School

**Appendix 3:** Accessibility Action Plan - Sawley Infant School

**Appendix 4:** Accessibility Action Plan - Dovedale Primary School

## 1. Aims

- 1.1 **Aspire...Achieve...Thrive...** This underpins our aims, our values and our ethos. Willows Academy Trust is committed to providing learning environments that value and include all pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors regardless of their physical, sensory, social, educational, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs, and that enable full curriculum access and engagement in school life. We are committed to maintaining and further developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within each of the schools in our trust.
- 1.2 The vision and aims of each school in our trust are based around providing the very best for individual pupils and developing a sense of community and identity for the school. This is an entitlement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs or advanced gifts and talents. We endeavour to ensure that all pupils are integrated into the life of their school and are offered every opportunity to develop to the best of their ability. Our shared vision is to enrich our pupils' lives during their time with us and help them to 'aspire...achieve...thrive'.
- 1.3 The Willows Academy Trust Board of Directors also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities, and will:
  - Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
  - Ensure that employees with disabilities are supported with special provision as appropriate to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
  - Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace

- 1.4 The Willows Academy Trust Accessibility Plan is one of the ways in which the trust plans to fulfil its vision and aims for all.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy sets out our commitment to improving accessibility for all and how we intend to make improvements in our schools.
- 2.2 This policy applies to everyone to whom Willows Academy Trust provides a service (e.g. our pupils and parents/carers), everyone who works or volunteers for the trust, everyone who applies to work for the trust, and everyone who provides services to it.
- 2.3 Willows Academy Trust recognises that each school within the trust faces different challenges and therefore each school is responsible for developing its Accessibility Action Plan to address its individual needs within the overall framework of the Willows Academy Trust Accessibility Plan (**Appendices 1-4**). The Accessibility Action Plan for each school is structured to complement and support their Equality Objectives.

## 3. Legislation and Guidance

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) replaces all previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act.
- 3.2 With regard to schools, the Equality Act 2010 covers all aspects of school life. It covers how a school treats pupils and prospective pupils, parents and carers, employees, and members of the community. Everything a school does must be fair, non-discriminatory and not put individuals or groups of people at a disadvantage. In particular, a school must not discriminate, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to:
- admissions.
  - the way it provides education for pupils.
  - how it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
  - excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 3.3 Tackling inequalities and disadvantages should therefore be reflected in every aspect of school life.
- 3.4 There is also a requirement under the Equality Act to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. For schools the duty can be summarised as follows:
- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
  - Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.
- 3.5 Under the requirements set out in Section 3 of the Equality Act 2010, all schools in England and Wales must have an Accessibility Plan in place which sets out how the school will, over a prescribed period:
- (1) Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;

- (2) Improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school;
- (3) Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled. This must be within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking into account the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

3.6 The Accessibility Plan must be:

- in writing
- kept under review during the period to which it relates and, if necessary, revised
- implemented by the 'responsible body'.

3.7 In drawing up an Accessibility Plan, the 'responsible body' must:

- take into account the need to allocate adequate resources for implementing the plan.
- take account of the views and needs of parents, carers and pupils.

3.8 The DfE recommend that the Accessibility Plan is updated at least every 3 years. At Willows Academy Trust we review our action plan and progress against our objectives regularly and update published information annually as a minimum.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

4.1 In Willows Academy Trust, the Willows Academy Trust Board of Directors delegates responsibility for drawing up and implementing each school's Accessibility Action Plan to the headteacher and the academy governing body of each school.

## **5. Publication**

5.1 The Willows Academy Trust Accessibility Plan is made available online on the Willows Academy Trust website and our school websites. Paper copies and copies in other formats can be made available upon request. Our children are helped to understand our policy through age-appropriate means such as PSHE lessons, assemblies and individual discussions relating to individual needs.

## **6. The Accessibility Audit**

6.1 Each school conducts an accessibility audit to inform its Accessibility Action Plan. There is no prescriptive outline for the audit. Each school will assess current accessibility and identify barriers to access or inclusion. They will review the ways in which their current arrangements might prevent or hinder disabled pupils from accessing education and all other aspects of school life. The review of access will cover the physical environment; the provision of auxiliary aids and services; teaching and learning practices; the curriculum; staff training; the culture and ethos of the school and the provision of written information.

6.2 In carrying out access audits and reviews, schools should aim, where possible, to consider information relating to possible future needs either on an individual or a general basis.

6.3 Each school will keep a record of the accessibility audit.

6.4 In devising the Accessibility Action Plan, schools in the Willows Academy Trust consider short, medium and long-term priorities and devise strategies to address these with clear implementation arrangements and a timeframe for work.

## 7. Consultation

7.1 The Accessibility Action Plan in each school has been developed based upon internal review and evaluation (including an accessibility audit), formal and informal consultations with pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school and takes account of feedback received. Outside agencies and specialists are also consulted where appropriate. We will consult with stakeholders and experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are identified or experienced.

## 8. Monitoring and Review

8.1 The Accessibility Action Plan for each school is monitored by the headteacher and progress is reviewed and evaluated by the academy governing body. It is reviewed and reported upon annually by the full governing board in respect of progress and outcomes.

8.2 The Willows Academy Trust Board of Directors sets the overarching policy and reviews progress in each school regularly as part of their ongoing commitment to equality and diversity.

## 9. Links with other Policies

9.1 The Willows Academy Trust Accessibility Plan should be read alongside:

- the Willows Academy Trust **Equality and Diversity Policy**, which sets out our principles and values in relation to equality and inclusion; and
- the Willows Academy Trust **Equality Duty Information Report**, updated annually, which sets out each school's equality objectives, progress and achievement. It also includes information on the school context (including data on the relevant protected characteristics).

9.2 It is also linked with other Willows Academy Trust policies, strategies and documents including:

- Equalities Action Plans
- Risk Assessments
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Pupil Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Continuous Professional Development Policy

## **10. Raising Concerns**

- 10.1 If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, please contact the headteacher of the relevant school in the first instance to discuss your concerns. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of these discussions, the Willows Academy Trust Complaints Procedure covers the accessibility plan and sets out the formal process for raising these concerns. For staff, the Willows Academy Trust Grievance Procedure will be relevant.