

	POLICY TITLE:	Accessibility Policy and Plan
Committee/Person Responsible for Policy:		SLT/Karen Mellish Director of Inclusion - SENCo
Date Approved by Local Advisory Board:		
Date due for review:		September 2025

Background

The Taunton Academy is committed to providing a fully accessible school environment which values and includes all students, 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.

The definition of disability is as below:

- Someone with a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment is such that it has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an Individual's ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on students' everyday lives.

We recognise our duty under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act has simplified and strengthened the discrimination laws which protect people from unfair treatment.

It is unlawful for a school or other education provider to treat a disabled student unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- discrimination arising from a disability
- harassment

Schools and LEAs must:

- not treat disabled students less favourably; and
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty)

The Trust and governors have the duty to publish Accessibility Strategies and Plans.

Scope of the Plan

This plan covers all three main strands of the planning duty:

1. Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and associated purposes.

The Taunton Academy is a purpose-built building which has considered the need for access for all. This strand of the planning duty covers aids to improve the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes things such as 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, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs and furniture. Aids to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities and blinds.

Physical aids to access education cover things such as ICT equipment, enlarged computer screens and keyboards, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor coordination and poor hand/eye skills, such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

The provision of a special piece of equipment or extra assistance will be made through the SEN framework and to a lesser extent through the planning duty which applies to all schools. The distinction between auxiliary aids and services provided through the SEN route and those provided under the planning duty is that the SEN duties relate to the individual, whereas the planning duty relates to the provision of aids or services in terms of the population (and future population) of the school. For example, a student with visual impairment might have low vision aids provided through the EHC Plan, but the school might as a general measure provide blinds and adjustable lighting through the planning duty.

2. Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in schools' curriculum.

The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of learners and students access a broad and varied curriculum.

This strand of the planning duty will help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

Schools are expected to plan to improve progressively access to the curriculum for all disabled students although many adjustments to access will be dependent on individual needs and may be provided through the SEN framework. The accessibility strategies and plans will help to ensure that schools are planning and preparing to respond to the particular needs of individual students.

3. Improving the delivery of information to students with disabilities

Any students requiring additional support are clearly identified on entry to The Taunton Academy. Those requiring specific support with communication are known by staff, so their needs can be met in lessons through differentiation. Some students are allocated additional support in morning registration where communication is used extensively and monitored on a daily basis by support staff. Some students are also allocated a key worker to ensure effective communication with parents as well as children. This part of the duty covers planning to make information normally provided by the school in writing to its students – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to disabled students. This will include alternative formats such as Braille, audio tape and large print and the provision of information orally or through a recognised symbol system or ICT. This information should also be made available within a reasonable time frame and take account of the students' disabilities and students' and parents' preferred formats.

Other related school policies

Equality for disabled students is included as an explicit aim in all the school's policies and is supported by the school's other policies including:

- Equality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Admissions Policy
- SEND policy
- Medication Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Aims

The Taunton Academy aims to include all students, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this will include:

- having high expectations of all students
- finding ways in which all students can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music, and drama
- planning out-of-school activities including all school trips and excursions so that students with disabilities can participate
- setting admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate against students with disabilities or treat them unfairly
- devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for students with disabilities

- planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of students with disabilities
- raising awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through a programme of training
- by providing written information for students with disabilities in a form which is user friendly.
- by using language which does not offend in all its literature and make staff and students aware of the importance of language.

Monitoring

The Taunton Academy recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that students with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

We will monitor:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Rewards
- Sanctions
- Exclusions
- KS4 option choices
- Post 16 destinations
- Selection & recruitment of staff
- Governing body representation
- Parents attending consultation meetings
- Parents' involvement in the life of the school (representation on Parents for The Taunton Academy attendance at parents' evenings, in the classroom, school productions, sports day, fetes etc.)

a) Improving the physical environment of the school

Strategies	Outcomes	Resources	By Whom
<p>Student's Individual Learning Passports updated on Provision Maps regularly to help teaching staff provide appropriate learning strategies and provision for students with individual needs i.e. close to a classroom door, situated at the front of the classroom. Enlarged print. Specialist seating and assistive technology such as Read, Write, Gold/Immersive Reader. Specialist equipment such as stability cushions.</p> <p>To deliver physiotherapy programmes to students identified as having physical needs to help improve core strength and stability.</p> <p>Additional support to be reviewed and updated as required with additional training for staff and students as required.</p> <p>Students to be supported where recommendations have been made by external agencies including the Occupational Therapy service.</p> <p>Students to be supported where recommendations have been made by the support services including the Physical Impairment and Medical Support team (PIMS), Hearing Impairment Team, Vision Impairment Team and Somerset Communication and Interaction Team.</p> <p>Adjustments made to the physical environment as part of the GCSE Access Arrangements in line with the JCQ guidelines.</p>	<p>To enable staff to differentiate effectively for the physical needs of our students.</p> <p>To enable students to have their physical health needs met.</p> <p>To ensure students and their parents are consulted about regularly about equality at TTA.</p> <p>To create easier access to the school building.</p> <p>To ensure students are not disadvantaged in their exams.</p>	<p>Student's Individual Learning Plans/Medical Healthcare Plans and advice from other agencies as appropriate.</p> <p>Embedding Read Write Gold software in the curriculum so that it accessible to all. SEND laptops for GCSEs.</p> <p>Differentiated PE curriculum where appropriate.</p> <p>Specialist equipment such as pen grips and stability cushions.</p> <p>Students can also use an appropriate coloured paper/books and coloured overlays for reading.</p> <p>Access to external agencies (EP, SALT, HSS, PIMS etc.).</p> <p>Internal doors fitted with push button door openers.</p>	<p>External agencies/SENCo/Medical Officer</p> <p>SENDCo/Teaching Assistants/Teaching Staff.</p> <p>SEND Professional Advisory Services, Inclusion</p> <p>Exams Officer/SENCo/teaching staff</p>

b) Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the schools' curriculum.

Strategies	Outcomes	Resources	By Whom
<p>In line with the TTA's SEND policy and Information Report, a student's profile and plan will be drawn up for students who have identified needs.</p> <p>Parents and students will be consulted about their plans and staff will differentiate appropriately. This may mean the curriculum needs to be adjusted for all students in a class/year group or for an individual student. SEND students are monitored through reviews, parental meetings and the EHA process.</p> <p>Staff are given regular training on frequently met conditions and any conditions that are new to the school i.e. diabetes etc. where appropriate.</p> <p>New staff are given additional training and information about supporting commonly met conditions and those present in the school and is updated on a student's Individual Learning Plan or Medical Healthcare Plan i.e. asthma/epi-pen use/diabetes.</p> <p>Medical Healthcare plans are drawn up for new students and reviewed at least annually i.e. for diabetic students in line with school policy.</p>	<p>Students who have an EHC Plan or who have been identified as having additional needs will have a supported transition into post-16 provision.</p> <p>All students who receive exclusions or high levels of sanctions to have their needs reviewed and additional support as required. Exclusions data to be monitored regularly.</p> <p>Parents, students and staff to be consulted regularly about equality within the Academy.</p> <p>To ensure that TTA can support students with medical conditions in an emergency.</p>	<p>Access to relevant external professionals as required to support students.</p> <p>Year Leader monitoring, key worker, PSP, ELSA support. Break and lunch time support.</p> <p>Exit/Medical timeout cards to allow students to move freely through the corridors between lessons or access the toilet as and when required.</p> <p>Medications to be kept in school under relevant government guidelines i.e. asthma inhalers/epi-pens to prevent students becoming unwell and not being able to access/participate in school life.</p>	<p>SENDCo/Assistant SENDCo/</p> <p>All teaching staff</p> <p>Medical Officer</p> <p>Attendance Officer in-conjunction with Learning Support Team</p>

c) Improving delivery of information to students with disabilities

Strategies	Outcomes	Resources	By Whom
<p>Use of ICT for reading and scribing.</p> <p>Students to have access to ICT to facilitate this or a TA may be used.</p> <p>Dyslexia friendly resources – enlarged print/coloured overlays and paper. Reading rulers.</p> <p>Specialist maths equipment – ruler/protractor from the Partially Sighted Society as recommended by the Somerset Vision Support Team.</p> <p>Improved communication with parents via emails/reports/telephone calls/ etc. if parents feel there is an unmet learning need.</p> <p>Hearing transmitters for students with hearing impairments under the guidance of the Somerset Hearing Support Team.</p> <p>Individual Learning Passports available on Classcharts to help teachers provide the most appropriate support to students with disabilities.</p> <p>Multi-sensory literacy interventions are available to students with the highest needs.</p> <p>Direct Instruction to be delivered by skilled staff to help improve numeracy and literacy for students with the highest need in Year's 7,8 and 9.</p> <p>Speech and language interventions run if therapeutic assessment recommends them.</p>	<p>To ensure students can access resources and information.</p>	<p>Read Write Gold software purchased.</p> <p>Laptops along with assistive software are available in school.</p> <p>Dyslexia friendly resources used e.g. yellow books and paper, reading rulers. Dyslexia mentoring also in place.</p> <p>GCSE Exam Access Arrangements in place for students in Y9 and above. Laptops and netbooks available for use in school.</p> <p>Monitoring of sanctions to ensure they are not the result of unmet needs</p> <p>Reader pens purchased in 2019 are accessible to students who need them.</p> <p>Coloured paper and overlays available on request.</p>	<p>SENCo</p> <p>SENCo</p> <p>Heads of Faculties (HoF's)</p> <p>Somerset Hearing Support Team</p>

Learning Passports and additional resources are available to staff to help them differentiate appropriately for the most common forms of need.

Cumulative multi-sensory literacy interventions are run for the students with the highest level of need.

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Author: Karen Mellish SENDCo

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