

Victoria Lane Academy



Accessibility Plan 2026 - 2027

Date of Last Review: July 2026

A Member of the Tudhoe Learning Trust



Victoria Lane Academy

Accessibility Plan – 2026 to 2027

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Vision Statement:

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education’s guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan must be reviewed every three years and approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Head. At Victoria Lane Academy the Plan will form part of the Premises, Resources, Fund-Raising and Marketing section of the School Development Plan and will be monitored by the Headteacher and evaluated by the relevant Governors’ committee. The current Plan will be appended to this document.

At Victoria Lane Academy we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

1) The Victoria Lane Academy Accessibility Plan has been developed and drawn up based upon information supplied by the Local Authority, and consultations with pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school. Other, outside agencies and specialists have also been consulted. The document will be used to advise other school planning documents and policies and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes. The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three-year period ahead of the next review date.

2) The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school’s Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school’s activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.

3) Victoria Lane Academy is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that 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 taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the

school.

4) The Victoria Lane Academy Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the **curriculum** as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability areas, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or **auxiliary aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve and maintain access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

5) The Victoria Lane Academy Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information.

6) Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

7) This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Critical Incident Support Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Equality Plan
- School Improvement Plan
- Special Educational Needs Policy

8) The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the governing body. It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of this accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new

Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

9) Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all governors' committees will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010.

10) The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

11) The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through the Governor Finance and Premises Committee

12) The school will work in partnership with the Local Authority in developing and implementing this Accessibility Plan.

13) The Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

2. Aims and Objectives

Our Aims are:

- **Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability,**
- **Improve and maintain access to the physical environment**
- **Improve the delivery of written information to pupils,**

Our objectives are detailed in the Action Plan below.

3 Current good practice

We aim to ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers. For parents and carers of children already at the school, we collect information on disability as part of a survey of parents' views, or in conjunction with a letter home about a parents' evening.

Physical Environment

Disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extra-curricular activities present particular challenges, for example: lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction impairments, after-school clubs for pupils with physical impairments, school trips for pupils with medical needs;

Curriculum

There are areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, science and technology for pupils with a visual impairment, humanities for pupils with learning difficulties. Other issues affect the participation of disabled pupils, for example: bullying, peer relationships, policies on the administration of medicines, the provision of personal care, the presence or lack of role models or images of disabled people, in effect, all the school's policies and procedures, written and unwritten.

Information

Different forms of communication are made available to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is planned, with a range of different formats available for disabled pupils, parents and staff.

4. Access Audit

The school is a single storey building with corridors and several access points from outside. All areas are ground level with some entrances having steps/ramps to enter the building. There are 2 halls separated by a small set of stairs.

On-site car parking for staff and visitors. All entrances to the school are either flat, stepped or ramped and all have wide doors fitted. The main entrance is accessed through a buzzer system; this is accessible by wheelchair users.

The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked.

5. Management, coordination and implementation

- We will consult with experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.
- The Governors and Senior Leadership Team will work closely with the Local Authority and The Tudhoe Learning Trust.

Date of Last Review: July 2026

Date of Next Review: July 2027

Headteacher: *H. D. Whitfield*

Chair of Governors: *K Short*

6. Action Plan

Aim 1 To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.

Our key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
SHORT TERM	To liaise with the other nursery providers to review potential intake for Sept 26	To identify pupils who may need additional to or different from provision for Sept 26 Intake	July 2026	HT EYFS teacher SENCO	Procedures/equipment / ideas implemented by Sept 2026.
	To review all statutory policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	To comply with the Equality Act 2010	Ongoing 2026/27	HT All subject leaders SENCO	All policies clearly reflect inclusive practice and procedure
	To establish close liaison with parents	To ensure collaboration and sharing between school and families.	Ongoing throughout 2026/27	HT SENCO All Teachers	Clear collaborative working approach
	To establish close liaison with outside agencies for pupils with ongoing health needs. e.g. Children with severe asthma, epilepsy or mobility issues	To ensure collaboration between all key personnel	Ongoing throughout 2026/27	HT TAs SENDCO Outside agencies- Health	Clear collaborative working approach
	To ensure full access to the curriculum for all children.	Outside Play visits; Employment of specialist advisory teachers; CPD for staff and: A differentiated curriculum with alternatives offered.	Ongoing	Teachers	Advice taken and strategies evident in

		• The use of PKS levels/ Sentence Progression Scale to assist in developing learning opportunities for children and also in assessing progress in different subjects • A range of support staff including trained teaching assistants • Multimedia activities to support most curriculum areas • Use of interactive ICT equipment • Specific equipment –weighted		SENCO Special school Ed Psych	classroom practice. ASD children supported and accessing curriculum.
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	Tasks/Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
MEDIUM TERM	To finely review attainment of all SEN pupils.	SENCO/Class teacher meetings/Pupil progress Scrutiny of assessment system Regular liaison with parents	Termly	Class teachers SENCO	Progress made towards support plan outcomes Provision mapping shows clear steps and progress made
	To monitor attainment of Able, G & T pupils	Policy and Able G&T list to be updated Able G&T booster groups/activities Monitor Able G&T list	Ongoing Annually	Able G&T coordinator Class teachers	Able G&T children making proportionate progress. Achieving above average results

	To promote the involvement of disabled students in classroom discussions/activities To take account of variety of learning styles when teaching	Within the Curriculum, the school aims to provide full access to all aspects of the curriculum by providing (where appropriate) • Wheelchair access • Screen magnifier software for the visually impaired • Ear defenders –Sensory-ASD • Visual timetables in every class • Features such as sticky keys and filter keys to aid disabled users in using a keyboard • Giving alternatives to enable disabled pupils to participate successfully in lessons • Creating positive images of disability within the school so that pupils grow into adults who have some understanding of the needs of	Ongoing	Whole school approach	Variety of learning styles and multi- sensory activities evident in planning and in the classrooms. Ensuring that the needs of all disabled pupils, parents and staff are represented within the school.
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	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
LONG TERM	To evaluate and review the above short- and long-term targets annually	See above	Annually	SMT, Core curriculum co-coordinators Governors	All children making good progress.
	To deliver findings to the Governing Body	Finance and Premises and Curriculum Governors meetings	Annually Termly SEN Governor / SENCO meetings	SENCO SMT/SEN Governor	Governors fully informed about SEN provision and progress

Aim 2: To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
SHORT TERM	Improve physical environment of school environment	The school will take account the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.	Ongoing	SLT	Enabling needs to be met where possible.
	Ensure visually stimulating environment for all children	Colourful, lively displays in classrooms and inviting role play areas.	Ongoing	Teaching and non-teaching staff	Lively and inviting environment maintained.
	Ensuring all with a disability are able to be involved.	• Create access plans for individual disabled children as part of support plan process • Undertake confidential survey of staff and governors to ascertain access needs and make sure they are met in the school and meetings etc. • Include questions in the confidential pupil information questionnaire about parents/carers' access needs and ensure they are met in all events.	With immediate effect, to be constantly reviewed	Teaching and non-teaching staff	Enabling needs to be met where possible.

	To ensure that the medical needs of all pupils are met fully within the capability of the school.	To conduct parent interviews, liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and establish individual protocols where needed.	With immediate effect to be constantly reviewed	Head Teacher SENCO School nurse	
	Ensuring disabled parents have every opportunity to be involved	• Arrange interpreters from the RNID to communicate with deaf parents • offer a telephone call to explain letters home for some parents who need this • adopt a more proactive approach to identifying the access requirements of disabled parents	With immediate effect to be constantly reviewed	Whole school team With immediate effect to be constantly reviewed	To ensure that disabled parents are not discriminated against and are encouraged to take interest and be involved in their child's education

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
MEDIUM TERM	To improve community links	School to continue to have strong links with schools and local organisations in the local community and Tudhoe Learning Trust community.	Ongoing	All staff	Improved awareness of disabilities/the wider community Bishop Auckland and the world and their needs Improved community cohesion

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
LONG TERM	Continue to develop playgrounds and facilities.	Look for opportunities for funding and volunteer organisations e.g. Northumbria Water EYFS project	Ongoing	Whole school approach	Inclusive child-friendly play areas.
	To ensure driveway, roads, paths around school are as safe as possible.	Communication with parents via safety messages /letters/walk to school week /Class Dojo/Arbor Risk Assessment completed by LA Environmental Occupational therapist. Bikeability for Year 5/6	Ongoing	Head Teacher	No accidents

Aim 3: To improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils and parents.

Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Parent with Hearing impairment	Regular communication with parents Interpreter provided for parents' eve/annual reviews	Ongoing	Class teacher SMT	Two-way communication in place.
To ensure all children with ASC have access to the curriculum	Regular parental communication Access to SEND nurse and Resilience for advice on individual needs of children. Individualised multi-sensory teaching strategies used for ASC children. CPD for all staff from Dr Pooky Knightsmith	Ongoing	All staff to be aware	ASC children able to access curriculum.
To enable improved access to written information for pupils, parents and visitors.	• Investigate symbol software to support learners with reading difficulties. • Raising awareness of font size and page layouts will support pupils with visual impairments. • Auditing the school library to ensure the availability of large font and easy read texts will improve access. • Auditing signage around the school to ensure that is accessible to all is a valuable exercise.	Ongoing	Head teacher	All signage accessible for all

	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
	To review children's records ensuring school's awareness of any disabilities	Information collected about new children. - Drop in sessions with SENCO to review health care plans and support plans. - Records passed up to each class teacher. End of year class teacher meetings - Annual reviews - Support plan meetings - Medical forms updated annually for all children - Personal health plans - Significant health problems – children's photos displayed on Office/staffroom notice board / info kept in separate file in/and in kitchen where necessary for food allergies - Locked away in each class in lockable cupboard	Annually	Class teachers Outside agencies Office staff	Each teacher/staff member aware of disabilities of children in their classes
	Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
LONG TERM	In school record system to be reviewed and improved where necessary. (Records on Arbor/ network/ protected	Record keeping system to be reviewed. CPOMS used to record all relevant information in addition to SIMs.	Continual review and improvement	Head teacher	Effective communication of information about disabilities throughout school.