

Accessibility Plan

Approved by Resources & Audit & Risk Committee: 20 October 2026

Date of Next Review: September 2029

Responsible Person: CEO

Reviewed earlier where legislative, organisational or estate changes require it

1. Introduction

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that every child, young person, employee, parent, carer, trustee, governor, volunteer and visitor can fully participate in the life of the Trust.

Accessibility is integral to our vision of ***Providing Infinite Opportunities*** and our determination ***to do more and to do it better***. We recognise that barriers to participation can arise through physical environments, communication methods, curriculum delivery, technology, systems and practices. Through this Accessibility Plan, the Trust seeks to identify, reduce and remove those barriers wherever reasonably practicable.

The Trust is committed to creating inclusive environments where everyone feels welcome, valued, respected and empowered to achieve their full potential. This plan sets out how we will continuously improve access to education, facilities, services, information and opportunities across all academies within Horizons Specialist Academy Trust.

2. Legislative Context

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust has prepared this Accessibility Plan in accordance with:

- Equality Act 2010 (including Schedule 10)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Relevant Department for Education guidance relating to accessibility and inclusion.

Under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, academy trusts are required to prepare, implement, keep under review and, where necessary, revise a written Accessibility Plan to:

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

The Trust recognises its anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments. This means considering in advance the barriers that disabled pupils, staff, families and visitors may experience and taking reasonable steps to remove or reduce those barriers wherever practicable.

The Trust is committed to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity.
- Fostering good relations between individuals and groups.
- Making reasonable adjustments where required.
- Promoting inclusive practices throughout all aspects of Trust life.

This plan will be published on the Trust website and made available in alternative formats upon request where reasonably practicable.

3. Vision, Aims and Values

Vision

Providing Infinite Opportunities – Ensuring the Best Education for our Children and Young People

Aim

To Do More and To Do It Better

This Accessibility Plan supports the Trust's vision by ensuring that all pupils, staff, families and visitors can fully participate in education, employment, enrichment activities, facilities, services, information and opportunities, regardless of disability or additional need.

Our values underpin all accessibility planning and development:

Opportunities for All

- Inclusion
- Equality

Opportunities to Care

- Dignity and Respect
- Safety and Wellbeing

Opportunities Together

- Working in Partnership
- Supportive Relationships

Opportunities for Life

- Aspirational
- Personalisation

Accessibility is not solely about buildings or facilities. It is about ensuring that every member of our community is able to participate, contribute, belong and achieve success.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Trust celebrates diversity and is committed to creating environments where differences are recognised, welcomed and valued.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we will ensure that nobody is disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic, including:

- Disability
- Age
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Trust will:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disability.
- Remove barriers to participation and achievement.
- Encourage independence and self-advocacy.
- Seek the views of pupils, parents, carers and staff.
- Ensure inclusion is embedded within strategic planning and decision making.
- Promote a culture of belonging across all academies.
- Monitor and review equality and accessibility arrangements.

Accessibility planning forms an important part of the Trust's wider commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

5. Definition of Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010:

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Trust recognises that disabilities may be visible or non-visible and may include:

- Physical disabilities
- Sensory impairments
- Learning difficulties and disabilities

- Communication needs
- Neurodiversity
- Long-term medical conditions
- Mental health needs

We are committed to understanding individual needs and making reasonable adjustments to support participation, independence and achievement.

Accessibility Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees retains overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with accessibility legislation and monitoring delivery of this plan.

The Resources, Audit and Risk Committee will receive an annual report on progress against the Accessibility Plan, including estate, digital accessibility and reasonable adjustment arrangements.

Where accessibility relates directly to curriculum participation, pupil outcomes, inclusion and SEND provision, assurance may additionally be considered through governance arrangements relating to standards, inclusion and educational outcomes.

Principals are responsible for implementing accessibility arrangements within their academies and ensuring accessibility considerations inform academy development planning.

All employees share responsibility for promoting inclusive practice and identifying opportunities to improve accessibility across the Trust.

6. Accessibility Objectives 2027–2030

The Trust will:

Objective 1 – Access to the Curriculum

Ensure all pupils can access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum through adaptive teaching, specialist support, assistive technology and reasonable adjustments.

Objective 2 – Physical Environment

Maintain and improve physical environments to promote independence, safety, dignity and inclusion.

Objective 3 – Accessible Information

Provide information in accessible formats and communication methods that meet individual needs.

Objective 4 – Equality and Inclusion

Promote equality, diversity and inclusion across all Trust communities.

Objective 5 – Strategic Planning

Embed accessibility considerations within estate development, procurement, digital systems and service delivery.

Objective 6 – Stakeholder Engagement

Actively seek and respond to feedback from pupils, families, staff and visitors regarding accessibility.

Objective 7 – Monitoring Impact

Evaluate accessibility through quality assurance, governance and stakeholder feedback.

7. Access to the Physical Environment

The Trust continually reviews its buildings, grounds and facilities to ensure accessibility remains a key consideration in maintenance, refurbishment and capital development programmes.

The Trust will:

- Undertake regular accessibility audits.
- Ensure accessibility is considered within all capital projects.
- Maintain accessible routes throughout academy sites.
- Maintain suitable hygiene and changing facilities.
- Provide appropriate parking arrangements.
- Ensure emergency evacuation procedures support disabled individuals.
- Develop sensory-friendly environments where appropriate.
- Improve signage and wayfinding throughout sites.
- Make reasonable adjustments to facilities where required.

Academy-specific accessibility information is detailed within Appendix A.

8. Access to the Curriculum

The Trust is committed to ensuring all pupils can participate in learning and wider school life.

We will:

- Deliver ambitious curricula that are appropriately adapted to meet need.
- Utilise specialist resources and equipment.

- Provide assistive technologies where appropriate.
- Support communication through a variety of approaches.
- Ensure access to therapies and specialist services.
- Enable participation in educational visits and enrichment activities.
- Promote independence and preparation for adulthood.
- Monitor participation and outcomes for disabled pupils.

9. Digital Accessibility

The Trust recognises the importance of accessible digital communication and technology.

We will:

- Consider accessibility when procuring digital systems.
- Provide documents in alternative formats where required.
- Promote accessible website content.
- Use communication platforms that support accessibility features.
- Support pupils and staff in accessing assistive technology.
- Review digital accessibility as part of annual quality assurance processes.

10. Accessible Information and Communication

The Trust will provide information in alternative formats wherever reasonably practicable.

This may include:

- Large print
- Audio formats
- Easy Read documents
- Braille
- Symbol-supported communication
- Translation services
- British Sign Language interpretation where appropriate
- Digital accessibility tools

The Trust will work closely with individuals and families to identify the most appropriate form of communication.

11. Accessibility Improvement Action Plan 2027–2030

Priority Area	Identified Need	Action	Success Measure	Lead	Timescale
					Physical Environment
Estate Development	Ensure accessibility is embedded in future developments	Accessibility impact considered within all refurbishment and capital projects	Accessibility considerations evidenced within project planning and approval documentation	CEO / Estates Team	Ongoing
Curriculum Access	Ensure all pupils can participate fully in learning	Review curriculum accessibility, adaptive practice, specialist equipment and assistive technology provision annually	Curriculum audits demonstrate appropriate support and identified actions completed	Principals	Annual
Digital Accessibility	Improve accessibility of websites and digital resources	Audit websites and priority digital resources against accessibility standards	Identified barriers addressed and annual review completed	IT and Communications Leads	Annual
Accessible Information	Improve availability of accessible communication formats	Establish and promote arrangements for large print, Easy Read, audio, symbol-supported and translated information where appropriate	Requests can be met promptly and stakeholders report improved accessibility	Principals	Ongoing
Staff Development	Improve staff understanding of accessibility and reasonable adjustments	Deliver training and awareness opportunities for staff	Staff training records demonstrate annual coverage	HR Lead / Professional Learning Leads	Annual
Stakeholder Voice	Ensure accessibility priorities reflect lived experience	Gather feedback from pupils, parents, carers, staff and visitors using accessible methods	Feedback informs improvement actions and resulting actions are communicated through governance reporting	Principals	Annual
Emergency Planning	Ensure disabled individuals can be safely evacuated	Review Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and emergency arrangements annually	All relevant PEEPs reviewed and updated	Principals	Annual

12. Monitoring and Review

Progress against this Accessibility Plan will be monitored through:

- Academy improvement planning.
- Accessibility audits.
- Equality monitoring.
- Stakeholder feedback.
- Estate reviews.
- Quality assurance activities.
- Trustee challenge and scrutiny.

An annual progress report will be presented to the Resources, Audit and Risk Committee. Significant accessibility risks, barriers or compliance concerns will be reported sooner where appropriate.

The Board of Trustees will review this plan formally every three years, or sooner if required as a result of:

- Legislative change.
- Significant estate developments.
- Changes to Trust provision.
- Findings arising from audits, reviews or complaints.
- Changes in identified accessibility needs across the Trust community.

13. Related Trust Policies and Documents

This Accessibility Plan should be read alongside:

- Equality Information and Objectives
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policies
- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Communication Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Academy Improvement Plans
- Trust Strategic Plan
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Arrangements
- Data Protection and Information Governance Policies

Appendix A – Academy Accessibility Profiles

Abbey Hill Academy and Sixth Form

Stephenson Building

The Stephenson Building is a single-storey building designed to support a wide range of physical, sensory and learning needs.

Current accessibility features include:

- Accessible parking adjacent to the building entrance.
- Automatic entrance doors.
- Wide corridors supporting wheelchair users and those with mobility aids.
- Accessible toilets and changing facilities.
- Specialist hygiene facilities including ceiling and gantry hoists.
- Physiotherapy and sensory support equipment.
- Hydrotherapy pool and associated changing facilities.
- Secure and accessible outdoor learning and recreational spaces.
- Wheelchair-accessible playground equipment.
- Colour-coded signage and environmental cues to support navigation.
- Adjustable-height furniture and specialist kitchen facilities.
- Accessible transport, including wheelchair-accessible minibuses.

Walker Building

The Walker Building is a single-storey facility with accessibility features including:

- Automatic entrance doors.
- Wide corridors and circulation spaces.
- Accessible toilet and shower facilities.
- Hoist-assisted changing provision.
- Sensory regulation spaces and quiet rooms.
- Secure outdoor facilities.
- Accessible transport provision.

Sheraton Building (Sixth Form)

The Sheraton Building provides access across two floors through:

- Automatic entrance doors.
- Lift access to upper floors.
- Accessible toilet.
- Hoist-assisted changing provision.
- Adjustable-height furniture.
- Accessible dining facilities supporting inclusion and independence.
- Secure outdoor provision.
- Wheelchair-accessible transport.
- Adapted kitchen equipment and furnishings in the cooking room.

Gym Facility

The gym facility includes:

- Ramp access to the building.
- Ground floor access to sporting and physical activities.

Future refurbishment opportunities will continue to consider accessibility improvements where appropriate.

Fairfax Provision (Acklam Grange Academy site)

The Fairfax Building provides access across two floors through:

- Automatic entrance doors.
- Lift access to upper floors.
- Accessible toilet facilities.
- Adjustable-height furniture.
- Sensory support equipment.
- Accessible dining facilities supporting inclusion and independence.
- Secure outdoor provision.
- Wheelchair-accessible transport.

North Shore Provision (North Shore Academy site)

The North Shore Building provides access across two floors through:

- Automatic entrance doors.
- Lift access to upper floors is available where required. The provision currently operates from rooms located on the ground floor.
- Accessible toilet facilities.
- Adjustable-height furniture.
- Sensory support equipment.
- Accessible dining facilities supporting inclusion and independence.
- Secure outdoor provision.
- Wheelchair-accessible transport.

Archway Academy

Archway Academy benefits from improvements completed prior to joining the Trust and provides:

- Accessible circulation routes throughout the building.
- Wide corridors supporting independent mobility.
- Dedicated transport provision.

The academy continues to review accessibility requirements as part of its ongoing estate management programme.

Green Gates Academy

Green Gates Academy provides:

- Accessible entrance arrangements.
- Accessible toilet facilities.
- Calm and sensory-regulation spaces.
- Accessible transport provision.

The academy regularly reviews accessibility arrangements to ensure continued suitability for its pupils and community.

Hollis Academy

Hollis Academy was designed with accessibility in mind and includes:

- Lift access between floors.
- Wide corridors and circulation spaces.
- Accessible learning environments.
- Dedicated transport provision.

The academy continues to maintain and develop accessibility features in line with pupil need and best practice.

Mo Mowlam Academy

Mo Mowlam Academy was opened in 2021 and includes:

- Accessible entrances and circulation routes.
- Accessible toilets and shower facilities.
- Wide corridors designed to support independent movement.
- Calm and sensory-regulation spaces.
- Dedicated transport provision.

The academy's design reflects modern expectations around accessibility, inclusion and participation.

Norman Cornish Academy

Norman Cornish Academy provides:

- Accessible entrance
- Dedicated transport provision
- Calm and sensory spaces
- Ramp to access playground and ramp to access nurture classroom

Westlands Academy

Westlands Academy comprises a combination of original and modernised accommodation.

Accessibility features include:

- Significant areas of the site designed to modern accessibility standards.
- Accessible learning spaces within the newer accommodation.
- Dedicated transport provision.

Accessibility improvements continue to be considered through the academy estate strategy and investment planning processes

The Woodlands Academy

- Woodlands is built over 2 floors.
- There are specialist hygiene areas for use across both floors.
- Calm and sensory-regulation spaces.
- Dedicated transport provision (including wheelchair accessible vehicle).
- All corridors are wide and accessible for students with disabilities.
- Woodlands has a lift for non-ambulant people.
- A range of accessible learning environments.
- The building has been designed in accordance with applicable accessibility requirements and building standards.

Trust-Wide Accessibility Commitments

In addition to academy-specific provision, Horizons Specialist Academy Trust is committed to:

- Maintaining accessible learning environments across all sites.
- Undertaking regular accessibility audits.
- Ensuring accessibility is considered within all capital developments and refurbishment projects.
- Providing reasonable adjustments where required.
- Promoting inclusive learning environments and positive participation.
- Supporting access to specialist equipment and assistive technology.
- Reviewing accessibility requirements through annual estate and academy improvement processes.
- Seeking the views of pupils, families, staff and visitors to inform future accessibility developments.

Planned Accessibility Improvements (2027–2030)

Improvement Area	Action
Physical Environment	Annual accessibility audits across all academy sites.
Estates Development	Accessibility considerations embedded within all refurbishment and capital projects.
Signage and Wayfinding	Review of visual signage and navigation aids across all academies.
Sensory Environments	Ongoing development of calm, sensory-friendly and regulation spaces where required.
Accessible Equipment	Review of specialist equipment and furniture to ensure it continues to meet pupil needs.
Emergency Planning	Annual review of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and evacuation arrangements.
Stakeholder Engagement	Annual gathering of pupil, parent, carer and staff feedback regarding accessibility.

This appendix should be read alongside the main Accessibility Plan and the Trust's Equality Information and Objectives, SEND policies and Health and Safety arrangements.