



**Horizons Specialist Academy Trust**  
*Providing infinite opportunities*

# Horizons Specialist Academy Trust Accessibility Plan

Reviewed and Adopted by Resources & Audit & Risk Committee: 11 June 2024

Date of Review: Summer 2027

Responsible Officer: Premises & Facilities Manager

## **Introduction**

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the Equality Act 2011 and part 3 of the Children's and Families Act 2014.

## **Definition of Disability**

Disability is defined as;

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

## **Key Objectives**

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the Trust community for students and prospective students.
- To ensure that the needs of disabled staff and parents/carers are accommodated in the academies, as far as is reasonably practical.
- To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- To improve the physical environment of the academies to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated activities
- To improve the delivery of information to all students. This should take account of views expressed by the students or parents about their preferred means of communication

## **Principles**

The Trust recognises its duty to:

- ensure that compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with the Trust's Single Equality Policy; its Equal Opportunities Policy; the operation of its SEN policy and any other Trust policy that has a focus and impact on its students, staff and parents/carers
- not discriminate against students, staff and parents/carers
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting students, staff and parents/carers at a substantial disadvantage
- publish an Accessibility Plan

This plan is based on the academies within the Trust and covers the following:

- The physical environment (Access to and around the Building)
- Improving the provision of information (Access to the Written Word)
- Access to the curriculum for students with disabilities (Access to the Curriculum)

## **The Physical Environment** (Access to and around the Building)

### **Abbey Hill Academy and Sixth Form**

#### **Stephenson Building**

The Stephenson Building was built in 1991 on one floor. There are disabled parking bays at the front of the building.

- There are electronic doors at the front entrance.
- There are disabled parking bays at the front of the building.
- The corridors are wide to allow easy movement for students with disabilities and those students who use wheelchairs or walking frames.

- The building has disabled toilets and private changing areas with beds for toileting.
- The toilet areas have large press switches for automatic opening.
- There are gantry and ceiling hoists for lifting students in the changing areas.
- There are standing frames, physio beds, large bean bags, benches and balls, trampolines and soft play facilities for students with physiotherapy programmes and sensory needs.
- There is a hydrotherapy pool with changing facilities for Physiotherapy and sensory work.
- There are safe outdoor playing areas surrounded by security fences.
- There is wheelchair accessible playground equipment.
- There are colour coded corridors with sensory and auditory plaques to support visually impaired students and those students with ASD who need clear positioning/boundaries.
- There are rise and fall tables for students in wheelchairs to work at.
- There are rise and fall cooker and sink in Base 1 kitchen.
- The building is serviced by 6 mini-buses – 3 of which have tail-lifts to transport disabled students.

### Walker Building

The Walker Building was built in 2009 on one floor.

- There are electronic doors at the front entrance.
- The corridors are wide to allow easy movement for students with disabilities and those students who use wheelchairs or walking frames.
- There is a disabled toilet and shower room.
- There is a hoist in the disabled changing area.
- There is a safe outdoor playing area surrounded by a security fence.
- There are 2 quiet spaces for students to use when suffering sensory overload.
- The building is serviced by a people carrier, 5 mini-buses – 2 of which have tail-lifts to transport disabled students.
- The building is serviced by 6 mini-buses – 3 of which have tail-lifts to transport disabled students.

## Sheraton Building (Sixth Form)

The Sheraton Building was built in 2005 on two floors.

- There are electronic doors at the front entrance.
- The corridors are wide to allow easy movement for students with disabilities and those students who use wheelchairs or walking frames.
- The second floor is accessible by a lift.
- There is a disabled toilet and shower room.
- There is a hoist in the disabled changing area.
- There is a specialist dining table that adjusts so that students in wheelchairs can eat their lunch in the main café style dining hall with their friends.
- There is a safe outdoor playing area surrounded by a security fence.
- There are rise and fall tables for students in wheelchairs to work at.
- The building is serviced by 6 mini-buses – 3 of which have tail-lifts to transport disabled students.

## Gym

The gym is a dated building spread over one floor.

- There are ramps for easy access to the main entrance of the building.
- There isn't a disabled toilet or disabled change area.

## Archway Academy

Archway Academy was built in the 1930's and is over one floor. It was refurbished in 2019 by Redcar and Cleveland council, prior to joining the Trust.

- The building has wide corridors
- The building is serviced by a 9 seat mini bus and a 7 seat car.

### **Westlands Academy**

Westlands Academy was built in the 1970's over two floors. One half of the school (single story) was re-built in 2014 and is fully DDA compliant

- Access to the second floor is by two sets of stairs, one at either end of the school.
- There is no lift.
- The building is serviced by 2 minibuses

### **Hollis Academy**

Hollis Academy was built in 2010 over two floors and is fully DDA compliant.

- Access to the second floor is via two sets of stairs and a lift.
- The building is serviced by 2 minibuses

### **Green Gates Academy**

Green Gates Academy was built in the 1970's over one floor.

- There is an electric lift at the entrance for wheelchair users.
- There is a disabled toilet.
- There is disabled access to the school entrance.
- There are calm rooms available for students to use.
- The building is serviced by a minibus

### **Mo Mowlam Academy**

Mo Mowlam Academy was built in 2021 over one floor.

- There are disabled toilets and shower rooms in school.
- The access is suitable for disabled access to the school.
- There are calm rooms available for students to use.
- The building is serviced by 2 minibuses.
- The corridors are wide to allow easy movement for students with disabilities and those students who use wheelchairs

**Woodlands Academy**

- Woodlands is built over 3 floors.
- There are hygiene areas for use
- There are calming areas available for students.
- The building is serviced by 2 minibuses, one being fully wheelchair accessible.
- Some corridors are wide and accessible for students with disabilities.

**Please note, Woodlands building is being replaced by a new building which will be fully DDA compliant. This is due to be opened in December 2025**

<b>Planned improvements to the physical environment</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
1. A fully compliant DDA building for Woodlands academy is due to be opened in December 2025	December 2025	F&P Manager

**Improving the provision of information (Access to the Written Word)**

At present we use standard written information, either by letter, email or text.

<b>Improvements made to the provision of information</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
1. Audio format	Principals
2. Large print	Principals

### **Access to the curriculum for students with disabilities.**

The Trust looks to find solutions to any barriers that are presented and have already made the following changes to improve access to the curriculum.

- Purchase of 2SIMPLE software on all computers so that students with severe learning difficulties can access a simplified version of Microsoft Office programmes.
- Wireless keyboards and mice so that students can take control of the smart boards in their wheelchairs.
- Installation of touch screen computers including one that is height adjustable for students in wheelchairs.
- Purchase of 2 Visilift plus multi touch interactive tables for those with more complex and sensory needs.
- Easy to use computer accessories e.g. tracker balls, colour coded keyboards with both upper and lowercase letters for students with autism.
- Large keyboards for visually impaired students.
- Extra software for an iPad to allow a student who can't speak to be able to communicate their needs.
- Bespoke height adjustable tables in classrooms for students in wheelchairs
- Special chairs in classrooms with arms for students who need extra support when sitting or have epilepsy.
- Bespoke height adjustable tables in practical areas such as HFS and art rooms.
- Eye level cookers for students in wheelchairs.
- Height adjustable sink and hob in Base 1.
- Specialist kitchen equipment, cutlery and gadgets that are easier for students to grip and handle. □ Talking scales for visually impaired and those students whose number recognition is poor
- Talking microwave
- Computer controlled sewing machines
- Cameras that project onto a whiteboard so that students in wheelchairs can see what is happening on the work benches are in pans on hobs.
- Alpha smart keyboard in English department for students who have difficulty writing □ Magnifier machine for books for visually impaired students.
- CCTV system that projects a magnified image on a video monitor for students with visual impairments. • Individual specialist working chairs for students in Base 1



- Specialist equipment that allows students who are unable to communicate verbally to have recorded messages to speak for them • Picture communication system for students with complex or profound learning difficulties
- Specialist slings for students to use the hydrotherapy pool/ access the rebound bed etc.
- Sensory room/theatre for students to access a sensory curriculum including switchboards for cause and effect, weighted blankets and belts, rocking chairs and massage toys.
- 1:1 tutoring for students who need extra assistance.
- Access to specialised services such as physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, social services, school nurse, respite provision and parent support advisor.
- Large trampoline used for Rebound Therapy with gantry hoist to enable access for all students.
- A range of swings, physio balls and a trampette for Sensory Integration work.
- Electronic shears in textiles for students who cannot use conventional scissors
- Height adjustable sinks, ovens and hobs in food technology rooms and ovens in Base 1
- Dual height adjustable chairs where required.
- Film on classroom windows for those students who are hypersensitive to light
- Computer screen magnifiers where required.

<b>Planned improvements to access to the curriculum</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Replacement of the floor covering in the Stephenson building in the corridors to aid with access for students with disabilities</li> <li>2. The replacement of Woodlands Academy main building to provide a fully DDA compliant site, which will include rebound therapy, full accessible food technology and other significant improvements to allow full access to the curriculum.</li> </ol>

**Plan Review**

This plan has been adopted by the Board of Trustees and is reviewed every three years, unless a significant change requires agreement outside of this timescale. In the meantime it is reviewed as necessary by the owner of the plan and the Chief Executive, and any resultant changes other than minor clarifications or amendments will be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees.