



# **East Midlands Academy Trust**

## **Accessibility Policy 2023/2026**

**'Every child deserves to be the best they can be'**

| Scope: East Midlands Academy Trust & Academies within the Trust                                      |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Version: V2</b>   | <b>Filename:</b><br>EMAT Accessibility Policy   |
| <b>Approval: October 2023</b><br><i>September 2024 – approval of academy specific content by LAB</i> | <b>Next Review: September 2026</b><br><i>This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Trust Board (FHRE)</i> |
| <b>Owner:</b><br>East Midlands Academy Trust Board of Trustees                                       | <b>Union Status:</b><br>Not Applicable  |

| Policy type: |                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Statutory    | Replaces Academy's current policy |

### Revision History

| Revision Date     | Revisor    | Description of Revision   |
|-------------------|------------|---|
| September 2024    | E Williams | Further Update to school specific accessibility plan  |
| October 2023 – V2 | R Ryan     | Added reference to Equality Act 2010 and updated definitions of disability. Add reference to Head of School responsibilities. |
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|                   |            |   |

## EMAT Accessibility Policy

### 1. Introduction

Under the Equality Act 2010 all schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The purpose of this plan is to:

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

East Midlands Academy Trust believe in providing every opportunity to develop pupils, young people and adult's full potential. All our pupils, staff and visitors should feel valued, cared for, listened to and encouraged to challenge themselves to be the best they can. It is our aim to reduce and eliminate barriers to the curriculum, fuller aspects of academy life and the academy environment for pupils and prospective pupils, staff, parents and visitors with a disability.

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the trust ethos, enables consistency and quality across the schools and is related to the following legislation:

- SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years. Statutory Guidance for Organisations Who Work with and Support Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (DfE) and (DoH)
- Race Disparity Audit - Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Website (Cabinet Office)

We believe that we work hard to ensure that the culture and ethos of this trust are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treat one another with respect. Each school provides pupils with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates into all aspects of school life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with this school to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

## 2. Definitions of disability

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that is:

- Substantial
- Long term
- Has an adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal everyday activities.

We have a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, eliminate disability related harassment, promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage disabled people to participate in school life.

In accordance with good practice guidelines, we strive to increase accessibility in three main areas:

### **The Physical Environment**

We aim to improve and maintain access to the physical environment of each school in the trust, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the schools and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe.

### **Availability of information**

We aim to improve the availability of accessible information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, newsletters, timetables, textbooks and information about the schools and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

### **The Curriculum**

We aim to increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, 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.

The following policy documents are relevant to the general issue of accessibility.

- Admissions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

### 3. Aims

- To ensure that all school personnel with disabilities are treated fairly in regard to recruitment, performance management, promotion, staff development, teaching environment and access to the school premises.
- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and to have full participation in the school community for pupils, prospective pupils and our adult users with a disability.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy

It is a requirement that each academy's Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Each school in the Trust will draw up an Action Plan showing how the school will address priorities identified in the plan. This plan would incorporate the school's intention to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

The Head of each Academy is responsible for the management and implementation of their respective Accessibility Plan. They will work in conjunction with the Health and Safety Officer, Site Manager and Senior Leadership Team at their Academy in order to co-ordinate resources.

### 4. Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed every three years by the Trust Board but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by the Executive Headteacher / Headteacher / Head of School and the Local Advisory Board (LAB).

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Trust Board for further discussion and endorsement.

### Shepherdswell Academy Accessibility Plan - Improving Physical Environment

| Targets  | Strategies   | Timescale  | Responsibility  | Success Criteria  |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Access:</p> <p>Be aware of the access needs of all pupils/children, staff, governors and parents/carers.</p> <p>Ensure all staff &amp; governors and other volunteers / visitors to the academy are aware of access issues.</p> | <p>Gather data around access needs at the point of transition process or, at the very least, when a child begins at the academy.</p> <p>Create access plans for individuals as required.</p> <p>Annual reminder to parents and carers through communication to let us know if they have problems with access to areas of the academy.</p> <p>Include the accessibility plan as part of induction</p> | <p>Annually or as required</p> <p>September (annually) As required</p> | <p>Executive Headteacher</p> <p>Head of School</p>                  | <p>Individual, relevant and current information is gathered and shared as required so that all needs are met.</p> |
| <p>Maintain safe access for all</p>  | <p>Check exterior lighting is working on a regular basis. Door locks, security fobs, obstructions to doorways, steps and staircases.</p>   | <p>Ongoing checks – 3 monthly</p>                                      | <p>Executive Headteacher</p> <p>Head of School</p> <p>Site Team</p> | <p>Everyone feels safe and can gain access safely into the school grounds.</p>                                    |
| <p>Exits:</p> <p>Ensure all people can be safely evacuated.</p>  | <p>Ensure there is a personal emergency evacuation plan for any person with a disability or additional need.</p>   | <p>As required</p>   | <p>Executive Headteacher</p> <p>Head of School</p> <p>Site Team</p> | <p>All pupils and staff working with them are safe.</p>   |

| Targets   | Strategies  | Timescale               | Responsibility  | Success Criteria   |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|--|
| Ensure that the academy passes its Fire Safety Audit including training for staff is up to date, equipment checks are regular and defect equipment is replaced.     | Ensure staff are fully trained and aware of their duties.   | Daily                   | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of School<br>Site Team<br>Fire Marshalls                                     | All personnel and pupils have safe independent exits from academy.   |
| Ensure that the building remains accessible and compliant in line with the Equality Act (2010)  | Ensure that any building or maintenance works ensure full compliance with the Equality Act (2010) in relation to access e.g. ramps, visual alarms etc.  | As works are undertaken | Trust Board   | That the building is accessible and easily travelled by all staff, students, parents/carers, and visitors. |
| Ensure that the gates and fences around the Intervention room, nursery and EYFS areas are always closed so there is controlled access during break and lunch times. | Ensure all gates and fences meet fire and health and safety regulations. Ensure that staff always close gates.  | Daily                   | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of School<br>Site Team<br>Fire Marshalls                                     | That children are supervised and safe during the school day in all outdoor areas.                          |
| To provide and maintain a wider range of play resources for lunchtimes to support a range of different play types.  | Audit current play resources and ensure adequate amount of equipment. Observe play patterns of children to rotate play equipment depending on interest. Order additional resources as required. | Weekly                  | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of School<br>Staff including lunch and play assistants and the Sports Coach. | All children have access to well maintained resources and are engaged in safe and happy play.              |

### Shepherdswell Academy Accessibility Plan - Improve access to information

| Targets   | Strategies  | Timescale    | Responsibility   | Success Criteria  |
|---|---|--------------|--|---|
| Website is compliant with statutory regulations   | Annual Website audit undertaken   | Annual check | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of School<br>Central Team                                       | Compliant website   |
| To improve awareness of alternative formats for sharing information   | Using a variety of formats for communication, including text, email and pupil-post. Ensure all parents/carers are aware that the academy can provide communication in large text, via telephone /meetings to meet needs. Check that correspondence sent home is accessible in relation to reading ability language etc. | Ongoing      | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of<br>School<br>Central Team                                    | All parents/carers become aware of alternatives available and how these can be accessed                     |
| Ensure information in all SEND Reviews is accessible, understandable and allows ease of use to all parties. | Provide a choice of formats for pupil's parents/carers to provide views on Reviews.   | Ongoing      | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of School<br>SENDCO<br>Central Team and<br>Trust Inclusion Team | Parents/carers have choices about how they are communicated with and how they provide their points of view. |



| Targets  | Strategies  | Timescale   | Responsibility  | Success Criteria  |
|--|---|-------------|---|---|
| Signpost language translation on website for local community of EAL speakers.  | IT team to support with ensuring translation software is available and visible on school website.   | As required | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of School<br>IT Team | Parents / carers are able to access school information in their home language.  |
| Parents made aware of rules of conduct for parking around the school and not using the staff car park so accessible to meet the needs of all pupils including disabled pupils and parents. | Regular communication via newsletter and Arbor emails regarding parking expectations and accessibility.<br>Working with PCSO and road traffic enforcement to support with addressing barriers to accessibility. | As required | Executive<br>Headteacher<br>Head of School            | All parents and carers and families are able to access the school site.<br>Those with disabilities have accessible friendly access to site. |

**Shepherdswell Academy Accessibility Plan - Improve access to the curriculum**

| Targets   | Strategies   | Timescale                                    | Responsibility   | Success Criteria  |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Curriculum adjustments ensure fair access for all.</p> | <p>Consider the needs of all pupils in the academy when planning lessons and adjust resources accordingly, such as text size, paper colour, writing equipment, classroom position etc.<br/>- With consideration for those children with general and specific learning difficulties</p> <p>Ensure all staff have access to the inclusion data of pupils for who they teach to ensure they can plan and deliver to meet their needs. Effective differentiation ensures all pupils can access the curriculum at an appropriate level.</p> | <p>As required in response to pupil need</p> | <p>All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders</p> | <p>All pupils access fully the curriculum provided through quality first teaching<br/>Structured conversations as appropriate with parent /carers</p> |

| Targets   | Strategies  | Timescale                               | Responsibility  | Success Criteria   |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Ensure teaching and learning methods and environment support children with speech impairment  | Promotion of an ethos of inclusion, acceptance and understanding.<br>Demonstration of patience and support. Specific programme as required through liaison with Speech Therapy Service.   | As required in response to student need | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders | Progress confirmed by observations and formal assessment |
| Ensure teaching and learning methods and environment support children with hearing impairment | Quiet classrooms, child facing the teacher, clear enunciation, use of hearing loops (where available) .TA support as required.  | As required in response to student need | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders | Progress confirmed by observations and formal assessment |
| Ensure teaching and learning methods and environment support children with visual impairment  | Child faces board, glasses worn. Modified print.  | As required in response to student need | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders | Progress confirmed by observations and formal assessment |
| Develop understanding and the use of sensory circuits to support children to access learning. | Ensure CPD for all staff and relevant training for staff running sensory circuits.<br>Identification of children accessing provision, including referral to SENDCO.<br>Timetabled space and resources for sensory circuits to take place. | As require in response to student need. | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders | Progress confirmed by observations and formal assessment |

| Targets  | Strategies  | Timescale                               | Responsibility  | Success Criteria  |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Ensure teaching and learning methods and environment support children with visual impairment                             | Child faces board, glasses worn. Modified print.  | As required in response to student need | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders           | Progress confirmed by observations and formal assessment        |
| Ensure teaching and learning methods and environment support children with impaired mobility including wheelchair users. | Support in P.E. Classroom environment, corridors unobstructed pathways and clear of hazards. Doorways wide for wheelchair use, ramps as required. Walking rule in academy. Supervised access to lifts. Early exit from classes. | As required in response to student need | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders           | Children are able to access all activities.                     |
| Ensure teaching and learning methods and environment support children with emotional and behavioural difficulties        | Layout of classroom, time out, clear targets, clear behavioural expectations and visual timetables.   | As required in response to student need | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO, Pastoral and Behaviour teams | Progress confirmed by teacher assessment and achieving targets. |

| Targets  | Strategies   | Timescale   | Responsibility  | Success Criteria   |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Ensure teaching and learning methods, and the environment support children with ASD.   | Layout of classroom, classroom strategies, ensuring the student is prepared for change (e.g.; timetable changes, exam or assessment dates given etc.), using clear unambiguous language (e.g., avoid using sarcasm or using idioms, using clear, concise instructions. | As required in response to student need           | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO, Department Lead and Inclusion Team   | Progress confirmed by observations and formal assessment |
| Ensure teaching and learning methods and environment support children with diagnosed medical conditions e.g. asthma, allergies | Individual Health Care Plan to be followed. Accessibility of medication.<br>Awareness of staff when planning DT, PE, Science activities.   | Awareness for the subject specific lessons and PE | All Staff including all trained Paediatric First aiders and First Aiders. | All pupils able to access the activities.                |
| Necessary provision is in place to allow all pupils to access extra-curricular opportunities                                   | Pre preparation meetings with parents and carers to make all necessary additional arrangements.<br>Risk assessments to be in place.  | As required in response to pupil need             | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders                   | All pupils access fully the curriculum provided          |

| Targets   | Strategies   | Timescale                       | Responsibility  | Success Criteria   |
|---|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Improve oral, literacy and numeracy levels of pupils achieving below age expectations             | Identify pupils who require additional support. Provide appropriate interventions and differentiation for learning.  | Weekly                          | All staff including the SLT, SENDCO and Subject Leaders | Progress confirmed.  |
| Ensure all pupils can access public examinations, statutory assessments and internal assessments. | Approved access arrangements in place for all pupils who require and are eligible for support, including, readers, separate rooming etc. Ensuring that there is evidence of the student's normal way of working in the classroom that comply with regulations. | For all exam/ assessment series | All staff including the SLT and SENDCO                  | All students that have approved access arrangements can fully access all exams and statutory assessments |