Accessibility Plan

This policy is effective for all schools within The Mead Educational Trust, the Teaching School, the SCITT and all other activities under the control of the Trust and reporting to the Trust Board.

Version:	3.0
Ratified by:	Board of Trustees
Date ratified:	17th March 2026
Review date:	March 2029 (every 4 years)

Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
1.0	18/12/2019	EM	New Trust Template for Accessibility Plan
2.0	19/01/2024	MO	Review of policy. Appendix 2: specialist equipment checklist for schools with DSPs.
3.0	27/02/2026	MO	• Section 1 - Updated to explicitly include: Designated Specialist Provisions (DSPs), special schools and internal alternative provision. • Section 2: Added 2.2 to strengthen of Equality Act (2010) reasonable adjustments. • Section 3: Expanded Action Plan examples to include mobility, surface transitions and specialist vocational environments. • Appendix 2 Fully revised to reflect specialist accessibility and environmental standards, and to apply consistent assurance expectations across DSPs, special schools and internal alternative provision.

Accessibility Plan

Contents

1. Aims 2
2. Legislation and guidance 3
3. Action plan 4
4. Monitoring arrangements 7
5. Links with other policies 7

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit- 8

Appendix 2: Specialist equipment checklist for schools with DSPs 10

1. Aims

1.1. This Accessibility Plan applies to all schools and provisions within The Mead Educational Trust, including mainstream schools, Designated Specialist Provisions (DSPs), special schools, and any internal alternative provision operated by the Trust.

1.2. Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils
- The Trust recognises that pupils educated within DSPs, special schools and internal alternative provision often present with comparable levels of complexity, risk and need. As such, the Trust is committed to applying consistent expectations, standards and assurance arrangements across all such provisions.

1.3. Our school aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

1.4. At Castle Mead, one of our key Drivers is that 'Everyone is Capable of Excellence', and hence it is important to us that equal opportunity is available to access our academy offer for all stakeholders.

1.5. Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

1.6. The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

1.7. Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

1.8. We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school.

1.9. The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1. This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

2.2. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Trust will make reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce any substantial disadvantage experienced by disabled pupils. This duty applies equally across all Trust provisions, including internal alternative provision.

2.3. The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled 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 undertake normal day to day activities.

2.4. Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

2.5. Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

2.6. This policy complies with our Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.

3. Action plan

3.1. This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim	Current good practice *Include established practice and practice under development*	Objectives *State short, medium and long-term objectives*	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	*Our school offers a differentiated curriculum for all pupils.* *We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum.* *Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities.* *Curriculum progress is tracked for all pupils, including those with a disability.* *Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs.* *The curriculum is reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.*	Ensure curriculum materials accessible Specialist, auxiliary aids and equipment New pupils	Ensure font size, layout and coloured paper allows curriculum material to be easily read. Provide specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment to students. Review student records ensuring awareness of disabilities of new students.	SENDCO SENDCO Data Analyst	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Equality of access to the curriculum. Equality of access to the curriculum. Equality of access to the curriculum

Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	*The environment is adapted to the needs of pupils as required.* *This includes:* • *Ramps* • *Lifts* • *Corridor width* • *Disabled parking bays* • *Disabled toilets and changing facilities* • *Library shelves at wheelchair-accessible height* • *Ensure external pathways, thresholds and surface transitions are suitable for pupils using mobility aids, with routine inspection and prioritised remediation where risk is identified..*	Doors to be made easier to operate by wheelchair users. Ramps to replace steps on all external access doors and fire doors. Independent access to disabled changing rooms. Evacuation from upper levels.	Installation of push button opening mechanism on doors throughout the academy. Safer evacuation during emergency situations. Installation of independent access mechanism to disabled changing rooms Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans in place for all disabled students and staff.	Estates and Compliance Manager Estates and Compliance Manager Estates and Compliance Manager Student support/ Data Manager	When reasonably practicable When reasonably practicable Completed Summer 2021 Ongoing	Fully compliant buildings and grounds Fully compliant buildings and grounds Fully compliant buildings and grounds Safety of students improved during emergencies
Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability	*Our school uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This includes:* • *Internal signage* • *Large print resources*	To enable improved access to written information.	Raising awareness of font size and page layout.	SENCO	Ongoing	Students & parents with disabilities have equal access to information

	• *Braille* • *Induction loops* • *Pictorial or symbolic representations*					

4. Monitoring arrangements

4.1. This document will be reviewed every three years, or sooner where changes in provision, pupil need or risk profile require.

4.2. It will be approved by the TMET Board of Trustees, and the Principal on behalf of the school

4.3. Specialist accessibility requirements for DSPs, special schools and internal alternative provision are set out in Appendix 2. Compliance with these standards, including completion of the specialist accessibility and environment checks, will be reviewed as part of Trust-wide quality assurance processes. Findings will be reported through governance, safeguarding and health and safety routes and will inform prioritisation of remedial action.

Commented [CJ1]: How often will these be? If we state a timeframe we'll need to reference it in Appendix B

5. Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- SEND Information Report
- TMET Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicine Policy
- Trust Quality Assurance Framework for DSPs and Specialist Provision.

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit

Feature	Description	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by
Number of storeys	Main Building: 3 storeys Sports Hall: 2 Storey	General maintenance- daily basis	Premises Staff	On going
Corridor access	Daily	Keeping corridors clear so that all children of all needs can access the building and the teaching spaces.	Premises Staff	On going
Lifts	2 Lifts	Weekly function check, serviced every 3 months.	Premises Staff	On going
Parking bays	6 visitor spaces 112 staff spaces 4 disabled spaces	Ensure people are parked in correct bays	Premises Staff	On going
Entrances	Main building Sports building	Ensure they are accessible to all	Premises Staff	On going
Ramps	All buildings	Inspect ramps monthly for any defects	Premises Staff	On going

Toilets	Accessible toilets x 22 (12 student/10 disabled) Non accessible x 60	General maintenance	Premises Staff	On going
Reception area	Both reception areas are accessible.		Premises Staff	On going
Internal signage	Clear signage	Ensure signs are clear	Premises Staff	On going
Emergency escape routes	Escape routes for every room with clear signage on how to exit Test the fire alarm weekly	Daily Evacuation - every year Evacuation – every term	Premises Staff	On going

Appendix 2: Accessibility and Environmental Standards for Specialist Provisions

This appendix sets out the accessibility and environmental standards required for all Designated Specialist Provisions (DSPs), special schools within The Mead Educational Trust (including Netherhall Special School), and any internal alternative provision operated by Trust schools. These provisions support pupils with significant and complex needs and therefore require enhanced expectations relating to safety, accessibility, environment, equipment and Equality Act compliance.

Compliance with these standards forms part of Trust-wide quality assurance arrangements and will inform the prioritisation of any remedial actions identified.

1. General Internal and External Environment Checks

1.1 Specialist settings must maintain an internal and external environment that is safe, developmentally appropriate, and aligned to the needs of their pupils. Environmental assurance should consider:

- Finger guards in place where required.
- Access control systems operational and appropriate to pupil need.
- Any CCTV systems are fully operational and clearly signposted.
- Radiators and hot pipes are protected and do not present a burn risk.
- Fixture, fittings & equipment are in a safe, secure and appropriate for the age, size and needs of user.
- Windows fitted with suitable opening restrictors.
- Play and outdoor equipment suitable for the development stage and physical needs of current users.

2. **Mobility, Surface and Transition Safety**

2.1 Specialist settings often support pupils who use mobility aids, including wheelchairs, walkers and gait trainers. In line with Equality Act requirements, reasonable adjustments must ensure safe navigation of all areas. Consideration should be given to:

- Pathways, thresholds and surface transitions (including grass-to-path interfaces
- Gradient, edging, tactile or visual markings and route contrast.
- Frequency of inspection and prompt remediation of uneven, degraded or temporary surfaces.

2.2 This is of particular importance within special school environments, where pupils may require close supervision and specialist equipment to move safely.

3. Specialist Curriculum and Vocational Areas

3.1 Where specialist or vocational curriculum areas are delivered (e.g. hairdressing, construction and other practical or trade-based learning), settings must ensure that:

- Height-adjustable or adapted workstations, seating and access points where required.
- Accessible and adapted tools appropriate to pupils with physical, sensory or cognitive needs.

- Activity-specific risk assessments covering equipment, environment and supervision levels.
- Staff training to ensure industry-standard equipment is safely adapted and supervised for SEND learners.

4. Risk Assessment Requirements

4.1 Specialist settings must ensure that risk assessments are comprehensive, reflective of pupil need and reviewed at appropriate intervals. As a minimum, these must include:

- Classroom risk assessment
- Open / play area risk assessment
- Individual pupil risk assessment reflecting specific needs and reasonable adjustments
- Activity-specific risk assessments (e.g. cooking, construction, hairdressing, off-site learning)

5. Perimeter, Security and Emergency Procedures

5.1 Specialist environments must ensure that:

- Perimeter boundaries to play areas and buildings are secure and appropriate to the needs of current users.
- Evacuation and, where appropriate, invacuation procedures are in place, accessible, and practiced regularly.
- Emergency arrangements reflect the physical, sensory and medical needs of pupils accessing the provision.

6. Internal Alternative Provision – Assurance Parity

6.1 Internal alternative provision operated by Trust schools must meet the same standards of accessibility, safety and reasonable adjustment as DSPs and special schools. These settings will be incorporated into Trust-wide quality assurance cycles, ensuring consistent oversight of environment, equipment and risk across all specialist contexts.

7. Quality Assurance and Review

7.1 Compliance with the standards set out in this appendix will form part of Trust-wide specialist provision reviews. Findings will be reported through established governance, safeguarding and health and safety routes and will inform the prioritisation of any required remedial actions.