



Darlinghurst

ACADEMY

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Darlinghurst Academy

Academy Accessibility Plan (Jan 2026 – Jan 2029)

Introduction

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to Schools for disabled pupils", issued by DfES in July 2002.

Definition of disability

Disability is defined by the Equality Act (2010) as

- Someone with a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment is such that it has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to perform normal day-to-day activities
- Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on students' everyday lives.

Discrimination

At Darlinghurst Academy we recognise our duty under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations of all our children; the achievements, attitudes and well-being of every individual matter. At Darlinghurst we aim to promote the individuality of all our children, irrespective of their ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background and to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the Academy community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

The Equality Act has simplified and strengthened the discrimination laws which protect people from receiving unfair treatment. It is unlawful for an Academy or other education provider to treat a disabled child or their parent/carer unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- discrimination arising from a disability
- harassment

Principles of the policy

- Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the Academy's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the Academy's SEN policy;
- The Academy recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):
 - not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
 - not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
 - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage

- to publish an Accessibility Plan.
- In performing their duties, directors and staff will have regard to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) Code of Practice (2002);
- The Academy recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality;
- The Academy provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles and endorses the key principles in the curriculum, which underpins the development of a more inclusive curriculum by:
 - setting suitable learning challenges
 - responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
 - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Scope of the Plan

This plan covers all three main strands of the planning duty:

- **Improving the physical environment of Academy for the purpose of increasing the extent to which children and visitors with disabilities are able to take advantage of education and associated services.**

Currently at Darlington Academy all children can access the curriculum regardless of their disability. Whilst the physical environment includes steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, floor coverings, signs and furniture there are suitable and appropriate aids to physical access including ramps, handrails, widened doorways, adapted toilets and washing facilities and hoists. Where appropriate a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be prepared for any individual where there is considered a need in the event of an emergency.

- **Increase the extent to which children with disabilities can participate in Academics' curriculums.**

The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of all learners and all children access a broad and varied curriculum, with any adaptations and differentiation incorporated in the planning and delivery. Teaching and learning is accessible through Academy and classroom organisation and support, including the deployment of additional staff.

- **Improving the delivery of information to children with disabilities**

Any child requiring additional support is clearly identified on entry to the Academy with regular reviews should the child's needs change. Those requiring specific support with communication are known by staff so their needs can be met in lessons through differentiation. Some children are allocated additional support from support staff.

Aims

Darlington Academy aims to include all children, including those with disabilities in the full life of the Academy. Our strategies to do this will include:

- having high expectations for all children
- finding ways in which all children can take part in the full curriculum
- planning out-of-Academy activities including all Academy trips and excursions
- maintaining an admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate
- planning and reviewing the physical environment of the Academy
- raising awareness of disability amongst all Academy staff

Activity

This section outlines the main activities which the Academy will undertake, and is planning to undertake, to achieve the key objectives. (outlined below).

a) Education & related activities

In addition to providing a rich, stimulating and differentiated curriculum the Academy is determined to identify and remove all barriers to learning to ensure that all children are equally able to access the curriculum. Consequently we will continue to seek and follow the advice of the Local Authority, (LA) as well as specialist teacher advisers and appropriate health professionals in order to support staff to make "reasonable adjustments" to ensure equal opportunities for all.

b) Physical environment

The Academy will take account of the needs of pupils 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, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

c) Provision of information

The Academy will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

d) Financial planning and control

The Principal with the Senior Leadership Team, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the Academy Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process.

Linked Policies

This Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related Academy policies, e.g.

- Academy Development Plan
- Building and site development/Lifecycle Plan
- SEN policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Curriculum policies

Date of Plan: March 2019

Date of Review: September 2020 (or before if any further building works are undertaken)

Reviewed Date: 13th January 2026 (S.Clark and T.Grant) **Next review Date:** January 2029

Member of staff responsible: Principal, Directors and all staff

Darlinghurst Academy – Accessibility Plan

		Objective	What	How	When	Goal to be achieved
Short Term	1	Raise staff awareness of disabilities issues	Consider specific needs of current children, particularly those with visual impairments and staff and potential future needs	Staff meetings Directors meetings Advice from experts	On-going	Academy to comply with requirements of DDA, SENDA and the SEN Code of Practice
	2	Ensure all playground surfaces are smooth and do not pose a danger	Identify any areas that may be at risk of causing harm e.g. raised tree roots and where markings are needed to identify the existence of any changes in gradient	Ensure all playground surfaces are smooth and all changes in gradient visible	Fix upon notification of damage	All areas of playground are free from risk of tripping and changes clearly marked
	3	Ensure that all Academy trips are accessible for pupils with physical or learning disabilities	All class trips to be accessible to all	Thorough planning and advance visits	On-going	All trips are accessible to all pupils
	4	Ensure internal stairways continue to meet requirements	When/if stripping on stairways becoming worn and needs replacing	Replace worn stripping	On-going	Internal stairways meet requirements
	5	Ensure all glass doorways are easily identifiable for those with a visual impairment	All glass doors to have markings to identify their presence	Marking to be used to identify clear glass doors to improve their visibility for those with VI	On-going	Glass doors meet requirements
	6	Ensure all entrances are not hampered by deliveries	All entrances/exits are accessible to all	Move deliveries as soon as delivered Ensuring portable ramp access available where needed	On-going	All entrances to remain free and accessible to all
	7	Ensure that all external steps meet requirements	Ensure that all outside step areas remain visible, particularly to those with visual impairments	External steps to be monitored and reviewed. Where fading starts to pose a potential risk the need to repaint identified and implemented	On-going	Any worn edges to be repainted in accordance with current requirements
	8	Ensure that all external edges meet requirements	Ensure that all areas remain visible, particularly to those with visual impairments	Cupboard and equipment edges be monitored and reviewed. Where they pose a potential risk stripping to be applied and/or replaced as necessary	On-going	Visibility of any cupboard and/or equipment edges to be enhanced

Medium to Long Term	9	Ensure any new classrooms built are suitably accessible for all	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	When planning new build	All classrooms are suitably accessible
	10	Ensure any new classrooms built are acoustically friendly	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	When planning new build	All new classrooms are acoustically friendly
	11	Ensure any new classrooms built are to be mindful of the needs of all pupils, visitors and staff	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	When planning new build	All new classrooms are to be built being mindful of it uses and the people using it.
	12	Ensure any new external areas are built with suitable access for all	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	When planning new build	All external areas are suitably accessible
	11	Ensure any new external areas built are to be mindful of the needs of all pupils, visitors and staff	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	Identify requirements within the planning and implementation stage	When planning new build	All new external areas are to be built being mindful of it uses and the people using it.