Accessibility Policy

Policy Number:	EDE/POL/010	Policy Owner Job Role	Quality Manager
Issue Number:	008	Ratified By	Quality Director
Issue Date:	01.07.26	Service Type:	Schools
		Applicable Services:	Education
Contributors	Rob Arrowsmith		
Mandatory Policy	Yes		
Relevant Regulations	- Equality Act 2010 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 - Part 3 (Welfare, Health and Safety), Part 5 (Premises and Accommodation), Part 6 (Provision of Information) - SEND Code of Practice (0–25) - Education (School Premises) Regulations 2012		
Note	This policy should not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

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1. Supporting Documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

2. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 mandates that all schools and local authorities develop and implement plans to improve accessibility for disabled pupils.
Since September 2002, schools, including independent schools, and local authorities have been required to develop accessibility strategies and plans.
Tees Valley College is committed to providing a fully accessible environment that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents/carers, and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional, or cultural needs.
We are dedicated to challenging attitudes towards disability and accessibility and fostering a culture of awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.
Tees Valley College maintains individual accessibility plans (appendix A), reviewed and updated every three years, tailored to the needs of our pupils.

3. Aim/Scope

This policy aims to create and maintain an inclusive educational environment for the entire school community, promoting ongoing awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

The Equality Act (2010) defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a 'substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal, day to day activities.'
This includes sensory impairments (such as sight or hearing loss) and mental illnesses that are clinically recognised; for example, diagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions, including Autism, ADHD and SEMH needs where they impact access.
Not all disabled pupils have Special Educational Needs (SEN), and not all pupils with SEN have disabilities under this legislation. Many pupils may have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

5. Policy Content

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5.1 Improving Access to the Physical Environment

We commit to enhancing the physical environment of Tees Valley College, including visual, acoustic, and physical aspects, to meet the needs of disabled pupils. Reasonable adjustments may include sensory adaptations, assistive technologies, and differentiated communication methods.

All new buildings comply with Building Regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations (2012) to ensure physical accessibility.

5.2 Increasing Access to the Curriculum

Access to the curriculum encompasses teaching and learning as well as extracurricular activities such as after-school clubs, leisure, sports, cultural events, and school visits.

We tailor accessibility planning to pupils with EHCPs and complex needs to ensure full participation.

5.3. Improving Delivery of Written Information

We ensure that written materials provided to pupils are available in formats suitable to their abilities and needs, delivered within reasonable timescales.

Local authorities and schools review and revise accessibility strategies and plans regularly, prioritising resources for effective implementation.

5.4 Accessibility and Safeguarding

Due to the strong link between accessibility and safeguarding, it is recognised that barriers to access can increase vulnerability, create attendance issues, lead to disengagement and increase the risk of exclusion.

Tees Valley college ensures that accessibility planning supports safeguarding by promoting engagement, inclusion and enables access to education.

6. Responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring accessibility planning is implemented effectively and reviewed regularly.

The SENCo supports the identification of barriers to access and ensures that reasonable adjustments are made.

Senior leaders monitor accessibility improvements and ensure alignment with SEND provision.

All staff are responsible for implementing inclusive practice in their daily work.

7. Monitoring and Review

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The school maintains a written Accessibility Plan in accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Progress is monitored through:

- Review of individual accessibility plans

- Feedback from pupils and parents/carers

- Analysis of attendance, engagement, and participation

Senior leaders report on accessibility to the governing body to ensure oversight and continuous improvement.

In accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the school maintains a written Accessibility Plan which sets out how access to education, the physical environment and information will be improved for disabled pupils over time. The plan is reviewed annually and updated whenever significant changes to provision, premises or pupil needs occur.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

To ensure a person-centred approach, the pupil voice and parental/carer input will support accessibility planning. If any individual or group believes they are disadvantaged by this policy, they should contact the Headteacher of the school. Tees Valley College and Keys Group will respond proactively to such concerns.

9. Version Control

This document can be found in Radar.
This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The next review date and version history are recorded in the control table above. The named owner for review at Tees Valley College is the headteacher.

10. Appendices

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Appendix A – Accessibility Plan

Tees Valley College Equality and Accessibility Plan 2025-2028

A. **Improving Access to the Curriculum**

Priority Area	Proposed Response /action	Resources	Timeframe	Outcome	Signed as completed
Continue to develop further range of new and up-to-date learning resources that are accessible for students with disabilities	Continuous upgrading of resources for various learning levels	Time allocation Training Finance	Autumn 2025 – Autumn 2028	Pupils with disabilities have increasing access to learning materials	
Teachers further develop their knowledge of different teaching and learning styles	Head Teacher/SENCo to identify Professional Development Opportunities as appropriate	Time Allocation Training days Staff brief	Autumn 2025 – Autumn 2028	Teachers to use Multiple Intelligence principles to assess and cater to a wide range of learning styles for all pupils, particularly those with SEN and Disabilities, to improve their achievement.	
Disability equality issues are incorporated in the Citizenship and	Continuously introduce new elements into the Citizenship/PSHE/SMSC schemes of work to address relevant issues	Textbooks Resources	Autumn 2025 – Autumn 2028	Students have a greater understanding of disability issues	

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PSHE/SMSC curriculum					
Teachers develop skills to work with pupils with specific needs	Senior Management to arrange specific training for new and existing staff relating to disabilities experienced by pupils- Identified member of staff to complete Mental Health First Aid training	Time Allocation Training Days Staff briefs	Autumn 2025 – Autumn 2028	Staff have a greater understanding of disability issues.	

B. **Improving Access to the Physical Environment**

Priority Area	Proposed Response /action	Resources	Timeframe	Outcome	Signed as completed
Ensure fire procedures consider the needs of pupils with disabilities	Continual review the needs of identified pupils.	Specific needs identified in referral paperwork. Ongoing	Ongoing	Everyone can access and egress the site effectively and their needs are met robustly	
Reduce the acoustic bounce in the front corridors and dining room	Review current acoustics and consult student council. Propose changes to be raised at governors		Consultation autumn 26	The noise is dampened	

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C. Improving Access to Information

Priority Area	Proposed Response /action	Resources	Timeframe	Outcome	Signed as completed
Make information more accessible to pupils, parent/carer, staff and visitors	Review format of Prospectus and other relevant information and policies	Ongoing	Autumn 2025 – Autumn 2028	The information is accessible to all	

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Appendix B – Reasonable Adjustments Checklist

- Sensory adaptations (e.g., noise-cancelling headphones, tinted overlays)
- Assistive technology (e.g., speech-to-text software, adapted keyboards)
- Differentiated communication (e.g., simplified language, visual supports)
- Physical environment adjustments (e.g., ramps, handrails, accessible toilets)
- Flexible curriculum delivery (e.g., alternative assessments, adapted timetables)
- Staff awareness and training on individual needs
- Accessible formats for written materials (large print, braille, audio)
- Support from specialist services (e.g., occupational therapy, speech therapy)
- Emotional regulation support strategies
- Trauma informed approaches
- Access to Therapeutic Support

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Appendix C – Accessibility Audit Tool

Area Reviewed	Accessibility Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Responsible Person	Review Date
Entrances and exits					
Corridors and pathways					
Classrooms					
Toilets and changing facilities					
Signage					
Lighting and acoustics					
Emergency procedures					

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Appendix D – Communication Support Protocol

- Identify pupils' and families' preferred communication methods.
- Provide written materials in accessible formats (large print, braille, audio, digital).
- Use visual supports and symbols where appropriate.
- Ensure staff are trained in communication needs and strategies.
- Review communication support regularly with pupils and families.
- Liaise with external specialists for communication aids and advice.

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Appendix E – Equality Impact Assessment Template

Policy/Practice/Change Assessed	Date of Assessment	Assessor(s)

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions
Age		
Disability		
Gender		
Race/Ethnicity		
Religion or Belief		
Sexual Orientation		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Gender Reassignment		

Summary and Recommendations:

Assessor Signature: **Date:**

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