

# DISABILITY SCHEME & ACCESSIBILITY PLAN WOODHOUSE ACADEMY

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## Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values
  - 2.1 School's strategic priorities
  - 2.2 Mission Statement
  - 2.3 Removing barriers
3. Information from pupil data and school audit
  - 3.1 Definition of a disability
  - 3.2 Strengths and weaknesses
  - 3.3 Information, performance and evidence
  - 3.4 Impact assessment
  - 3.5 Governing Body
  - 3.6 Reasonable adjustments
  - 3.7 School facility lettings
  - 3.8 Contractors and procurement
4. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
5. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled
6. Making it happen
7. Publishing the school's plan
8. Further information and feedback
9. Responsibility for review

**Appendix 1:** Disability Equality Scheme (DES) Action and Accessibility Plan

## 1. Introduction

Governing bodies in England have three fundamental and legally binding duties towards disabled pupils under the Equality Act 2010:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

It is a requirement of the Act that an Accessibility Plan that identifies the action the school intends to take over a three year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas is published and evaluated annually. The three areas include:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Under the Equality Act, schools must consciously consider the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in all their functions. Practically, this means schools must actively find and break down barriers to participation, make "reasonable adjustments" (like providing auxiliary aids) so disabled students are not disadvantaged, and regularly publish progress and specific, measurable objectives. To comply with the legislation, schools are required to take the following concrete actions:

- **Make Reasonable Adjustments:** This is an anticipatory legal duty. Schools must plan ahead and make physical and auxiliary adjustments so disabled students can fully access education and facilities (e.g., providing screen readers, adjusting benches, or improving acoustic environments).
- **Publish Equality Information:** Schools must openly share information that demonstrates how they are complying with the PSED across all protected characteristics. This information must be updated at least annually.
- **Prepare and Publish Objectives:** Schools must set specific and measurable equality objectives designed to tackle disadvantages, foster good relations, and promote opportunity. These must be reviewed and published at least once every four years.
- **Implement Accessibility Plans:** Schools must have a written, resourced plan in place to increase physical accessibility (ramps, lighting, adapted classrooms) for disabled pupils, as well as to improve the delivery of information in accessible formats.

To meet these duties, the Governing Body have decided to produce one plan that includes the outcomes of both the DES and the Accessibility Plan and sets out the proposals of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties of the Equality Act 2010. Attached is an action plan showing how the school will address the priorities identified.

## **2. The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values**

### **2.1 School's strategic priorities**

Through the process of education Woodhouse Academy seeks to develop the attitudes, knowledge, skills and qualities necessary for each pupil to lead a meaningful, successful and productive life.

Woodhouse Academy aims to help every child to maximise his/her potential through experiencing high quality in teaching, learning and partnership regardless of gender, race, background, sexual orientation, religion or disability. The duty helps the school meet its strategic priorities of improving performance, social inclusion and emphasis on Every Child Matters.

### **2.2 Mission statement**

At Woodhouse Academy we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for:

- Pupils with disabilities in relation to education and associated services.
- Staff with disabilities in relation to employment rights, conditions and opportunities.
- All parents and members of the local community with disabilities in relation to additional services offered by or at our school.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel confident about disclosing their disabilities in the certain knowledge that they will receive a positive and supportive response which facilitates their full participation in the full range of activities offered by our school.

In particular, the achievement and participation of pupils and pupils with disabilities will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We are determined to identify individuals with a disability at the earliest opportunity, and will make reasonable adjustments in relation to teaching and learning and wider aspects of school life to make sure that the educational environment is as accessible as possible.

We will use our accessibility planning duty to ensure that there is an ongoing programme of improvements in relation to:

- Access to the curriculum.
- Access to information for both pupils and their parents, and
- Access to the school buildings, its facilities and amenities for all.

We will seek to foster a positive response to disability among all members of our school community and to eliminate bullying, harassment or the less favourable treatment of people with disabilities wherever and whenever it is likely to occur.

At Woodhouse Academy, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in, and visit our community. In making this assertion, we subscribe to the social model of disability.

## **2.3 Removing barriers**

Woodhouse Academy wishes to be proactive in removing barriers to disabled pupils and members of the community that may wish to access the school's facilities. The school buildings are currently not accessible to wheelchair users. However action already taken includes:

- Installation of disabled toilet and PE changing facilities.
- Dyslexia Friendly Stage 1 status.
- Accessible parking bays provided.
- Resources in enlarged print when required.
- Changes to the timetable to ensure accessibility.
- Specialist equipment made available to staff / pupils.
- Disability awareness sessions held with staff and pupils.
- Regular references to disability and the intolerance of disability in form time discussion, PSHE, assemblies.
- Supported access to those with injuries and short-term needs (e.g. library provision and work supplied).
- Those not being able to access school provided with structured signposting to quality home learning prepared by subject leaders.
- Care plans completed prior to the student accessing the school.
- All information shared with staff (and updated at weekly pastoral as needed) before students join.

## **3. Information from pupil data and school audit**

Information from pupil data and school audit is monitored and specific features relating to disability of the school community are reviewed and adjusted as necessary to accommodate any disability.

### **3.1 Definition of disability**

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

At Woodhouse Academy this definition is extended to include all pupils who require substantial support to enable them to access the curriculum.

### 3.2 Strengths & Weaknesses

Woodhouse Academy presents the following strengths and weakness regarding the promotion of disability equality:

#### Strengths

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) staff and resources.
- Pastoral support system and staff.
- Sensitivity towards disability.
- Pro-active attitudes on inclusion.
- Pro-active work with feeder schools to ensure smooth transition for pupils with disabilities, including appropriate training and resources.
- Consultation with relevant external agencies.
- Commitment to staff development.
- Monitoring of pupil academic progress.
- Specific and tailored training where students develop a disability whilst at Woodhouse.
- Very supportive approach to staff needing additional help (e.g. changing timetable or rooms).
- OH referrals identified and followed up.

#### Weaknesses

- Physical access to and within the school buildings but careful planning takes place to mitigate this where possible.

### 3.3 Information, Performance and Evidence

Woodhouse Academy has rigorous systems in place to monitor progress and performance of all pupils. More specifically, where numbers allow, action will be taken to gather information to assess performance and participation of disabled pupils as a defined group in terms of:

#### a) Student Achievement

Records are kept of every pupil's achievements including those with SEN and a disability (in accordance with the definition in section 3.1). Student achievement is targeted, monitored and analysed by senior and middle leaders, the SENDCO, intervention staff and the pastoral team in order to ensure inclusion and progression for all pupils. Woodhouse Academy pastoral staff liaise with feeder schools to identify disabled pupils prior to admission and monitor their progress as a specific group to help to identify any areas of concern or potential barriers that may exist and make reasonable adjustments accordingly.

#### b) Learning Opportunities and Wellbeing

All vulnerable students (of which disabled students are part) receive additional monitoring, tracking and where appropriate, intervention.

Additional, personalised opportunities are purposefully introduced to raise self-esteem, e.g.: pupil workshops; school assemblies to raise whole school awareness; pupil-run clubs, extra-curricular clubs; outside agency support; pastoral work; nurture sessions; PP funding and personalised profile offer etc.

c) Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions

Woodhouse Academy will identify disabled pupils using admissions data at Year 5 together with the SEN register. Transitions and exclusions will be monitored in terms of disability to identify trends, any trends will then be analysed and reasonable adjustments made as necessary. Pupils are prepared for transition in Year 8, working closely with their respective High School.

d) Social Relationships

Woodhouse Academy encourages disabled and non-disabled pupils to take an active part in the school community and actively fosters a 'can do approach' to inclusion (e.g. Sports Day, Drop Down Days, trips out)

e) Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

Woodhouse Academy follows Staffordshire County Council's equal opportunities policy and encourages and supports employment, promotion and training of all staff regardless of disability.

### **3.4 Impact Assessment**

Woodhouse Academy will continue to monitor each of its policies and procedures upon review and will consider the DES at each stage of the process.

Staff, pupils and other stakeholders will be encouraged to feed back the impact of any adjustment or action, which will be closely monitored. Where appropriate, data will also be monitored and analysed to assess impact and further action taken as necessary.

### **3.5 The Governing Body**

All nominations received to become a member of the Governing Body of Woodhouse Academy are treated equally, and every parent is entitled to stand for election to the Governing Body. Disabled representatives are welcomed and proceedings are made accessible.

### **3.6 Reasonable Adjustments**

Where there is an identified need, a reasonable adjustment will be made to accommodate that need. The impact of the adjustment will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

### **3.7 School Facility Lettings**

Woodhouse Academy makes facilities and resources available on a lettings basis to all members of the community. Where possible requested facilities will be made available on the ground floor and additional reserved parking will be provided.

### **3.8 Contractors and Procurement**

Contractors and procurements from Staffordshire County Council's approved lists are covered by the County Council's DES. When the school chooses a procurement route other than the approved list it is not reasonably practical nor a good use of time or resources for the school to make checks of this kind.

In addition, the catering staff at Woodhouse Academy can make available a range of foods e.g. vegetarian, gluten/wheat/dairy free are available to pupils to pre-order.

#### **4. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum**

Woodhouse Academy encourages positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and encourages all pupils to participate fully within the curriculum, providing extra resources where needed to ensure this in the case. No student is ever unable to participate in any activity. Care is taken to nurture the self esteem of pupils with disabilities.

To ensure appropriate measures are in place to support those with a disability, the school provides support and seeks advice from external sources, which could include:

- School Nurse
- Physical Disability Support Service
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapist
- Sensory Support Team
- Parents and carers
- Local Support Team
- Equalities, health & Well Being in Education Team
- Educational Psychologist
- MIND
- CAMHS
- Research (e.g. pastoral and nurture training to inform practice)
- Tourettes Action

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will monitor and review on an ongoing basis, and in particular will evaluate:

- The impact the curriculum has upon pupils with a disability.
- The effectiveness of reasonable adjustments in reducing discrimination.
- The effective deployment of adult and peer support in reducing discrimination.
- The impact the curriculum has on increasing awareness of and positive attitudes towards disability.
- Effective access to specialist advice and support.

#### **5. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled**

Following an assessment of need, every effort is made to ensure that disabled pupils receive information in an appropriate format to ensure they can participate fully in school life (e.g. inability to access assemblies – watching via Zoom in the library or sitting with a TA to discuss after). The school is Dyslexic Friendly and uses all strategies, working closely with parents and staff, to support those who may struggle in this aspect. We offer a range of accessible formats, such as large print, accessible PDF, audio, Easy Read and translated formats. Please contact the school office should you require any reasonable adjustments.

## **6. Making it happen**

Woodhouse Academy wishes to involve disabled pupils, staff, parents/carers and other stakeholders when reviewing this policy. Key staff involved in the process will include the Principal and senior leaders, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, pastoral staff, governors, and the Business Manager. Other staff will also have the opportunity to provide feedback.

Disabled pupils and their parents/carers are able to voice their views and aspirations via Annual Reviews with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Parents are also encouraged to comment.

The action plan will be reviewed by the School Leadership Team no less than annually, and the Scheme will be revised every three years.

## **7. Publishing the school's plan**

This Disability Equality Scheme will be published on the school website and made available on request from the school office.

## **8. Further information and feedback**

We are constantly seeking to improve the service and information we provide. If you feel you have a valid contribution to make, or would like to comment on the scheme, please contact the school via:

Telephone: 01782 973600

Email: [office@woodhouseacademy.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@woodhouseacademy.staffs.sch.uk)

In writing: Woodhouse Academy  
Woodhouse Lane  
Biddulph  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST8 7DR

If you would like to receive a copy of the Disability Equality Scheme in another format, please contact the school as above.

**ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2026-28**

**Achievements to July 2026**

Environment and Facilities:

- Ramps now give access to DT block
- 2 accessible toilets are in place
- Consistent signage around school
- Handrails on all stairs
- Emergency lighting upgraded to comply with current legislation
- Risk assessments are made for all pupils with temporary mobility issues and reasonable adjustments made
- A sensory room has been installed to ensure those who have additional needs can access this
- Gates on site – all closed and only access for students is via the bottom gate which is monitored by staff on duty. All other gates closed and access via reception intercom
- Car park now resurfaced for safer access and clear walkway signage and ground markings
- Two disabled parking spaces allocated
- Information shared with parents/carers/clubs to access the building safely after school hours

Curriculum:

- Laptops and i-pads have been purchased to support pupils with additional language and motor skill needs
- Staff have been trained in dyslexia friendly strategies
- A full training programme for all staff on providing adapted lessons to ensure all students are able to access the curriculum
- Written materials are available on various colours of paper and are enlarged as required
- Adapted pens, scissors and furniture is available
- Home learning set up on our website for those who may need access from home during authorised absence
- Homework plan revised to ensure all students able to access
- Progress tracked for all students to ensure full curriculum access and coverage
- EHCP plans shared with staff to ensure needs are addressed
- Quality assurance by leaders to ensure all students have fair access to the curriculum
- SEND Toolkits in each classroom to support students accessing their learning

Pastoral:

- All students have access to additional pastoral support as needed to identify further curriculum and wider needs
- Key workers/staff support students who may struggle with accessing areas in the building
- Pastoral officer employed from September 2022 to provide additional support for students

Information:

- All information shared by county, nationally and specific organisations shared on social media and school newsletter to support families needing additional help
- Policies readily accessible on the school's website
- Arbor MIS installed to ensure swift communication and action for students, staff and parents

Medical:

- First aid trained staff compliant with school need
- All care plans designed and regularly updated by trained member of office staff
- Occupational Health used as supportive tool to ensure staff are able to come to work
- Those staff deemed as having a disability having adaptations made to support access to work (e.g. rooms, meetings, computers)
- Staff communicated with and action plans implemented when students are on either a reduced timetable or having difficulty accessing the building due to medical (or pastoral) needs

Next Steps 2026-28

Actions	Success Criteria	Lead	Timescale
<b>Environment and Facilities</b>			
Resurfacing of pathway leading to field	Students have safe access to our facilities	Business Manager	Ongoing
Relocate sensory and SEND area	Students will have access to supportive measures as needed A central area allows for constant monitoring	Business Manager, SENDCO SLT	By end of summer 2 2026
Gated access reviewed around entrance/pathway to reception and during out of hours activities	Visitors access the building safely and do not have unauthorised access to the students on site	Business Manager SLT	By end of autumn 2 2026
Review wheelchair access for visitors to reception area	All external visitors needing to access reception can do so successfully	Business Manager	By end of autumn 2 2026
<b>Curriculum</b>			
Review and quality assure the provision for students with disability or additional needs in the class	All students are able to access learning and be successful Further training for staff	Teaching and learning lead	Ongoing
Intervention Space – create a wider area for this	Students can access spaces to support more directed provision, either in small groups or one to one	SLT SENDCO	By end of autumn 1 2026
<b>Pastoral/Safeguarding</b>			
All visitors receive appropriate checks (e.g. DBS, Identification, Sign in)	Stakeholders are able to access the building safely and are assured that relevant checks are carried out	Reception Staff SLT	Ongoing
<b>Information</b>			
Ensure all policies relating to DAA are reviewed and update to reflect changes	Stakeholders have access to support and advice	SLT Business Manager	Ongoing
<b>Medical</b>			
Ensure all plans are fit for purpose and regularly reviewed	Students have the right support to access school and learning and parents/carers reassured	Reception Staff (allocated this role) Business Manager	Ongoing
Make certain that those students who have injuries and can attend school have access to lessons	Students are able to receive learning provision, even if reduced, and are supported whilst in school Stakeholders are reassured that students are kept safe and can access the curriculum	SLT Reception staff Business Manager	Ongoing