

## Gawthorpe Community Academy Access Policy

### Policy Statement

This academy believes in providing a welcoming, comfortable, accessible environment that is safe and easy to use for pupils, their parents and relatives, staff and other visitors and users of the premises. The accessibility of buildings is a critical issue, especially for people with a disability, so entrances and exits need to balance ease of access with safety and adequate levels of security.

Each disabled pupil should have a unique plan of care which takes into account their needs and wishes and those of the key people involved in their care. Needs identified from these care plans will inform the disability access and premises development and maintenance plans to ensure that all individual needs are met wherever practicable.

### Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to achieve equality of opportunity for all its pupils, ensuring that they are given a chance to attain their full potential through equal access to all facilities.

### Procedure

This academy adheres fully to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, which places a duty upon owners of premises to provide adequate access for disabled people, and to make reasonable adjustments to allow them to access the services provided fully. This includes removing, altering or providing reasonable means of avoiding physical features or attitudinal barriers that make it difficult for anyone with a disability to use a service or to be employed.

Key processes in place to ensure compliance with these requirements include:

- a. an annual audit of the premises to ensure that all issues relating to access to and exit from the buildings are considered, any problems are identified and reasonable improvements are planned and made
- b. the formulation of an accessibility plan
- c. prioritisation of disability access issues in the maintenance system
- d. access to specialist advice and guidance from appropriate occupational therapy, physiotherapy and architectural design experts to ensure that the needs of disabled users of the buildings are met.

All access points to the building are reviewed annually as part of the accessibility plan and suitable adaptations are made under the Equality Act 2010 and the building regulations. This includes main entrances and side entrances.

Adaptations include:

- a. the provision of disabled parking bays close to the building
- b. the fitting of covered ramps and slopes to replace stairs and steps where appropriate
- c. the fitting of suitable grab rails and handrails
- d. the fitting of electrically opening doors or of door opening systems
- e. alterations to existing doors to make them easy for wheelchair users to open

- f. the provision of intercom security systems where necessary
- g. the widening of doorways to ensure wheelchair access
- h. the removal of door steps or barriers
- i. the removal of furniture or fittings that block wheelchair access
- j. a review of floor surfaces and coverings to make them slip and trip free
- k. a review of signage to ensure that pupils and visitors know where they are and how to get to their destination
- l. the provision of flat, safe paths leading from the car park.

All works or extensions should consider disabled access as a key part of building design and incorporate a "level floor" policy, avoiding the use of ramps and slopes wherever possible by ensuring that individual floors are kept to one level.

All works or access alterations must include a full fire risk assessment to consider the impact of changes on fire exits.

**Training**

All staff are offered training covering basic information about staff duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and about health and safety risk management and the reporting of hazards. All new staff receive induction training, including a comprehensive tour of the premises and guidance on improving access and procedures wherever possible. In particular, staff are trained to be more aware of disabled access issues and to consider how services can be provided in ways that disabled people would find more convenient.

**This Policy**

A copy of this policy is stored in each year group and a copy is also held in the staff room.

**Has It Been Successful?**

The following questions will be asked by the reviewing group to ascertain the success of the policy.

- Is there evidence of any physical features or attitudinal barriers that make it impossible or difficult for people with a disability to use the services of, or be employed at, the academy?
- Where any issues highlighted by the annual audit of the premises?
- Where any issues highlighted by the annual review of the accessibility plan?

**Linked Policies**

Other policies that should be referred to include

- Disability Equality Scheme and Disability Accessibility Plan
- Auxiliaryaids and Equipment Policy.

**Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

Biennially the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed, or when the need arises, and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governing Body

<b>Principal:</b>	<i>S. Wickeman.</i>	<b>Date:</b>	<i>24/9/14.</i>
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