



Accessibility Plan

September 2024

Next Review: Autumn 2027

Introduction

The Beyond Schools Trust is committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness throughout the Trust's schools.

The Trustees, and staff of Beyond Schools Trust recognises its duty in complying with all disability and equal opportunities legislation:

- Not to discriminate against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and extra-curricular activities
- Not to treat disabled students less favourably
- To take all reasonable steps to avoid putting students with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage
- To publish an Accessibility Plan

Since April 2011, schools have also been bound by a part of the Equality Act 2010 called the Public Sector Equality Duty (also known as the PSED, or simply the "Equality Duty"). This replaces the previous three sets of duties on schools to promote disability, gender and race equality through having equality policies and action plans for these groups and has two parts: the "general" duty and "specific" duties.

The general duty is the overarching legal requirement, which means that schools must consider how their policies, practices and day-to-day activities impact on students and staff. Schools are required to have "due regard" to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations.

The two specific duties for schools which aim to assist them to meet the general duty are:

- To publish information to show how they are complying with the Equality Duty. This must be updated at least annually.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

The Beyond School Trust's Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions that meet the requirements of the Equality Act to:

- Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability, modifying the **curriculum** as necessary to ensure that students with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied students. (If a school fails to do this, they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010). This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools' visits.
- Improve and maintain access to the **physical environment** of the Trust schools, adding specialist facilities as necessary. Take into account the needs of students, parents and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements to Trust schools. The Trust's Accessibility Plan considers how access is to be improved for students with disabilities, staff and visitors to individual Trust schools, anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.
- Improve the delivery of **written information** to students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school.

Curriculum

The SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (September 2014) underpins the identification and support of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at Beyond Schools Trust. This states that "All teachers are teachers of students with special educational needs." The Code of Practice clearly acknowledges the importance allocated to the teacher with regards to SEN. That Quality First Teaching is an essential element of addressing and supporting students with SEN in their classes.

The Special Educational Needs Department staff in individual Trust schools support identified SEN students. SEN staff also work closely with curriculum staff to help differentiate the curriculum to meet the needs of these individual students.

Students who may require Access Arrangements for their Public Examinations will be assessed to determine whether they have an impairment that will cause them significant and long term difficulties. Students are offered a variety of arrangements that will create a 'level playing field' and allow them to achieve their full potential: eg, provision of a Reader, Scribe, Extra Time, Supervised Rest Breaks, Use of IT, or a provision of a smaller room.

The Physical Environment

We regularly monitor and improve the physical environment of the Trust schools to increase the extent to which students, adults and members of staff with disabilities can use the school facilities and resources. The responsibility for this rests with the Trust Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

Written Information

The Beyond Schools Trust is committed to improving the delivery of information which is provided in writing to students, parents and other stakeholders. Individual Trust schools will have their own procedures which are outlined in their individual policies.

Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

- All sections of the Beyond Schools Trust community are encouraged to share concerns that can be included in the development of this Accessibility Plan.
- The SENCOs for each Trust school are consulted about the very specific details of the provision in their individual Trust school.
- All students with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) have an annual review at which the student and their parent/carer(s) are consulted about the provision that the individual Trust school's offer and are able to contribute to any support that may be required.
- The Beyond School Trust schools have a multi-agency approach and welcome advice from outside agencies (eg Educational Psychologist, Counsellor) in how they may support groups and individual students.

Coordination

The coordination and implementation of this Accessibility Plan will be led through Beyond Schools Trust's Chief Financial Officer. The coordination and implementation of the School Accessibility Plans will be led through headteachers with support from the Executive Business Managers and Estates Managers. This will involve the co-ordination of the work of the Site Managers for each individual Trust school and their team and other external workers/contractors for the school.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY will annually monitor local Accessibility Plans annually and report into the Trust board where accessibility needs Trust level capital investments

TRUST BOARD, through the work of the Finance Committee, will receive an annual report showing progress against accessibility improvements from the Trust investment and to report on school level compliance with the policy.

Date of Trustee approval:

September 2024

Review arrangements including date of review:

Autumn 2027

Links to other policies

- **Equality Policy**
- **School Accessibility Plan**

To be updated annually and to include a rolling 3-year action plan of improvements to accessibility including, prior year, current year and future years and should cover the following:

- Accessibility to the Curriculum and Wider Curriculum
- Accessibility to the Physical Environment
- Accessibility to Communication