

Accessibility Plan

Date: 1st September 2026

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This Accessibility policy coordinates with:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality: Information and Objectives Statement
- Exclusions and Suspension policy
- Anti-Bullying (cyberbullying) policy
- Positive handling and powers to search
- Health & Safety Policy and procedures
- SEND policy, local offer
- Educational Visits Procedures
- Behaviour Policy
- School Development Plan
- Complaints Policy

Please note this is not an exhaustive list and doesn't include all school specific policies.

Any queries on policies please email - Compliance@alplearning.org.uk

Our Commitment to Inclusion and Access

At Hartside Primary Academy, accessibility is part of everyday practice. We ensure that all pupils, regardless of need or disability, can access learning, participate fully in school life and feel a strong sense of belonging. We actively remove barriers and adapt provision so that every child can progress and succeed.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in several ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However, the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day-to-day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition.
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities are under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified, but a school could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability, if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

Understanding Disability and Barriers to Learning

Under the Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

They have a physical or mental impairment,

The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).
- 'Normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meet this definition are also protected by the Act.

It should be noted that this definition is not just regarding physical difficulties, but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition, there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as:

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled, but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand

- Perception of risk of physical danger

Meeting Needs Through Reasonable Adjustments

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is, then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

The Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable, however, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) provides further guidance in its publication EHRC Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities are required to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a statement of SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

Under the Equality Act we do not have a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our accessibility planning.

Our Responsibilities Under the Equality Act 2010

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (section 149 of the Equality Act) came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty applies to public bodies (including schools) and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.

The PSED is supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties require public bodies to:

- publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty at least annually; and

- set and publish measurable equality objectives, at least every four years.

All information must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access it and the published information must show that the public body had due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

These are generally described as the three aims of the Equality Duty. Our accessibility plan has been developed to help us to effectively meet our obligations under the PSED and ensure that users of our service who have a disability are not disadvantaged when accessing our curriculum, physical environment or the information which we provide.

What We Are Working Towards

We ensure that our school is inclusive, ambitious and supportive. Pupils are enabled to understand and value difference, and access learning successfully alongside their peers.

In Hartside Academy, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum.
- Increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of schools/settings to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people through specific targets. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan. The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates, in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the school, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Plan will be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

Hartside Academy strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school/setting are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school/setting community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

Key Objectives

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - Setting suitable learning challenges.
 - Responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs.
 - Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

Our School Context and Physical Environment

The school is located in Hartside Close, Crook, County Durham. The building includes classrooms, offices, a main hall, kitchen, library, after-school provision, staff areas and toilet facilities, including an accessible toilet with changing provision. The grounds includes a yard, activity trail, woodland and school field. Most areas of the school are accessible to pupils with physical needs, although some areas, including the activity trail, woodland and upper floor, present limitations.

Where aspects of the site are not fully accessible, we adapt provision to ensure pupils are not disadvantaged. This may include relocating activities, adapting timetables or planning alternative access arrangements to enable full participation in school life.

What we do well

We identify and respond to pupils' needs early through strong relationships with families, previous settings and external professionals. Information is gathered and used to plan provision that is responsive and effective.

Teaching is adapted to ensure pupils with SEND can access learning alongside their peers. Staff use a range of strategies, resources and support to remove barriers and promote independence.

We work closely with parents and carers, ensuring their views are heard and reflected in decisions about provision. Communication is flexible and adapted where needed so that families can engage fully with school life.

Participation in wider school experiences is prioritised. Where challenges arise, adjustments are made so that pupils can take part safely and meaningfully.

Communication with families is adapted to meet individual needs. While the school primarily uses Class Dojo, alternative methods such as phone calls, face-to-face meetings or printed materials are used where required.

We actively seek and respond to pupil and parent voice to ensure communication is clear, accessible and effective. Adjustments are made where needed so that all members of the school community can engage confidently.

Aims

Hartside Primary Academy Accessibility Plan 2026 – 2028

Aim 1: To increase the extent to which SEND pupils can participate in the school curriculum			
Targets	Strategies	Timeframe	Staff Responsible
To plan and support transition	Liaise with previous educational establishments (childminder, nursery, primary as appropriate) To identify pupils who may need additional to or different from provision	Upon transition	SLT SENCO Class Teachers
To ensure provision for SEND pupils is delivered consistently	• Staff follow agreed timetables and intervention plans • Provision is monitored through observations and pupil progress meetings	Half-termly monitoring	SENCO SLT
To review all statutory policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	To comply with the Equality Act 2010	Annual review of policy	SLT SENCO
To establish close liaison with parents	To ensure parent and pupil voice is documented in collaboration between school and families	On-going	SLT SENCO Class Teachers

To establish close liaison with outside agencies for pupils with additional needs	To ensure collaboration between all key personnel. Sharing information about the child where necessary.	On-going	SLT SENCO Class Teachers All staff Multi-agencies
To ensure all pupils access a broad and appropriately adapted curriculum	- Teaching is adapted to meet identified needs - Staff implement agreed provision consistently - Interventions are planned, timetabled and reviewed regularly - Specialist advice is sought where required	Termly Review	SLT SENCO Class Teachers All staff Multi-agencies
To rigorously monitor the progress of SEND pupils and respond where needed	- Progress data is reviewed termly - Provision is adapted where progress is not sufficient - Barriers to learning are identified and addressed	Termly	SLT SENCO Class Teachers
To deliver findings to the Governing Body	Accessibility plan review by governors	Termly meetings with SEND governor	SENCO SEND governor

Aim 2: To improve the physical environment of the school			
Targets	Strategies	Timeframe	Staff Responsible

Improve the physical environment of school environment	• Accessibility is considered in all site developments • Adjustments are made in response to identified needs	Annual Review	SLT
To ensure all pupils can access the school environment	• Individual access plans and risk assessments are created and reviewed • Adjustments such as ramps and alternative access routes are implemented	Termly	SENCO All staff
To ensure that the medical needs of all pupils are met fully within the capability of the school	To conduct parent interviews, liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and establish individual protocols where needed	Annual/ ongoing	Office Manager Teaching Assistant
To ensure safe and accessible access to the school site	• Accessible parking and entry points are maintained • Individual arrangements are made where required	Annual/ ongoing	All Staff

Aim 3: To improve the delivery of information to SEND pupils and parents			
Targets	Strategies	Timeframe	Staff Responsible
To ensure communication is accessible for all pupils, parents and staff	• Communication is adapted to meet individual needs • Alternative formats are used where required • Communication approaches are reviewed regularly	Termly	SENCO HT
To ensure staff understand how to adapt communication for accessibility	• Staff receive guidance and training on accessible communication • Good practice is shared across the school	Annual/ ongoing	

To ensure pupils can access learning materials and written information	- Teaching resources are adapted (visual, auditory and technological supports) - Classroom practice promotes accessibility	Ongoing/Termly	SENCO Class Teachers HT
Ensure parents are involved	Liaise with parents about individual arrangements for drop off and pick up, including disabled bays for drop off and pick up. Value parental feedback and use it to support with adaption or change to practice.	Established	Whole school approach
To review children's records ensuring school's awareness of any disabilities	Ensure information is correct and up to date	Updates provided when required	SENCO Outside agencies Support staff

Safeguarding

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children as the safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to everyone in this school. We work hard to create a culture of vigilance and at all times we will ensure what is best in the interests of all children.

We believe that all children have the right to be safe in our society. We recognise that we have a duty to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by creating a positive school atmosphere through our teaching and learning, pastoral support and care for both pupils and school personnel, training for school personnel and with working with parents. We teach all our children about safeguarding.

We work hard to ensure that everyone keeps careful watch throughout the school and in everything we do for possible dangers or difficulties. We want all children to feel safe at all times. We want to hear their views of how we can improve all aspects of safeguarding and from the evidence gained we put into place all necessary improvements.

If a member of staff has any concerns in relation to the child's welfare/wellbeing the member of staff should log this on CPOMS and speak with Designated Safeguarding Lead, or appropriate team member. Further guidance can be found in the Safeguarding Policy.

Complaints

All complaints should be raised with the school in the first instance.

The details of how to make a formal complaint can be found in the School Complaints Policy.

Equality & Diversity

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of age, race, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, sex, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, religion/ belief or political/ other personal beliefs.

We believe that this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010, as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality across the Trust.

Modern Slavery Act

Advance Learning Partnership (Trust) is committed to ensuring that modern slavery and human trafficking are prevented from taking place within the Trust and its supply chain.

The Trust is committed to sourcing responsibly and improving our practices to combat slavery and human trafficking in our business and supply chain.

Accessibility Statement

We are committed to ensuring that our policies are accessible to all individuals. If you require this policy document in an alternative format, such as Braille, large print, or another language, please do not hesitate to contact our office. Immersive Reader tools are a useful way for an enhanced reading experience. PDF and word have this as a function. Your accessibility needs are important to us, and we are here to assist you in any way possible.

This plan will be monitored by the SENCO and Senior Leadership Team and reviewed annually. Progress against the plan will be shared with governors, ensuring accountability and ongoing improvement.

Description	Name / Title	Signature	Date
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Prepared by	Person who updated policy	D.Simpson	12.05.26
1 st - Approved by	Person who approved policy		
2 nd - Approved by (If more than 1 approver)	Second person who approved policy		