

Accessibility Policy

Academic Year 2022-2025



Version and Date		Action/Notes	Date to be Reviewed
6.0	13.07.2021	Approved by Board of Trustees	3 Years – July 2024
7.0	12.07.2022	Approved by Board of Trustees	3 Years – July 2025

Aims and Scope

The Connect Education Trust believes that in partnership with parents it has a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of pupils with disabilities over and above its basic statutory responsibilities. The Connect Education Trust will also make every practicable arrangement for staff and visitors with disabilities.

A person is defined as having a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This definition is a broad one and covers physical and medical disabilities, sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing and learning disabilities.

The Connect Education Trust will maintain and increase accessibility for those with disabilities to ensure their needs are met in its schools. This policy should be read in conjunction with the First Aid and Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy and the Health and Safety Policy.

The Connect Education Trust schools will achieve this aim by:

- Regular training for teaching and support staff in disability awareness so that they can encourage pupils with disabilities to take every opportunity to achieve their potential including music, drama and physical activities
- Fulfilling their duty not to discriminate against disabled pupils and prospective pupils in the provision of education and associated services including admissions, exclusions, extracurricular activities, educational visits and school trips
- Managing the physical environment so as to remove or minimise trip hazards or disturbances of noise and light
- Ensuring all refurbishment, minor and major building work include all reasonable measures to improve accessibility and comfort for children with disabilities.
- Designating a senior member of staff at each school with special responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy

Responsibilities and Monitoring

The Senior Leader for inclusion will:

- be responsible for identifying actions to improve accessibility and drawing up an implementation plan with targets and timescales.
- report on progress to the Headteacher and the Local Governing Boards or Interim Management Boards of each school

Long Term Objectives and Targets (Our Vision)

Our vision is that any further building work completed on our school sites will be inclusive of pupils with a range of disabilities for which we will be adequately equipped and resourced.

Any Future Building Programmes on individual School Sites

All future building programs for individual school sites will comply with the DDA act and will therefore provide:

- Full access for wheelchairs to all areas of the building where practicable
- Lighting which supports the visually impaired
- Decoration to support visually impaired pupils and pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- A lift, which will make any second floor of the building accessible to the disabled.
- Environments which support pupils with disabilities

Identifying and Removing Barriers to Access

- Each Connect Education Trust school has an ongoing decoration and improvement programme which takes into consideration all aspects of physical impairment, pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder and is particularly supportive for the visually impaired.
- Areas of poor lighting to be identified and will be replaced/refurbished as part of the on-going decoration improvement programme.
- Windows are to have blinds where required
- Schools can be accessed easily at ground floor level. However, upper floors may not have wheelchair accessibility.
- Not all of the schools have adequate space to support pupils with physiotherapy and occupational therapy programmes.
- The schools do not have documentation in any other form but written, although some documents have been translated into other languages.
- School alarms that are auditory only do not cater for pupils with hearing impairment.
- Toilets should be redecorated to create “contrasts” for easier use by visually impaired pupils.

School Specific Accessibility Plan (Example)

Target	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Success Criteria
1. Decorative state of the schools supports ASD pupils and the visually impaired to access the sight more easily.	Annual site audit.	Re-decorating process on going throughout the schools over an extended period of time.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	Decorative state of the school supports ASD pupils and the visually impaired to access the sight more easily.
2. Improve Lighting to support the visually impaired.	Audit of lighting when an area is scheduled for redecoration.	Refurbishment process on going throughout the schools over an extended period of time.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	Improved lighting supports the visually impaired.
3. To increase access to the school for wheel chair users	Disabled access to higher floors where this is practicable	Ongoing refurbishment process over an extended period of time.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	Easier access from the playground into the main building for wheel chair users.
4. A more appropriate area in which staff can implement physiotherapy and occupational therapy programmes.	Consider future school building to create a more appropriate space for occupational and physiotherapy programmes	Ongoing re-decorating process throughout the school over an extended period of time.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	A more appropriate space for occupational and physiotherapy programmes is created.
5. School's documentation more easily accessible for visually impaired parents/carers.	Documentation translated into Braille or recorded in audio format.	To be completed if requested by a parent/carer.	SEND Team.	Documentation translated into Braille or recorded onto audio CDs if requested by a parent/carer.
6. To improve emergency evacuation procedures.	Emergency alarms replaced with visual and auditory alarms.	To be completed in the next renovation/ renewal of alarm system.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	The new alarm system will support the hearing-impaired pupils.
7. To improve emergency evacuation procedures.	Evacuation chairs/ Refuge points	To be completed when disabled access is given to upper floors	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	Emergency evacuation chair purchased.

8. To improve the provision for ASD.	Use communication in print to improve signs around the school by augmenting them with symbols.		Senior Leader for Inclusion.	New signs around the school augmented by symbols.
9. Re-decoration of all doors to provide good contrast for visually impaired children.	Audit of environment.	Re-decorating process on going throughout the schools over an extended period of time.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	All doors painted grey, with contrasting handles and kick and push plates.
10. To de-clutter PE, dining halls and other environments and create better storage in communal areas.	Annual audit of environments.	Annually.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	All areas will be tidy and the risk of tripping over clutter will be reduced.
11. Sound reduction in communal areas and some classrooms to support ASD pupils	During on-going redecoration programme, sound absorption boards or false ceilings to be built in classes and communal areas such as halls.	To be completed as part of the redecoration programmes.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	Learning environments and communal areas will be quieter.
12. Sink splash backs in classrooms and in toilets to contrast with the sink, taps and work tops to support visually impaired children.	During on-going redecoration programme, splash backs to be changed around sinks.	To be completed as part of the redecoration programmes.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	Sink splash backs will contrast with sinks, taps and work tops.
13. External post protectors to prevent injury to visually impaired pupils.	During on-going refurbishment programme, install post protectors on all support posts for shelter roofs in playground.	To be completed as part of the refurbishment programmes.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	All support posts will have post protectors

14. Finger guards on doors	During on-going refurbishment programme, install finger guards on all doors.	To be completed as part of the refurbishment programmes.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	All doors have finger guards.
16. Steps and Stair edging.	All steps and stairs should be clearly demarcated	To be completed as part of the refurbishment programmes.	Senior Leader for Inclusion and Site Manager.	All stairs and steps are clearly visible to visually impaired pupils.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Trust Board.

