



The Burgess Hill Academy Accessibility Policy and Plan

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1. Purpose

The Burgess Hill Academy is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which disabled students can participate fully in academy life.

This policy and plan set out how the academy will, over time:

- increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment so that disabled students can take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided by the academy; and
- improve the availability of accessible information for disabled students.

The academy will take reasonable and proportionate steps to remove or reduce disadvantages experienced by disabled students. Accessibility will be considered in relation to current students and, as far as reasonably practicable, anticipated future needs.

The plan also informs the academy's approach to accessibility for disabled staff, parents, carers, governors and visitors. Separate duties may apply to these groups under employment, service provision and other provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

2. Legal framework

This policy and plan have been prepared with regard to:

- the Equality Act 2010, including Schedule 10;
- the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- the Equality Act 2010: advice for schools;
- the academy's duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students;
- the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- relevant building, fire safety, health and safety and information-accessibility requirements.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled where they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A disability may be visible or non-visible. It may include physical, sensory, cognitive, neurological, developmental or mental health impairments. A student may be disabled under the Equality Act without being identified as having special educational needs, and not every student with special educational needs will necessarily meet the legal definition of disability.

The academy will not discriminate unlawfully against a student because of disability or because of something arising from disability. It will consider reasonable adjustments to policies, practices, procedures and the provision of auxiliary aids and services where a disabled student would otherwise experience a substantial disadvantage.

3. Relationship with other academy documents

This policy should be read alongside the academy's:

- SEND Policy;
- SEND Information Report;
- Equality Information and Objectives;



- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Curriculum Policy;
- Admissions arrangements;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Educational Visits Policy;
- Examination and Access Arrangements procedures;
- Emergency evacuation and fire safety procedures;
- Concerns and Complaints Policy.

Where a Trust-wide policy applies, this accessibility plan describes how that policy is implemented locally at The Burgess Hill Academy.

4. Academy vision and principles

At The Burgess Hill Academy, we believe that school should give every student the knowledge, experiences and opportunities they need to thrive. We want our students to leave us as confident, capable young people with excellent outcomes and a wide range of choices open to them for the future.

Through our values of ambition, curiosity, determination and kindness, we work together to create an inclusive and supportive community where every student belongs.

In applying this plan, the academy will:

- maintain high expectations for disabled students;
- identify and remove barriers to participation;
- listen to students and their parents or carers;
- make decisions based on individual need rather than diagnosis alone;
- consider accessibility when policies, systems, curriculum plans and facilities are developed;
- ensure that reasonable adjustments are communicated clearly to relevant staff;
- provide staff with appropriate information, support and training;
- monitor whether agreed adjustments are being implemented;
- balance individual need with safeguarding, health and safety and the needs of the wider academy community;
- avoid assumptions that disabled students cannot participate in particular subjects, activities, visits or experiences.

5. Identifying and assessing accessibility needs

Accessibility needs may be identified through:

- transition information from primary schools or previous settings;
- admissions documentation;
- information provided by students, parents or carers;
- SEND assessment and review processes;
- education, health and care plans;
- medical information and individual healthcare plans;



- advice from health, social care or specialist education professionals;
- examination access-arrangement assessments;
- observations of a student's participation, progress, attendance or wellbeing;
- accessibility audits and site inspections;
- student, parent and staff feedback.

The academy will seek relevant information before a student starts wherever possible. Where needs emerge after admission, the academy will assess and respond to them promptly.

Information will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with data-protection requirements. Staff are responsible for reading and applying the information provided about students they teach or supervise.

Where appropriate, the academy will prepare individual arrangements such as:

- a student passport or equivalent support document;
- an individual healthcare plan;
- a personal emergency evacuation plan;
- a risk assessment;
- an examination access-arrangement plan;
- an individual transition or reintegration plan.

These documents will be reviewed when needs or circumstances change and at the intervals specified within the relevant plan.

6. Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be determined individually. The academy will consider:

- the nature and extent of the disadvantage;
- the student's identified needs and views;
- advice from parents, carers and relevant professionals;
- the effectiveness of the proposed adjustment;
- practical implementation;
- safeguarding and health and safety;
- the financial and staffing implications;
- the availability of external support or funding;
- the effect on other students and the academy's work;
- whether an alternative adjustment could achieve the same outcome more effectively.

The academy will not charge a student or their family for a reasonable adjustment required under the Equality Act.

Examples may include:

- adapting teaching methods, resources or classroom organisation;
- providing information in an alternative format;
- allowing additional time to move between lessons;
- changing a room or route;
- using appropriate specialist equipment or technology;
- providing an auxiliary aid or service;



- adapting participation in physical activities without unnecessarily removing the student from the curriculum;
- adjusting academy procedures where these place a disabled student at a substantial disadvantage;
- making appropriate examination access arrangements in line with current awarding-body requirements.

An adjustment that is reasonable for one student may not be necessary or appropriate for another. Decisions will be recorded where they are significant, complex or subject to review.

7. Access to the curriculum

The academy aims to ensure that disabled students can participate in a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.

Subject and pastoral leaders will consider accessibility when planning:

- schemes of learning;
- classroom teaching;
- practical activities;
- assessment;
- homework;
- educational visits;
- enrichment and extra-curricular activities;
- careers education and preparation for adulthood;
- transition between key stages and post-16 destinations.

Teachers are responsible for using the information available to them and making planned adaptations that enable students to access learning. Adaptations may include:

- clear explanations and modelling;
- suitable seating and classroom positioning;
- accessible presentation of written and visual information;
- adapted or specialist equipment;
- use of assistive technology;
- additional processing or response time;
- opportunities to rehearse and revisit learning;
- alternative ways of recording or demonstrating understanding;
- adjustments to practical tasks;
- appropriate sensory or movement arrangements;
- support with communication and interaction;
- targeted adult support where this is required and effective.

Adaptation should enable access without unnecessarily reducing curriculum ambition or creating dependence.

The academy will monitor the implementation and impact of classroom adjustments through its normal quality-assurance, SEND review and line-management processes.

8. Educational visits, enrichment and wider academy life

Disabled students will not be excluded from visits, clubs, sporting activities, student leadership or other academy opportunities solely because of disability.



The academy will consider reasonable adjustments during the initial planning stage rather than after arrangements have been finalised. This may include:

- accessible transport and venues;
- additional staffing;
- medication and healthcare arrangements;
- accessible accommodation;
- adapted equipment or activities;
- individual risk assessment;
- communication with the student, family and relevant professionals;
- an alternative means of achieving the intended educational outcome where full participation in a particular activity is not reasonably possible.

Any decision that a student cannot participate will be based on a specific assessment of risk and available adjustments, not a general assumption about their disability.

9. Examinations and assessments

The academy will identify and assess potential examination access needs promptly.

Access arrangements will:

- reflect the student's normal way of working where required;
- be supported by appropriate evidence;
- comply with current Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding-body regulations;
- be communicated to relevant students and staff;
- be tested through internal assessments and mock examinations where appropriate;
- be reviewed when a student's needs or usual way of working changes.

The SENDCo, examinations team, teaching staff and relevant leaders will work together to ensure that eligible students can access examinations fairly while maintaining the integrity of the assessment.

10. Physical environment

The academy will take reasonable steps over time to improve access to its buildings, grounds, facilities and services.

Accessibility considerations will inform:

- estates planning;
- maintenance and refurbishment;
- capital projects;
- room allocation;
- signage and wayfinding;
- lighting and acoustics;
- accessible toilet provision;
- entrances, exits and circulation routes;
- parking and arrival arrangements;
- emergency evacuation;



- the purchase and location of equipment.

The academy will complete and maintain an accessibility audit of its physical environment. Identified barriers will be assessed according to:

- risk;
- impact on current and anticipated users;
- legal and safety requirements;
- feasibility;
- cost;
- planned maintenance or capital works.

Not all areas of an existing site may be immediately physically accessible. Where a barrier cannot be removed promptly, the academy will consider reasonable alternative arrangements, such as changing the location in which a service, lesson, meeting or activity is provided.

Corridors, entrances, evacuation routes and accessible facilities must not be obstructed. Staff should report physical-accessibility concerns through the academy's established site-reporting procedure.

11. Emergency evacuation

Where a student, member of staff or regular visitor may require assistance to evacuate safely, an appropriate personal emergency evacuation plan will be prepared.

The plan will identify:

- the assistance required;
- named roles or responsible teams;
- relevant routes and assembly arrangements;
- equipment or refuge arrangements, where applicable;
- arrangements during lessons, social time and extra-curricular activities;
- how the plan will be communicated and practised;
- the review date.

Personal emergency evacuation plans will be reviewed when the individual's needs, timetable, location or academy arrangements change.

The academy's fire-risk assessment and emergency procedures will take account of disabled users and visitors.

12. Accessible information and communication

The academy will take reasonable steps to provide information to disabled students in an accessible format and within a reasonable period.

Depending on need, formats may include:

- large print;
- simplified or plain-language versions;
- electronic formats compatible with assistive technology;
- audio or verbal explanation;
- symbols, diagrams or visual supports;



- appropriately formatted and contrasted documents;
- translated information or interpretation where language, rather than disability, is the barrier;
- communication through a meeting or telephone call.

Students and families may request an alternative format by contacting the academy office or SEND team.

Staff preparing important communications should consider:

- font size and readability;
- layout and spacing;
- headings and document structure;
- colour contrast;
- meaningful link text;
- accessibility of attached documents;
- whether technical or complex language is necessary.

The academy will maintain an accessibility statement for its website and review website accessibility in accordance with applicable requirements.

13. Training and staff responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to support accessibility within their role.

The academy will provide induction, information and professional development appropriate to staff responsibilities. This may include:

- disability awareness;
- the Equality Act and reasonable adjustments;
- inclusive classroom practice;
- use of student passports and SEND information;
- supporting sensory, physical, communication and cognitive needs;
- medical needs;
- assistive technology;
- examination access arrangements;
- emergency evacuation;
- accessible communication.

Leaders will not assume that distributing information is sufficient. Implementation will be checked through line management, quality assurance, case review and feedback.

Where an agreed adjustment is not being implemented, the relevant leader will clarify expectations, provide support and follow up. Repeated failure to apply agreed arrangements will be addressed through the academy's normal management processes.

14. Roles and accountability

14.1 Sussex Learning Trust

The Trust is responsible for ensuring that the academy meets its legal obligations as the responsible body and that appropriate governance, estates and resource arrangements support the implementation of this plan.



14.2 Local Governing Body

- approve or recommend approval of the plan in accordance with the Trust's scheme of delegation;
- monitor its implementation;
- receive evidence of progress against the action plan;
- provide appropriate support and challenge;
- consider accessibility when reviewing academy strategy and resources.

14.3 Headteacher

- ensure that the plan is implemented;
- allocate clear leadership responsibility;
- ensure that accessibility is considered in strategic and financial planning;
- report significant risks or resource requirements to the Trust and Local Governing Body.

14.4 Vice Principal responsible for Inclusion

- provide strategic oversight of the plan;
- coordinate annual review and reporting;
- ensure that curriculum, pastoral and SEND systems identify barriers;
- monitor whether agreed adjustments are communicated and implemented;
- coordinate work across the SEND, pastoral, curriculum and estates teams.

14.5 SENDCo

- support the identification and assessment of individual needs;
- advise staff on reasonable adjustments and inclusive provision;
- coordinate relevant student plans and specialist advice;
- support transition;
- monitor the effectiveness of provision for students with SEND and disabilities.

14.6 Site and facilities lead

- maintain the physical-accessibility audit;
- ensure accessibility is considered in maintenance and capital planning;
- report significant barriers, defects and resource needs;
- ensure accessible routes and facilities are maintained appropriately.

14.7 Curriculum and subject leaders

- ensure curriculum planning is accessible and appropriately ambitious;
- monitor the application of agreed adjustments;
- address inconsistency in classroom implementation;
- consider accessibility in visits, practical work, assessment and enrichment.

14.8 All staff

- read relevant information about the students they teach or supervise;
- apply agreed reasonable adjustments;
- maintain accessible and safe working environments;



- raise concerns promptly;
- contribute to review and evaluation where requested.

15. Consultation

The academy will take account of the views of disabled students, parents and carers, staff, governors, Trust leaders and relevant health, education, social care and accessibility professionals.

Consultation will be proportionate to the issue being considered. Individual students and families will be involved in decisions about significant adjustments affecting them wherever appropriate.

Student and parent feedback will be used to assess whether arrangements work in practice rather than relying solely on evidence that a process exists.

16. Resources

The academy will consider the resources required to implement this plan through its annual budget, staffing, curriculum and estates-planning processes.

Some improvements may depend upon Trust approval, capital funding, landlord or planning consent, specialist assessment, external-agency support or procurement timescales.

Where a longer-term physical change cannot be completed immediately, the academy will consider interim arrangements to reduce disadvantage.

A lack of immediate capital funding will not remove the duty to consider other reasonable adjustments.

17. Monitoring and review

This accessibility plan covers the three-year period from September 2026 to August 2029.

The action plan will be reviewed at least annually. It may be updated sooner where a new student or member of the academy community has significant access needs, a physical or procedural barrier is identified, the academy undertakes significant building or curriculum changes, legislation or statutory guidance changes, or monitoring shows that an action is not being implemented or is not having the intended effect.

Progress will be evaluated using evidence such as completed actions, accessibility audits, student and parent feedback, participation in curriculum and enrichment, implementation of individual adjustments, examination-access evidence, complaints and concerns, site inspection and evacuation records, quality-assurance findings and governor monitoring.

The Local Governing Body will receive an annual progress report.

18. Concerns and complaints

Accessibility concerns should normally be raised promptly with the relevant member of staff, SENDCo or senior leader so that the academy has an opportunity to investigate and resolve the issue.

Formal complaints will be considered under the Trust's Concerns and Complaints Policy.

This does not affect a person's right to use any external process available to them. The academy may seek advice from the Trust, local authority, legal advisers or other relevant bodies where a matter is complex or potentially discriminatory.



Accessibility Action Plan 2026-2029

The actions below establish the academy's initial priorities for the three-year period. They will be refined through annual review and evidence from accessibility audits, individual cases, student and parent feedback, quality assurance and estates planning.

Strand 1: Increasing access to the curriculum

Priority	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence and success measure
Accurate information about students' access needs	Audit student passports and other key records; establish a clear review cycle; confirm that relevant information is available to all staff who need it.	SENDCo	Audit by October 2026; termly review	Current information is available for identified students; staff checks show that information is understood and used.
Consistent implementation of reasonable adjustments	Include agreed adjustments in SEND and teaching quality assurance; identify strong practice and inconsistency; provide support and follow-up.	Vice Principal responsible for Inclusion and Teaching and Learning Assurance Lead	From September 2026; termly reporting	Quality assurance shows improved consistency; repeated omissions are followed up; student feedback indicates that adjustments are working.
Effective transition arrangements	Strengthen transfer of accessibility, medical and SEND information from primary schools and previous settings; agree arrangements before entry where possible.	SENDCo and transition lead	Annually by July; ongoing for in-year admissions	Necessary plans are in place before or promptly after admission; families do not need to repeat key information unnecessarily.
Access to educational visits and enrichment	Add an accessibility prompt to trip planning; monitor participation by disabled and SEND students; address identified barriers.	Educational Visits Coordinator and Personal Development Lead	Revised process by October 2026; termly monitoring	Trip documentation demonstrates early consideration of adjustments; participation gaps are identified and reduced.
Secure examination access arrangements	Review identification, evidence, normal way of working, testing and communication of access arrangements.	SENDCo, Examinations Officer and curriculum lead	Annual cycle; reviewed after each	Eligible students receive approved arrangements consistently; internal



Priority	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence and success measure
			examination series	checks identify and resolve errors promptly.
Develop staff expertise	Deliver planned training based on identified student needs and quality-assurance findings, including sensory, physical, communication and neurodevelopmental needs.	SENDCo and Teaching and Learning Assurance Lead	Programme agreed by October 2026	Staff feedback and quality assurance demonstrate improved understanding and implementation.

Strand 2: Improving the physical environment

Priority	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence and success measure
Accurate physical-accessibility baseline	Complete a whole-site accessibility audit covering entrances, routes, teaching areas, toilets, signage, lighting, acoustics, parking and external spaces.	Site and facilities lead with Vice Principal responsible for Inclusion	By December 2026	Audit completed, risks prioritised and costed actions assigned.
Safe and unobstructed access	Include accessible routes, entrances, toilets and evacuation routes in routine site checks; maintain a clear reporting route for defects.	Site and facilities lead	From September 2026	Inspection records show regular checks; identified obstructions and defects are addressed promptly.
Effective emergency arrangements	Identify students and staff requiring a personal emergency evacuation plan; review plans following timetable, room or need changes; practise arrangements appropriately.	Site lead, SENDCo and DSL	Initial review by September 2026; ongoing	All identified individuals have a current plan; relevant staff understand their role.
Accessibility within estates decisions	Include accessibility in specifications for refurbishment, signage,	Headteacher and site lead	Ongoing	Project documentation records accessibility



Priority	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence and success measure
	furniture, equipment and capital projects.			considerations and any specialist advice.
Alternative arrangements where building changes are not immediate	Identify alternative rooms, routes, meeting arrangements or service-delivery options for inaccessible areas.	Site lead and relevant senior leader	As required	Disabled users can access the relevant education, meeting or service through a safe and workable arrangement.
Prioritised longer-term works	Produce a costed improvement schedule from the audit and submit significant works through Trust estates and budget-planning processes.	Headteacher and site lead	Spring 2027, then annual review	Agreed works appear in the academy or Trust estates plan with owners and indicative timescales.

Strand 3: Improving accessible information

Priority	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence and success measure
Straightforward requests for alternative formats	Publish a clear statement explaining how students and families can request information in another format.	Academy communications lead and SENDCo	By October 2026	Information is clearly available on the website and in key communications.
Accessible academy documents	Establish minimum standards for headings, fonts, contrast, layout, links and attached documents; provide staff guidance.	Academy communications lead	Guidance by December 2026	Sample checks show increased compliance with agreed document standards.
Website accessibility	Complete an annual review of the website and maintain the required website accessibility statement.	Academy or Trust website lead	Annual	Current statement is published; identified issues have actions and timescales.
Accessible SEND and review information	Ask students and families about communication needs and provide suitable formats	SENDCo and pastoral leaders	Ongoing	Communication preferences are recorded where needed; families



Priority	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence and success measure
	for reviews and significant decisions.			can participate meaningfully in reviews.
Accessible meetings and events	Ask about access requirements when arranging significant meetings and events; provide an accessible alternative where required.	Academy administration team and event leads	From September 2026	Event and meeting arrangements demonstrate that identified needs have been addressed.

Document Version Control

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September 2026	v1		LGB	Headteacher