



Irlam and Cadishead Academy

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IRLAM & CADISHEAD ACADEMY

Accessibility Policy 2025-26

Document Owner	SENDCo - Mrs L Hren
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Approved By	Principal - Mr C Leader

Introduction

This policy sets out how Irlam and Cadishead Academy will work to promote disability equality. We will seek to ensure that as far as possible there are no barriers to students, parents, staff or visitors accessing the curriculum, the premises or information about school activities. The school has a duty to ensure that disabled students can fully participate in the school curriculum. The physical environment should as far as possible support and increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of all school services. This plan addresses our specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 which specifies that disability is a protected characteristic. There is a duty for schools to make reasonable adjustments in favour of disabled people. The duty is anticipatory and continuing to reflect the policy of the EA, which is 'to provide access to a service as close as it is reasonably possible to get to the standard normally offered to the public at large'.

The plan should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy and the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

There are three elements to the reasonable adjustment duty:

1. A requirement to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid provisions, criteria or practices that put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage, i.e. not to discriminate against disabled people in admissions, exclusions, provision of education and other services.
2. A requirement to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid physical features which put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage i.e. not to treat disabled people less favorably.
3. A requirement to take such steps as is reasonable to provide auxiliary aids or services without which a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled, i.e. to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage.

The duty does not require schools to make reasonable adjustments to avoid disadvantageous physical features as this is covered by the planning duties. (Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010).

Accessibility Planning and Review

The school recognises its duty under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 to produce and maintain a written Accessibility Plan. This plan will set out specific objectives to improve

access to the curriculum, the physical environment, and the provision of information. The Accessibility Plan will include clear targets, timeframes, success criteria and named responsible staff. It will be reviewed annually by the Principal and the Finance, Premises and HR Committee, and revised as necessary to reflect changes in student needs, site developments and statutory guidance.

DDA Definition of Disability

The disability discrimination duties and the planning duties are owed to all pupils who are defined by the Equality Act as being disabled. The definition of a disabled person is someone who has:

‘A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

Definition of the terms:

- ‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairments;
- ‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or
- consisting of a mental illness;
- ‘substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’;
- ‘long-term’ is defined as 12 months or more.

The test of whether an impairment affects normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects one of the following:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity;
- Physical co-ordination;
- 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.

Mental and Physical Impairments

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the pupil’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above. Some progressive conditions, such as cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS are included before they have an effect on the pupil’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Special Educational Needs and Disability

Though the definition of disability comes from the EA and the definition of special educational needs comes from the Education Act 1996, there is a significant overlap between the two groups of children. The definition of SEND includes many, but not necessarily all, disabled children: a disabled child has special educational needs if they have a disability and need special educational provision to be made for them in order to be able to access the education which is available locally.

Involvement of Disabled People and Their Carers

The school works collaboratively with people who have a disability, and other people who have experience of disability, e.g. parents of students with a disability, to formulate an action plan in meeting our General Equality duty towards disabled people. The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities.

Disability data, including hidden disability, is actively sought from the parents/carers of students. Staff, governors and parents will also be invited to disclose a disability. Disability data will be held confidentially.

Physical Access

Most areas of the academy are accessible by wheelchair. There is lift access to the each floor, and disabled access to the two upper floors. There are stairs to reach nearly all parts of the school. There is disabled access to the classrooms on each floor of the building.

For students, staff and visitors with physical or sensory difficulties, the school will seek to ensure that the school is made accessible by:

- use of the lift
- providing disabled toilets
- providing ramps where possible
- providing disabled parking spaces
- providing adequate lighting on stairs, corridors and in classrooms
- the physical environment of the school will be monitored by the Finance, Premises and HR Committee to ensure all reasonable adjustments are implemented planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site to improve access, lighting and more accessible fixtures and fittings

The school will seek to ensure that safety is maintained by:

- Providing appropriate emergency and evacuation procedures for visitors, staff and students with physical disabilities

- Carrying our Risk assessments by specialist teachers/third party advisers when students with physical/sensory needs join the school and then at least annually

Access to the Curriculum

The school will seek to ensure that students who have disabilities can access the curriculum by:

- recruitment and flexible use of support staff, e.g. Specialist TAs and staff trained to meet the needs of the students.
- lessons are adapted and accessible to all students
- intervention programmes in place for students who require additional support
- classrooms are suitably adapted
- provision of ICT to enhance learning opportunities
- students on the learning support and disability register are included in extra-curricular
- activities with support as necessary
- students access off-site visits with support and/or adaptation as necessary
- students encouraged to take part in all lessons including drama and PE
- overcoming potential barriers to learning for individuals and groups of students
- liaison with external agencies, specialist teachers, health professionals to support and enhance
- access to the curriculum
- school promotes peer support mechanism and ensures students have a voice in decisions
- which affect them, e.g. School Council

Digital Accessibility

The school recognizes the importance of digital accessibility in ensuring that all students, staff, parents and visitors can access online learning platforms, digital communications and electronic resources. The school will seek to ensure that its website, virtual learning environments, and digital communications are compliant with accessibility standards. Staff will be supported to create accessible digital content, and students with disabilities will be provided with appropriate assistive technologies to enable full participation in digital learning. The school will work with IT providers and external agencies to ensure that digital systems are inclusive and meet the needs of all users.

Communications

The school will seek to ensure that communications are clear and appropriate in terms of language to ensure accessibility. The school will make itself aware of local services for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested. The school provides reading and scribing help with external examinations where this is deemed necessary, and provides laptops for students who need this facility for exams. Translators can

be arranged to provide essential information, e.g. regarding statutory assessment, Admissions, child protection issues and information/parents' evenings or meetings. Parents/Carers who have literacy difficulties can access information on request through assistance from members of staff.

Publication and Accessibility of the Policy and Plan

The Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website and made available in alternative formats upon request. Copies will be shared with staff, governors and parents/carers. The school will ensure that the documents are accessible to all stakeholders, including those with literacy difficulties or language barriers, through the use of translation services, staff support and accessible formatting

Financial Planning and Control

The Principal and governors, together with the Buildings and Planning and Finance Committees will review the financial implications of the Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process.