

PRIORY FEDERATION OF ACADEMIES TRUST

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN – THE PRIORY WITHAM ACADEMY

Date: November 2021

Next review date: November 2024

1. Introduction

The Priory Federation of Academies Trust is committed to providing equality of provision to all visitors, staff and students who use our facilities.

Our aim is to provide a teaching and learning environment where students can realise their full potential regardless of any disability, in line with The Equality Act 2010. Under the Equality Act, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long term’ adverse effect on an individual’s ability to carry out normal daily activities.

The pledge of the Trust:

- Not to treat anyone with a disability less favourably because of their disability;
- Not to treat anyone with a disability less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- To make reasonable adjustments for anyone with a disability, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled students;
- To educate and inform regarding disabilities and to promote equality amongst peers;
- To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum of the Academy;
- To improve the learning environment in order to increase the extent to which students and adults with a disability can take advantage of education and associated services.

It is a requirement that the Academy’s accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised every three years following implementation.

2. The purpose and direction of the Trust

The Trust identifies its focus and dedication to the children, young people and adults of the local community, which includes all those with disabilities. This commitment also includes those who may wish to work within an Academy, and may have disabilities. Through its ethos, environment and curriculum, the Trust will enable each individual to realise their true potential and encourage them to make positive contributions to society and prepare them for adult life. The learning environment and resources will support social inclusion and provide a safe and secure place where everyone matters.

The Trust is committed to the providing a culture of inclusion, and ensuring that those with disabilities are able to participate.

Wherever possible, the Trust is committed to removing barriers for students and adults with disabilities and aims to include them in all aspects of development. The Trust is also committed to ensuring that they have a voice within the respective Academy, and are actively engaged in contributing to the identification and development of the provision for students and adults with disabilities.

The Trust works with staff in order to ensure that the policies, practices and procedures of the Academy consider the needs of anyone with a disability in order to ensure that barriers to learning are removed.

3. The Needs of Disabled Students and Adults

The Trust will review the needs of students and adults involved in the Academy. In relation to this, where a specific disability is identified, the respective Academy will endeavour to work to provide the resources/adaptations required, in order to ensure equality of access wherever possible.

4. Increasing Participation

The Trust strives to ensure maximum participation from all students and staff and will work collaboratively with outside agencies in order to coordinate necessary resources to achieve this goal.

5. Increasing Participation in Wider School Activities

The Trust is committed to ensuring that students with a disability are, as far as possible, included in Academy life, which includes wider activities, for example, educational visits.

In line with this, although all students are able to access wider school activities, additional activities and targeted opportunities are provided, in some cases with additional resources provided, in order to maximise the opportunities for students with disabilities to engage.

6. Improving the Accessibility of the Physical Environment

The Trust has considered accessibility issues across all of the sites within its portfolio, and will continue to consider building requirements in relation to students with disabilities. The Trust will also consider further amendments to the physical environment where necessary.

7. Management, Co-ordination and Implementation

The Head of each Academy is responsible for the management and implementation of their respective accessibility plan. They will work in conjunction with the SENCO, the Health and Safety Liaison, Site Manager and Senior Leadership Team at their Academy in order to co-ordinate resources.

8. Accessibility Provisions on site

The Priory Witham Academy is committed to providing equality of provision to all visitors, teachers and students who use our facilities.

To the front of the main building there are six parking bays reserved for the exclusive use of visitors, with an additional six bays for disabled parking.

Lowered kerbs provide wheelchair access from each of the designated disabled parking bays. The Academy reception, where all visitors are signed in and out, has been designed with a lowered desk area to facilitate ease of use for those in wheelchairs.

All internal doors within the building are disability friendly and are 860cm wide throughout the general concourse of the building, with doors of 910cm on disabled toilets.

There are numerous purpose designed disabled toilets on both floors; these are equipped accordingly with hand rails, and emergency pull cords signalling to the main Admin office, should the user require assistance.

The site has two storeys which are served by two lifts, one situated in the main reception area outside the site office D29 and a second lift situated outside B20 in B block. Each has emergency call features should the lift malfunction in use.

In the event of an emergency - evacuation and fire alarm:

The site has four disabled refuge points: one near the site office on the first floor; another near reception also on the first floor; and two in B block outside BU24 and BU13. Each refuge has an audio call point linking to the Admin main office.

The fire evacuation plan takes into account those students and staff who may require assistance to exit the building, while a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) system is in place. Notices to all visitors who may require a temporary visitor's PEEP are displayed in the reception area and, if necessary, requirements, planning and provision are recorded at this point.