



THAMES LEARNING TRUST

Name of Policy	Accessibility Statement
Scope of Policy	This statement applies to all Academies within The Thames Learning Trust
Approved by	Chief Executive Officer
Date of Approval	February 2026
Review period	Annually
Review Date	February 2027

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER



THAMES LEARNING TRUST

1. Purpose

Thames Learning Trust (TLT) is committed to removing barriers so that disabled pupils can access education and wider school life on an equitable basis. This policy sets out the Trust-wide expectations for accessibility and the requirement for each academy to publish and implement an accessibility plan.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all pupils (including prospective pupils), families, and visitors with disabilities;
- all staff and volunteers involved in curriculum planning, enrichment, trips, communications, premises, and support arrangements.

3. Legal and statutory context

TLT academies must meet duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations) and the requirement to prepare and implement accessibility plans (Schedule 10).

DfE statutory policy guidance expects accessibility plans to be reviewed every 3 years. Equality objectives must be published at least every 4 years.

4. Definitions

- **Disability:** A physical or mental impairment with a substantial and long-term adverse effect on normal day-to-day activities (Equality Act definition).
- **Reasonable adjustments:** Steps taken to avoid a disabled pupil being placed at a substantial disadvantage.
- **Auxiliary aids/services:** Practical supports or services provided to reduce disadvantage (e.g., specialist equipment, communication support).

5. Roles and responsibilities

Trust Board

- Holds overall accountability for compliance across TLT.
- Receives an annual summary of accessibility plan progress and key risks/barriers.

Chief Executive Officer / Trust Executive

- Ensures a consistent Trust-wide approach, resourcing, and oversight.

Principal (each academy)

- Responsible for ensuring the academy has an up-to-date accessibility plan, published and implemented.

SENCO

- Lead identification of barriers, reasonable adjustments, and coordination of support (including external agencies).

Site Managers

- Supports access audits, premises prioritisation, and delivery of physical environment actions.

All staff

- Implement reasonable adjustments in day-to-day practice and contribute to inclusive planning.

6. Accessibility Plans (academy-level requirement)

Each academy must maintain an Accessibility Plan covering the three required areas:

- increasing access to the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment;
- improving the delivery of information.

Plan cycle

- The plan will cover a 3-year period and be formally refreshed at least every 3 years.
- Progress against actions will be reviewed at least annually and the plan updated as needed (including following significant building work, cohort changes, or emerging needs).

Publication

- Each academy will publish its Accessibility Plan on its website and make it available in alternative formats on request.

Consultation

- Plans should be informed by consultation with pupils (where appropriate), parents/carers, staff, and relevant professionals.

7. Reasonable adjustments and auxiliary aids

Academies must make reasonable adjustments so disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage, including providing auxiliary aids and services where required.

TLT expectation

- Adjustments should be considered proactively (not only in response to problems).
- Many adjustments are low- or no-cost and should be embedded in quality-first teaching and routine planning.

Requesting adjustments

- Parents/carers or pupils may raise needs through the SENCO/INCo, pastoral lead, or class teacher.
- Requests will be assessed promptly, with decisions recorded and reviewed regularly.

8. Admissions, transition, and fair access

All TLT academies follow the School Admissions Code and local admissions processes.

- The academy must not discriminate in its admissions arrangements or processes.
- Where a pupil has an EHCP naming the school, the pupil must be admitted.

- The academy will work with the Local Authority and families to support accessible transition arrangements (e.g., visits, access arrangements, and planning meetings).

9. Pupils with medical conditions

TLT expects every academy to have clear arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions so they can access education and wider opportunities.

- No pupil should be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place because medical arrangements are not yet in place.
- Staff training and operational support will be planned so arrangements are safe, clear, and workable.

10. Educational visits and learning outside the classroom

TLT expects educational visits to be planned on the assumption that all pupils can participate. Academies must:

- involve parents/carers and pupils early, particularly for residential visits;
- make reasonable adjustments (e.g., staffing, transport, venue choice) so disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage;
- ensure risk assessments explicitly address inclusion and accessibility.

11. Accessible information and communication

Academies will provide information in accessible formats on request (e.g., large print, simplified language, assistive technology compatible formats) and will consider communication needs in routine engagement (parents' evenings, meetings, complaints processes).

12. Training and awareness

Academies will ensure staff have appropriate training/briefing so that disability equality considerations inform curriculum planning and behaviour approaches, and staff understand how to seek advice and implement reasonable adjustments.

13. Monitoring and review

Academy level

- Termly or annual review of plan actions (as determined locally), with an annual published update where appropriate.

Trust level

- An annual summary report to the Trust Board covering progress against plan actions, key barriers and risks, and priorities requiring capital/estates investment.

This Trust policy is reviewed annually and updated earlier if legislation or Trust structures change.

14. Links with other policies (academy and Trust)

- Risk assessment policy
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives statement
- SEN information report
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Appendix A

Reasonable adjustments in the classroom: a checklist

This is a list of practical classroom arrangements that teachers found useful in thinking of a range of adjustments they might want to make, rather than an exhaustive list.

1. Pre-planning information

- Have you been given information on the nature and degree of impairment and the access needs of the disabled pupils in the class?
- Have you been shown or do you know how these disabled pupils' access needs and personal care needs will be met in the class?
- If you don't know how the disabled pupils' needs will/can be met, seek advice from SENCO, Head of Department, Head or Deputy or from other agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Advisory Teacher or Health Professionals.

2. What preparation have you made with the class/group for:

- one-to-one peer support
- collaborative teaming group work
- valuing difference of race, gender, ethnicity, disability or religion
- How do you ensure that mutual respect is encouraged within your classroom?
- Are you clear about how to deal with bullying and harassment in the class?

3. Lesson planning: how will you support the needs of all learners?

- Consider: timing, variation of activities, types of activities [concrete/abstract], reinforcement of key ideas, extension work, recall of previous work, links to future work, clear instructions.
- Will the content of the lesson engage all pupils from the beginning?
- Will there be sufficient variation in activities and pace to engage all?
- Are you able to access specially adapted equipment for some students to enable them to participate fully?
- If not, can an alternative way be found?
- Will the diversified and differentiated work allow all pupils to experience success at their optimum level?

4. What different teaching styles are you going to use?

- Visual e.g. use photos, mind maps, maps and diagrams, pictures, film clips, wall displays?
- Auditory e.g. use story telling, talking, effective questions, problem solving, clear sequencing, music, singing?
- Kinaesthetic e.g. use movement, role play, artefacts, use the environment

5. Prepared materials

- Are written materials accessible to all: formats; readability; length; content?
- Scaffolding [practical materials] e.g. writing frames, pictograms, sounds, pictures, objects, artefacts, word lists, number lines, etc, are they accessible to all?
- Appropriate use of augmented communication and ICT

6. Self-presentation

- Have you thought about how you will: react to situations of stress, humour, seriousness, embarrassing questions; offer encouragement to all; challenge the behaviour not the child?
- Are all the students aware that you might approach the behaviour of some students in a different manner to the rest of the class?
- How will you use your voice in the lesson, eg: volume, tone, and make sure all children are understanding you?
- Where will you position yourself in the classroom and when?

7. Use of support staff

- Have you met with or at least communicated with support staff before the lesson?
- How are you going to use other adult support in the lesson?
- Does their use allow all children to be equally included in the class activities?
- If you are using support staff for withdrawal, how do you know the pupils are gaining from this?
- If you are using withdrawal, how are the groups organised?

8. Classroom organisation

- Is seating carefully planned and/or the activity accessible for pupils with:
 - mobility impairments e.g. circulation space, table height
 - hearing impairments e.g. sight line for lip reading/ interpreter/ no glare
 - visually impaired e.g. maximise residual sight, if touch can reach
 - pupils with challenging behaviour e.g. in adult gaze; at front for eye contact
 - pupils with short attention span/easily distracted, eg: sit on own
 - learning difficulties who need a lot of support, eg: next to peer supporter
 - short attention span, eg: distraction free zone
- What seating plans are you using and why?
- Will seating plans make use of peer support and how?

9. How will you organise and group pupils in lessons?

- Friendship groupings?
- Mixed sex/same sex groupings?
- Mixed ability/same ability groupings?
- Specific pairs of pupils working together, eg: stronger reader/weaker reader?

10. How will you deal with unexpected incidents?

- Are you aware of the systems for dealing with unexpected incidents, eg: evacuation, fainting or fits, incontinence, medical emergencies?

11. How will you ensure that all students feel equally valued through their experiences of:

- the allocation of teacher and support staff time
- being listened to/ paid attention to
- being respected
- achieving
- interacting with their peers

12. How will you assess the outcomes?

- Do you have a scheme for assessing the achievements of all?
- Have you looked at alternative forms of assessment? e.g. video recording progress, peer evaluation, self evaluation?
- How will you involve pupils in assessing their progress?

Appendix B

Model Academy Accessibility Plan (template)

Plan period: 3 years (review annually; refresh at least every 3 years).

Use the table below to set objectives and actions across the three required areas: curriculum, physical environment, and the delivery of information.

Aim (Curriculum / Environment / Information)	Current good practice	Objective	Actions	Lead person	Target date	Success criteria / impact