



Subject: Accessibility Policy and Plan	Number: POL00139
Approved by:	Type: Policy
Managing Director	Effective: October 2021
	Revision: 2.2
	Effective: September 2024

1. Objectives

The Robert Holme Academy aims to treat all pupils fairly and with respect. To do this, we aim to provide access and equal opportunities for our students, staff, parents and visitors without discrimination regardless of their education, physical, social, sensory and emotional needs. We therefore aim to provide and continuously improve facilities and awareness for inclusion across all stakeholders, including staff and students.

As a minimum, the Robert Holme Academy (RHA) recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan and acknowledges its responsibilities not to discriminate against students because of sex, race, religion or sexual orientation as well as disability. As such, the accessibility plan complements and supports the requirements laid down in the school’s Equality and Diversity policy, which is available in the school website.

The accessibility plan covers a range of factors that may influence accessibility for disabled students and staff including, but not limited to:

- the physical environment,
- the curriculum;
- written information;
- specialist aids;
- equipment; etc.

The purpose of the plan is to:

- maintain and increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- maintain and improve the physical environment of the educational establishment to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities, and services provided;
- maintain and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students.

The Robert Holme Academy aims to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ in line with the Equality Act 2010 and follow guidance issued in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. To alleviate any disadvantages that a disabled student may face in comparison with a non-disabled student.

For new students our priority is to understand and accommodate any special educational needs, as well as any concerns that parents/carers may have. For parents/carers of all existing students, we maintain and active dialogue to understand the student’s ongoing needs, along with any developing issues and needs, including any emerging medical conditions.

2. Scope and Applicability

This policy is applicable to all members of staff and mandates the practices and actions necessary to maintain and increase accessibility to the school, it’s facilities and the curriculum for students, their parents/carers, staff and visitors with disabilities.



3. Procedure

3.1 Responsibilities

3.1.1 Responsibilities of the Managing Director

The Managing Director has overall responsibility for providing access and equal opportunities for our students, staff, parents and visitors without discrimination regardless of their education, physical, social, sensory and emotional needs.

The Managing Director is also responsible for ensuring that we maintain and improve facilities our students, staff, parents and visitors without prejudice or discrimination, as well as promoting awareness for inclusion across all stakeholders.

In this capacity, the Managing Director will:

- make sure adequate provision and reasonable funding is available for maintaining and improving facilities and access;
- ensure that all staff are accountable for providing equal opportunities to students, staff, parents and visitors without discrimination;
- review plans and ongoing improvements to ensure the aims and objectives of this policy are achieved.

3.1.2 Responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher has a primary responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher therefore:

- ensures sufficient staff are available and are adequately trained and competent to accommodate our students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities;
- communicates the aims and objectives of this policy and plan to staff and ensures their acceptance of and willingness to actively support and participate in its implementation;
- monitors compliance to this policy, along with the accessibility plan to ensure the necessary facilities and practices to accommodate students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities are maintained;
- monitors the status of the accessibility plan and corresponding actions to ensure the aims and objectives of this policy are achieved;
- ensures necessary provisions are in place to support any medical needs for staff, students and visitors;
- reports all significant deficiencies to the Managing Director and takes appropriate corrective action to address any issues.

3.1.3 Responsibilities of all Staff

All staff are responsible for making sure the requirements set out in this policy, along with the accessibility plan are implemented. All staff must take reasonable steps to ensure that students, staff, parents and visitors are treated without discrimination regardless of their education, physical, social, sensory and emotional needs.

Staff are required to seek guidance from the Headteacher or the Managing Director if they are in any doubt regarding the content of this policy of the accessibility plan.

All members of staff are also expected to make suggestions where they we can improve facilities and arrangements for students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

Individual members of staff may also be assigned specific responsibilities for elements within the policy and accessibility plan. These are identified and documented within the accessibility plan (below).



3.1.4 Responsibility of all Pupils

While pupils may not fully appreciate the needs of disabled people, they are expected to treat other pupils, teachers and visitors with tolerance and respect. They are also expected, where appropriate, to provide the necessary assistance to ensure the support, safety and comfort of others.

Pupils are also expected to listen to and follow all instructions given by staff immediately and without question.

Pupils must not interfere with, neglect, damage or misuse equipment, including equipment and provisions for accommodating attendees with disabilities.

Pupils must not access or attempt to gain access to secure areas.



3.2 Physical Environment

Changes to the premises have been made to provide full accessibility for wheelchair users. Facilities include:

- access to the rear of the premises for wheelchair users, including a ramp to the rear entry;
- widened doorways to every room;
- disabled toilet with low-level washing facilities and emergency pull-cord alarm;
- low thresholds to all rooms.

Corridors are all wide allowing good access for wheelchair users.

Outside areas are also generally flat to permit easy access for disabled users.

The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked. In the event of an emergency fire wardens ensure that the premises are evacuated in good time and provide any additional assistance that may be required to help evacuate any students, staff or visitors with disabilities.

Most of the facilities for the school are located on the ground floor, which is fully accessible to disabled users. There are two rooms upstairs where disabled pupils have no access to but these are no longer included in our teaching plan.

3.3 Curriculum

If a child is accepted for admission to the school by reason of their special educational needs, we commit to support their education and provide the necessary facilities and resources to access, as far as practicable, the full school curriculum. We do our best to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and are encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school to the best of their abilities. We provide the necessary aids and equipment in classroom to ensure that disabled pupils have equal opportunity to access to the full school curriculum.

We are aware that many issues can influence the participation of disabled students in certain elements of the curriculum, such as in the implementation of physical education. This may include, for example, the attitude and behaviour of other students, the administration of medicines, the provision of personal care, along with the lack of role models or images of others with disabilities. We therefore work alongside parents/carers and outside agencies, as necessary, to address these challenges and adapt the curriculum to the needs of children in school with physical impairments.

We also have several members of staff who are trained in Makaton who can aid with students who struggle with communication. In addition, we encourage all members of staff to have a basic understanding of Makaton gestures to further assist with students who have communication challenges.

3.4 Implementation Monitoring and Review

This policy, accessibility audit, and corresponding plan will be formally reviewed and updated by the Headteacher and Managing Director not less than every year. However, more frequent reviews and corresponding actions take place as the need arises. This includes, for example, instances where a new student or new member of staff joins with additional needs that need to be accommodated or the circumstances of an existing student or new member of staff have changed an addition support is necessary.

Actions arising from accessibility plan form part of the rolling short-, medium- and long-term development plan for the school. In general, it is expected that actions arising in the plan will be completed in not more than a three-year period.



Reviews will consider and record consideration all provisions for accessibility including, but not limited to:

- changes to improve access to doors, stairs, toilets and consideration of the impact of signs, colour schemes, lighting, heating etc.;
- management and organisation issues such as maintenance of lights, fire alarms appropriate to those with hearing impairments, etc.;
- changes and enhancement of the acoustic environment that might include installation of sound proofing, hearing loop systems;
- the use of, enhancement and maintenance of auxiliary aids and computer equipment, tablets, apps and software;
- the implementation of tailored strategies such as flexible or shared timetabling, access to therapy, enhanced attendance and participation;
- review of how classes and group organisation are structured to ensure that all pupils achieve increased levels of success;
- consideration of the school response to pupils and pupil attainment and how effective communication in regard to specific pupil needs has been achieved and is monitored;
- liaison, communication and relationships with external agencies how this is monitored and improved with respect to accessibility;
- staff training needs in order to effectively meet the diverse needs of all pupils, including prospective pupils who may require, signing, personal hygiene support etc.;
- pupil peer support mechanisms and the ways in which the school has encouraged pupils to have a voice in decisions that affect them;
- actions to ensure that disabled members of the school community are seen in a positive light and providing positive role models of adults with disabilities to encourage success and achievement;
- actions that are undertaken to ensure that parents and carers see themselves as partners in their children's education and are increasingly willing to actively support their children's education;
- enhancing a positive culture and ethos of the school by undertaking interventions to improve the school's ability be seen as an inclusive environment.



4 References

This policy has been developed in line with the following policies and we comply with this guidance set out in the policies.

1. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
3. https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/technical_guidance_for_schools_england.pdf
4. https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/reasonable_adjustments_for_disabled_pupils_1.pdf



Policy

Annex 1. Accessibility Audit and Review (September 2023)

Item	Description	Actions	Responsibilities
Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corridors need to be clear and well lit with appropriate signs for emergency exit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure signage is clearly visible. Ensure all lights (including emergency lighting) working are working in all areas and replace as necessary. Ensure corridors are clean, tidy, and are clear of clutter and rubbish. Ensure emergency exit is clear and is in good working order. 	MD/HT All Staff
Upper Floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure stairway access and emergency exit routes are suitable for students using upstairs room. As far as possible reduce dependency on upstairs room(s) to provide more equal access to students with physical disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check suitability with individual learning plans. Re-arrange facilities to reduce access to upper floor areas. 	MD/HT
Parking bays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking bays must be clearly marked. Slip hazards should be cleared away. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check parking bays and clean footpaths, driveway as necessary. Prune and maintain trees to reduce leaf litter. 	HT/MD



Policy

Item	Description	Actions	Responsibilities
Entrances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The driveway should be kept clear and slip hazards should be cleared away. Entry and exits must be monitored at all times when gates are open including arrival and departure times and when visitors/deliveries are accessing the premises Entrances and pathways should be illuminated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to monitor entrances and exits at all times. Gates (front and back) to be shut and secured while students are present. At least one car-park marshal to be present at all times as students are arriving and leaving the premises. Assigned members of staff to meet students and assist arrival/departure from school premises. It is strictly forbidden for students to be dropped off or picked up outside the school premises. Staff to check and clear slip hazards, debris, rubbish thrown over the perimeter fences, etc., on paths, walkways and steps before start of day. Lights should be illuminated in light low conditions. Monitor and, as necessary, sweep and maintain curb side access to reduce the risk of visitors slipping on pathway when arriving at the school. 	MD/HT All Staff
Disabled Access Ramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear debris from ramp at rear. Enhance access to front of premises for disabled access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure debris from ramp at rear is clear before start of day. Enhance arrangement to front entrance to facilitate improved disabled access (medium/long term). 	MD/HT



Policy

Item	Description	Actions	Responsibilities
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure toilets are properly maintained and are clean, clear and suitable for use Ensure disabled facilities are in good working order (including disabled toilet alarm) Provide child friendly toilet with appropriate toilet bowl height. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to check and, as necessary, clean toilets before and after use by students. MD/HT ensure toilet facilities are clean, are in good working order and are stocked with supplies (soap, hand towels, toilet rolls) at all times. Staff are required to report any defects or problems (including blockages) with toilet facilities to the MD/HT for immediate action. 	MD/HT
Reception and Hallway Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reception and hallway area are maintained clean, tidy and well lit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily checks are made to ensure that hallway and corridor lighting is in good working order. Staff to ensure that the hallway and corridor areas (including fire exits) are kept free of obstruction, clutter, etc., to maintain adequate access for staff students and visitors. 	All Staff
Internal Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate signage to be maintained in line with health and safety requirements throughout building. As far as possible, ensure signage is 'child friendly' and meets needs of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily checks are made to ensure signage is maintained. Staff to report any signage problems and/or suggested improvements to the MD/HT Teachers to work with MD/HT to ensure signage meets the needs of their students. 	All Staff



Policy

Item	Description	Actions	Responsibilities
Emergency Escape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corridors and emergency escape route to be kept clear and suitable for use at all times. Arrangements are made to ensure all students, staff and visitors are able to escape the premises in the event of an emergency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing front exit does not allow easy wheelchair access/exit but rear does. Brief visitors on arrangements for exit in the case of emergency. Provide staff with emergency briefing on induction. Train fire marshals to coordinate emergency evacuation and, as necessary, provide assistance in case of emergency. Conduct regular fire-practices to test exit practices (termly). 	MD/HT
Classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classrooms are kept clean and tidy with clear entry/exit routes. Hazards, such as trip hazards are avoided wherever possible. A fire plan in place and clearly marked on the exit. Staff are briefed and, as necessary, training to support disabled students, staff or visitors in the event of an emergency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wheelchair accessible doors and adjustable height tables provided. Staff and students are made aware of need for clear isles and tidy room. Bins to be checked and emptied daily. Fire plan (student friendly or doors) can be made bigger/colours changed as required for students with disabilities. Bespoke learning plans/curriculum should be made available for students with disabilities. Auxiliary aids should be made available including, but are not limited, to: Overlays, pen grips, fidget toys/concentration aids, large print as required, coloured paper as required. 	All Staff
Dining Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dining room is to be kept clean and tidy with clear entry/exit routes. Hazards, such as trip hazards to be avoided. Spills and food dropped on the floor to be cleared away immediately to avoid slips hazard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers to check individual student plans to ensure catering equipment/resources/menu is suitable to meet their student's needs. Special requests to be made to Headteacher. All staff to be aware of tidiness/staffing levels/cleanliness and trip hazards to ensure in place. 	All Staff



Policy

Item	Description	Actions	Responsibilities
Common Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The common room is to be kept clean and tidy with clear entry/exit routes. Trip hazards, including as toys, trailing cables, etc., to be avoided wherever possible and cleared away after use. Spills dropped on the floor to be cleared away immediately to avoid slips hazard. The common room is appropriately staffed at all times when students are making use of the facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff to be aware of requirements for tidiness, staffing levels, cleanliness and trip hazards to ensure in place. 	All Staff
ICT equipment and software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure staff and pupils have sufficient access to computer equipment, software and ICT resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide lower case keyboard(s) for students who struggle with upper-case letters. Provide tablets for further access to on-line resources and work with teaching assistants. Obtain interactive wipe boards for classrooms (long term investment). 	MD/HT
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and improve communication with authorities, parents/carers with specific note of pupils needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain dialogue with authorities, parents/carers and obtain further feedback regarding areas for improvement from all stakeholders including staff, parents/carers and local authority representatives 	All Staff



Policy

Item	Description	Actions	Responsibilities
Physical Education and Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintain and improve sports and physical education facilities for students with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Arrange further use of local sports facilities with focus on access and use for disabled students.Provide examples of disabled role-models in-school to encourage participation of disabled students while also promoting understanding and support of peers.	



Policy

Annex 2. Accessibility Plan (September 2023 – September 24)

Objective	Action	Outcome	Responsibilities	Timeframe
Improve entry/exit arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve front escape route in case of emergency and ramp unavailable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Marshals to be trained to support exit in the event of an emergency. Staff to have manual handling training, as necessary, to assist pupils to exit in an emergency. 	MD	1 year
Improve facilities for disabled use including reducing need to access to upstairs areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust facilities to take account of poor access for disabled students to upstairs room(s). Add outdoor classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move office and administration room from downstairs to upstairs. Use upstairs room as office/staff room. Provide downstairs quiet/calm/sensory room(s) Provide outside classroom/forest school area, including access for students/staff/visitors with disabilities. 	HT	1 year
Improve internal signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarge internal signs to make them easier to read and more child friendly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better signs for emergency exit 	MD/HT	1 year
Improve communication facilities and hearing impaired support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional Makaton training to staff to assist with communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff trained in basic Makaton sign language with additional training to support students with particular communication challenges 	MD/HT	1 year



Policy

External access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure, as far as possible, that external facilities are able to support students, staff and visitors with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prune trees to reduce leaf litter. Keep all external areas clean and tidy to facilitate access and reduce slip hazards. 	MD	1 year
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all students attending the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspire students, including any with disabilities in career opportunities Encourage suitable vocational training that is for students with disabilities. Provide additional learning in the outdoor forest school area to encourage participation of students with disabilities. Provide examples of disabled role models to encourage students with disabilities and to promote understanding and support of peers. 	HT	1 year
Physical Education and Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide improved facilities and access to physical education and sports for students with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange further use of local sports facilities with focus on access and use for disabled students. 	MD	1 year