MEPA ACADEMY

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

THIS POLICY IS WRITTEN FOR AND APPLIED TO MEPA ACADEMY

Updated & Adopted:	October 2026
Review Date:	October 2027

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ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The aims of this Accessibility Plan are to ensure that MEPA Academy work towards increasing the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors to the school.

The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

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

Our aims are to:

- ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect
- make sure that our school is a safe, secure and stimulating place for everyone
- recognise that people have different needs; we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating them all exactly the same
- recognise that for some pupils, extra support is needed to help them to achieve and be successful
- make sure that no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age; any disability they may have; their ethnicity, colour or national origin; their gender; their gender identity or reassignment; their religion or beliefs; their sexual identity and orientation.

We set our Accessibility plan objectives for a three-year period and review the progress annually.

We have a general duty, under the Equality Act 2010, to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations; to explain how we have due regard for equality. At a legislative level there are three main strands for disabled students:

The SEND Framework (the Education Act 1996 and the SEND and Disability Act 2001), and the Equality Act 2010; The Disability Discrimination Duties (Sections 28A-28C of the DDA 1995); The planning duties (Section 28D-28E of the DDA 1995); The Education Act 1996 states that 'children have a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them'

We also have a duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion and we understand the importance of narrowing gaps in achievement which affect, amongst others:

- Pupils from cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Pupils who are registered disabled, or who meet the definition of disabled
- Pupils who have special educational needs
- Vulnerable pupils

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish information that demonstrates that we have due regard for the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation** and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Information on pupils by protected characteristics**

The Equality Act protects people from discrimination on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. Every person has several of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment.

DISABILITY

The Equality Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

MEPA Academy will make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

HOW WE HAVE DUE REGARD FOR EQUALITY

The information provided here aims to show that we give careful consideration to equality issues in everything we do.

Schools are required to have due regard to the need to **eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

1.	We are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 that it is unlawful to discriminate, treat some people less fairly or put them at a disadvantage.
2.	Where applicable our policies make explicit that we aim to give careful consideration to equality issues and as policies are reviewed in line with the monitoring cycle they will be edited to reflect this requirement
3.	We keep an accurate record, when possible and appropriate, of the protected characteristics of our pupils and employees at whole school and year group levels
4.	We analyse our data to ensure we act upon any concerns in relation to the protected groups and this is reported through the Schools' Self Evaluation Form.
5.	The Leadership Team of the school is concerned with closing gaps; this is reflected in the school's values.
6.	We give due regard for equality issues in decisions and changes we make.
7.	We record any inappropriate behavioural (including those regarding protected characteristics) or safeguarding incidents and act upon any concerns and report as appropriate.

8.	We deal promptly and effectively with all incidents and complaints of bullying and harassment that may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to disability or special educational need, ethnicity and race, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, religion and belief and sexual orientation. We keep a record of all such incidents and notify those affected of what action we have taken and importantly monitor the impact our provision has had.
9.	We provide training to all staff in relation to dealing with bullying and harassment incidents.
10.	We have a special educational needs policy that outlines the provision the school makes for pupils with special educational needs.

DATA PROTECTION

In the implementation of this plan, the Academy will receive personal data, some of which will be sensitive personal data. The Academy processes personal data in accordance with the data protection principles embodied in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The Academy complies with the requirements of the data protection legislation as set out in the Trust's Data Protection Policy.

Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Health and safety policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Information report
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

APPENDIX A

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

1. MEPA Academy offers an inclusive curriculum for all students. Disabled students are supported to access the curriculum by the SEND provision, in line with the needs of the individual and in consultation with their parents/carers, colleagues and other support agencies where relevant and appropriate.
2. MEPA Academy ensures that colleagues identify, assess and arrange suitable provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities including the provision of any necessary auxiliary aids. We use resources tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum.
3. MEPA Academy provides additional support for students and supports teachers in implementing strategies for improving students' behaviour and access to learning.
4. MEPA Academy actively seeks the views of students and their families, to ensure they are fully considered in all aspects of school life.
5. Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities, where possible.
6. Curriculum progress is tracked for all students, including those with a disability, regardless of background or academic starting point. Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students with additional needs to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual students and groups. Targets are modified where appropriate to ensure they set an appropriate level of challenge.
7. The curriculum is reviewed annually to ensure it meets the needs of all students, including those with learning and physical disabilities, with a focus on incorporating high expectations and developing skills for life-long learning.
8. The school curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.
9. MEPA Academy is proactive in seeking feedback and listening to student and parent/carer views and considering them in all aspects of school life.
10. Regular training opportunities for staff to promote awareness.
11. Ensure appropriate concession arrangements for students who require additional support for formal tests/examinations.
12. Access to student leadership opportunities and other enrichment activities.

OUR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Contextual Information

MEPA Academy is a three story building. The site presents many DDA challenges as there are many stairs throughout the building and there is currently no working lift in either part of the Earl Street buildings.

At present we have no wheelchair dependent pupils or members of staff and due to the nature of the course we offer we feel at present this does not provoke a problem. In the future there may be a discussion of activating a lift at the Earl Street Facility or transferring to classes to Studio 6.

INCREASING ACCESS FOR DISABLED PUPILS TO THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Focus	Where we are	Targets	Action	Responsible	Cost	Date	Success Indicators/ Review
1.1 Continue to provide training – to ensure all staff are clear on the intervention and support for each pupil's specific needs.	**As new members of staff are trained to understand the pupil passports and contribute to the review of interventions and strategies used.**	**Staff meeting training for on intervention strategies available / used within school**	**Staff initial audit Staff training developed and implemented from audit.**	**SENCO**	**None – staff time Cost of training to be determined**	**Sept 2021 Sept 2022 Sept 2023 Sept 2024 Sept 2025 Sept 2026**	**That all staff are clear and confident on the intervention delivered shown through monitoring Staff inset given 21&22 Pupil Passports in teacher folders 21-27 Staff alerted to students who have addition risks**
1.2 Optimal classroom organisation for the disabled (none at present)	**We make special provision for children with specific needs which are identified in their pupil passport and Risk Assessment. Targets are set and reviewed annually. Subject leads make differentiated materials that can be shared and accessible on TEAMs**	**Review Risk Assessment and Pupil passports**	**None at present**	**SENCO/Subject leads**	**None**	**Sept 2021 Sept 2022 Sept 2023 Sept 2024**	**Students make correct progress in line with peers GCSE 2021/22 SEN students outperformed or were in line with peers**

Focus	Where we are	Targets	Action	Responsible	Cost	Date	Success Indicators/ Review
						Sept 2025 **Sept 2026**	**GCSE 2024** **SEN students performed well** **Analysis from teachers show where gaps are which are then addressed** **GCSE Results 2025 & 2026**
1.3 Lessons provide full opportunities to achieve, are responsive to pupil diversity and are inclusive in a variety of ways	**Regular monitoring by SMT ensuring inclusivity.** **CAT4 testing of students in year 7 and staff made aware of needs** **Curriculum subject to ongoing reviews**	**Provision mapping and pupil passports to be in place and shared with all staff**	**Continue regular monitoring by SMT and appropriate action taken where necessary**	**SMT/ SENCO**	**None – staff time**	**Ongoing-Sept 25** **Sept 22** **Sept 23** **Sept 24** **Sept 25** **Sept 26**	**Monitoring reports show all children have an inclusive learning environment. 2024-26**
1.4 Ensure school staff are fully aware of the 'hidden' aspects of disability	**This is on an individual basis and identified through provision maps/pupil passports allowing for full access to all aspects of school life.**	**To review as required. To continue to use word processing to record information, mind maps, immersive reader and brain breaks which are factored in as required.**	**Review and purchase resources as required**	**SENCO**	**Added to SENCO budget annually**	**Annually**	**All pupils' needs are fully met. Tracking shows progress** **Observations show CTs are aware of students needs 2024/24** **Observations show most CTs are aware of student needs. 1 CT had additional observations and support however, they are no longer employed as a**

Focus	Where we are	Targets	Action	Responsible	Cost	Date	Success Indicators/ Review
							tutor by MEPA 2022/23
1.5 Increase the mobility, movement access around the building	**Regular monitoring Common room access and mobility is limited with personal belongings on the floor**	**Lockers to be purchased for student personal use**	**Purchase lockers**	**Principal**	**Part of proprietors budget for improvements**	**Sept 2022**	**Common room has more area for movement** **2021/22** **1 classroom split into 2. Rearranging or furniture allowed for more movement 2022/23**
1.6 Improve the delivery of written information to students and parents/carers	**Use of coloured overlays** **Access to TEAMs with accessibility reading** **School documents can be made in large print** **Access exam arrangements in place where needed**	**To show students when needed how to use accessibility reading on computer**	**Spend PSHE time showing TEAMs**	**Form tutors**	**None**	**October .22**	**Students are able to access the curriculum 2021/22** **Students have coloured books or printed on coloured paper** **Emails sent for newsletters** **Mailchimp used so it can be accessed on phones** **2022/23**

Focus	Where we are	Targets	Action	Responsible	Cost	Date	Success Indicators/ Review
1.7 Examination arrangements for students with disabilities	**Early identification of students** **Provision of appropriate materials** **Make early requests to examining authorities**	**To ensure access arrangements are made for student with dyslexic traits**	**Contact Lyn Sweetman (access arranger)** **Complete Form 8**	**SENCO/Exam officer**	**£95**	**October '22**	**Student is able to use access arrangements in exams** **Accessarrangements made and checked by JCQ 2023/24**
1.8 To identify and make appropriate provision for students with disabilities to be included on school trips, unless there are severe health and safety considerations that cannot be overcome	**Identified disability needs and how those needs can be met with meetings with relevant persons** **Complete a risk assessment**	**To make all trips accessible to all students** **Staff in charge of trip to liaise with relevant co-ordinators**	**Review students taking part in trips and activities**	**SMT**	**none**	**Students are accessing all activities and trips**	
1.9 Ensure hearing and visual environment in classrooms is regularly monitored to support hearing impaired and visually impaired children	**None at present**						

SCHOOL BUILDING DESIGN

Focus	Where we are	Targets	Action	Responsible	Cost	Date	Success Indicators/ Review
2.1 How well does the school provide access to all areas for all pupils?	**The school has many DDA challenges – see Contextual Information above.**	**To improve DDA access whenever any new buildings or building improvements are carried out.**	**To ensure all new work is fully DDA compliant.**	**SMT**	**To be determined as part of the improvement budget**	**As and when required PGP (permanent good practice)**	**Improved DDA access 21-22** **Continues 22-25**
2.2 Emergency exit procedure takes account of all stakeholders' needs.	**Individuals' needs are addressed through individual risk assessments, if there is a barrier to their evacuation then this is recorded and alternative arrangements put in place eg additional rehearsal, 1 to 1 support, mobility aid.**	**Drills inform on the ability or issues surrounding any individual pupil. Action is taken immediately as required.**	**Risk assessments and drills to continue at regular intervals**	**SMT**	**None**	**PGP**	**Health and Safety continues to be a top priority** **Weekly fire alarm check** **1 Per term fire alarm practice- record of improvements to be made in place 21-22** **Fire Doors installed in Business Suite**