The Lotus Academy Trust

Supporting children to find opportunities in every difficulty

The Damara School

Specialist SEMH Independent School

Accessibility Plan

Approved by: Trust Board	
Initial Ratification: September 2023	Reviewed: November 2026
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1. Aims

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

Our school aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

Each child who joins our school will be welcomed and valued regardless of sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, belief and abilities (including physical and learning disabilities). This accessibility plan focuses on a wide range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) including EAL. At The Damara School, pupil achievement is celebrated in a personalised holistic and therapeutic teaching and learning environment and excellent achievement enables pupils to be as independent as possible so that they make the most of opportunities when they leave the school. The plan will be made available online on The Lotus Trust website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

The trust/governing body also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities, and will:

- Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
- Ensure that employees with disabilities are supported within the school as appropriate to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
- Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace. Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents, staff and trustees/governors of the school.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the use of auxiliary aids or adjustments to premises.

3. Action plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim	Current good practice *Include established practice and practice under development*	Objectives *State short, medium and long-term objectives*	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Increase access to the school for pupils with a disability	• Our school offers a differentiated therapeutic curriculum for all pupils. • Provision upstairs is easily replicated downstairs • We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the school. • School resources include examples of people with disabilities. • School progress is tracked for all pupils, including those with a disability. • Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs.	Short term: Holistic and therapeutic curriculum model devised Medium term: Annual review of curriculum to ensure pupils continue to make excellent progress towards challenging targets Long term: Devise pre formal, semi-formal and formal curriculum models	Ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum models. Update the curriculum statement, policies and procedures to ensure curriculum is accessible to all learners	Leadership team	12/2023 prior to occupying building	Curriculum fit for purpose and is accessible by all pupils.

	• The school's provision is reviewed annually to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.					
Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	Particular attention is paid to accessibility and ensuring that the environment is adapted to the needs of pupils as required. This includes: • Corridor width • Disabled parking bays • Disabled toilet and changing facilities • Book-shelves at wheelchair-accessible height • Timetabling to take account of individual access needs	Short term	Review pupil access to ensure a positive impact on learning.	Leadership team	12/2023 prior to occupying building	Termly premises audit show accessibility as an area of strength.
Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability	Our school uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This includes: • Internal signage • Large print resources if requested • Pictorial or symbolic representations	Capture access requirements from all referrals. Make necessary adjustments to improve accessibility for all pupils.	Termly review of the effectiveness of communication strategies across the school. Capture parent, pupil, staff and partner voice.	Leadership team	12/2023 prior to occupying building	Communication strategies across the school are effective

4. Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every **3** years. It will be approved by the trust/ governing board.

5. Links with other policies

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

- Risk assessment policy
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit

Feature	Description	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by
Number of storeys	3 storeys. Mezzanine and first floors are not accessible by wheelchair.	All lessons to be moved downstairs should we have a wheelchair user	SG	12/2023
Corridor access	Wide enough for wheelchair use. Minimum width of 1.2m	Keep corridors clear. Check daily for obstructions	All staff	Continuous
Lifts	None			
Parking bays	1 disabled bay clearly signed situated close to main entrance. Cars parked in bays are monitored and the owner of cars without Blue Badges are challenged	To be used only by blue badge holders. Monitor use	All staff	Continuous
Entrances	2 (front and side)	Only side entrance to be used as main entrance for pupils. Front entrance for visitors.	All staff	Continuous
Toilets	1 DDA compliant toilet downstairs off the foyer	Entrance off foyer. To be kept clear of obstructions. Check daily for obstructions	All staff	Continuous

Reception area	Clear of obstructions.	To be kept clear of obstructions. Check daily for obstructions	All staff	Continuous
Internal signage	Fire exit signs clearly visible Signage on toilet	Clearly visible signage. Check termly as part of site audit	SG	Continuous
Emergency escape routes	Easily located close to toilet and downstairs classrooms. Clearly marked fire evacuation routes. Personal Evacuation Plans (PEEP) in place for SEND pupils as appropriate. PEEPs created for any pupils with temporary mobility restrictions (e.g. broken limb)	To be kept clear of obstructions. Check that PEEPS are updated at least annually for SEND pupils. PEEPs to be developed for pupils with temporary mobility limitations.	SG SENDCO SENDCO	Continuous Annually As necessary