DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Status: Statutory

Member of Staff Responsible: Principal / SENDCo

Related Policies:

- Health and Safety
- SEND Policy / SEND Information Report
- Equality of Opportunity Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy

Implementation date: September 2026

Reviewed date: September 2026

Next review date: September 2027

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 (DDA) introduced laws to end the discrimination facing many disabled people. The Disability Discrimination Act (amended 2005), has introduced a new duty on disability equality that includes general and specific duties for educational establishments.

The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust complies with the legal requirements as set out in the above Acts as well as the Disability Equality Duty (2006).

Definition of Disability under the Equality Act 2010

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities

The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust values and celebrates the diversity of all people. As an organisation providing education and care to students and families, we take seriously our responsibility to dispel prejudice and to produce, within our community, a positive attitude to all people.

The Governors and staff believe all members of our community, and those who visit us, have the right to feel valued for who they are. Our commitment to this is shown in our values, the curriculum, the care we offer and, in our policies and procedures.

General Duties

In carrying out its functions, the UTC will have due regard for the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life and in the work of the UTC

Take steps to take account of a disabled person's disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Specific Duties

It is against the law for a school or other education provider to treat disabled students unfavourably.

This includes:

'direct discrimination' – e.g. refusing admission to a student because of disability
'indirect discrimination' – e.g. only providing application forms in one format that may not be accessible
'discrimination arising from a disability' – e.g. a disabled student is prevented from going outside at break time because it takes too long to get there
'harassment' – e.g. a teacher shouts at a disabled student for not paying attention when the student's disability stops them from easily concentrating

victimisation – e.g. suspending a disabled student because they've complained about harassment

Reasonable adjustments

An education provider has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to make sure disabled students are not discriminated against. These changes could include:

- changes to physical features - for example, creating a ramp so that students can enter a classroom
- providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment)

Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All publicly-funded pre-schools, nurseries, state schools and local authorities must try to identify and help assess children with Special Educational Needs

The specific duty regulations require the UTC to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES).

The DES will include a statement of:

- The way in which disabled people have been involved in the development of the scheme;
- Methods for impact assessment;
- An action plan that sets out the steps The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust will take towards fulfilling its general duty;
- Arrangements for gathering information in relation to the delivery of education;
- Arrangements for putting the information gathered to use, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and in preparing the subsequent DES.

Accessibility Strategy

The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust, in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001 must prepare accessibility plans. This plan includes:

The UTC is required to produce an Accessibility Strategy setting out targets for improvement across:

- The Curriculum - increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
- The Physical Environment - improvements to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Information/Communication - improving the delivery to disabled students of written information which is provided to students who are not disabled. This should be done within a reasonable period of time and in formats which take account of views expressed by the students or parents about their preferred means of communication.

Operation

The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust will:

- Inform all staff that our policy for the provision of educational services ensures the inclusion of disabled students. Such communications will address the legal obligation of staff, and the UTC.
- Make all parents/carers aware of this policy.
- Provide appropriate disability awareness training for staff, which will explain the school policy towards disabled students and effective implementation and monitor it.
- Address acts of disability discrimination via existing conduct codes, where appropriate.
- Encourage suppliers and contractors, to adopt similar policies towards disabled students.

Students

Applications will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all students. Where students with disabilities apply for a place at the UTC it is a requirement that students and parents/carers visit prior to term commencement to discuss needs and access to the UTC with either the Executive Principal, Associate Principal, SENDCo, or Learning Managers (LMs).

An applicant's disability will not prevent him/her from being offered a place and integrated into the UTC unless:

- The content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the student would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it; or
- The UTC would be unable to provide suitably trained employees or facilities to allow the requirements of the curriculum to be met.

Curriculum

UTC Derby Pride Park, formally Derby Manufacturing UTC, opened with Academy status on December 1st, 2019. The UTC is a fully inclusive establishment. The range of accredited courses includes GCSEs, OCR L2 Nationals, OCR Technicals at L3, T Levels and GCEs.

The UTC recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable students with disabilities, including specific learning difficulties, to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge. Special arrangements will be made to enable such students to perform to the best of their ability by meeting their individual needs including access to examination venues and in supporting their ability to be entered. The UTC will liaise with the relevant Examination Boards in such instances. Students and parents/guardians will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations by the SENDCo.

The Physical Environment

The UTC is a new purpose-built college that opened in September 2015 and has been designed to meet DDA compliancy.

Information/Communication

The UTC website has been established to enable communication with students, parents and staff. The website takes into account the compliancy needs of the site and the level at which it must function to be accessible to all. All communications and documentation are analysed for accessibility for the audience. Alternative formats of all documentation are available direct from the UTC.

Involvement of students, parents, carers and staff in the scheme

The views of all students will be sought through the establishment of the Student Voice. Additional questionnaires at key transition points will allow all learners to express their opinion. Parental involvement is encouraged through the parental forum and through questionnaires/parental evaluations available at any time parents/carers are visiting the UTC. The UTC holds policies relating to equality of opportunity, special educational needs and inclusion which are accessible on the website and all additional policies being are required to reflect the ethos of equality and fairness. The UTC acknowledges treating everyone alike will not overcome the disadvantage individuals with disabilities experience and their aim is to meet the needs of individuals through creativity not conformity.

Monitoring and Review

This scheme will be monitored regularly to assess its implementation and effectiveness. The designated member of staff responsible will provide an annual report to the Governing Body and interim reports on request. The policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body as per the published policy review cycle.

Disability Equality Duty Action Plan

The action plan sets out the steps towards meeting the general and specific duties of the DED.

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DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Aims

- To increase the involvement of those with disabilities in deciding action that impacts upon them.
- To ensure access remains good for those with a disability to the physical environment of the school, the curriculum and ensure equality in regards to access to information.
- To evaluate the success of the action plan in meeting its targets.

Curriculum access	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Time scale	Goals achieved
	• All curriculum areas consider their practice in light of current legislation and developments • To ensure all students have appropriate equipment in place to enable them to engage with a technically focused, broad and balanced curriculum • Ensure all examination arrangements are in place for all students with identified needs	• Continue with training of whole school staff. • Link with UTC and faculty focus upon teaching and learning. At least one L&P training session to focus upon inclusive practice each academic year. • To meet regularly with students, parents and outside agencies to plan access improvements. • SENCo/LMs to gather evidence from all faculties to ensure arrangements are met.	• Staff more aware of the ways in which they can make the curriculum more accessible to students with specific needs. • Strategic planning continued at department level. • All students are to achieve full potential and support structures are in place.	On going Completed annually	• All students have equal access to a technically focused broad and balanced curriculum. The UTC community values diversity. • Raised awareness of the collective responsibility towards inclusion. • Raised awareness of examination access arrangements

Physical Environment	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Time scale	Goals achieved
	• To ensure that the main building is accessible to disabled visitors. • To ensure Emergency Evacuation Plan includes provision for physically impaired persons in the upper corridors. • To ensure all students needs are disseminated to staff for access to mainstream class.	• To keep the disabled lifts in working order and ensure arrangements are made for access during Open/Progress Evening (PEEP carried out as required). • To provide students who have identified needs access to the lifts. • To ensure at least one parking space near the main entrance is for disabled visitors. • To welcome visitors to the UTC at reception and ensure the visitor signing in book is easy to access. • Meetings held with parents, students and agencies to access and evaluate evacuation procedures. • SEND spreadsheet register is readily available for all staff.	• All visitors can access the main reception area of the UTC from the front and feel welcomed. All parents are able to access all upper areas of the UTC or are provided with access to information on lower floors having carried out a PEEP during Open/Progress Evening. • Evacuation Plan includes reference to provision for physically impaired person. Instructions clearly displayed and any necessary training undertaken. • All students accessing a technically focused broad and balanced curriculum.	Ongoing Ongoing	• All visitors and the UTC community feel included on arrival. • Emergency provision for all in all parts of the UTC building – PEEPS completed where necessary.

Access to the written word	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Time scale	Goals achieved
	• To ensure that all students can access written information on the classroom board. • Visual signs are used in all classrooms as signals to the organisation of tasks. • Staff become familiar with a variety of technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities.	• Seating arranged so that all students can see clearly. • Identify resources and strategies are available and known by all staff regarding individual needs. • Training for all staff using L&P sessions and Inset days including strategies for vulnerable groups. • Seek advice from agencies. • Include training from National Strategy Inclusion Development Programme within whole UTC CPD training. • Encourage use of ICT including 'bring your own device' and UTC supplied equipment for those with identified needs.	• All students feel comfortable safe and included and all are able to access the curriculum. • Consistency across faculties aids students' organisational skills. • Faculties use some alternative methods of recording within some lessons to effectively monitor all students.	On going On going	• All students can access written information. • All students are more independent and carry out tasks more effectively. • Improved access and provision for students.