Arden Multi-Academy Trust

Lode Heath School is an academy maintained by Arden Multi-Academy Trust.

Name of Policy	Accessibility Plan	
Lead	Amer Mohammed	
Governor Committee	Behaviour, Safety, Inclusion & Intervention Committee	
Policy Status	Governor Approved	Yes
Governors	Link Governor	Gillian Short
Next Review	Autumn Term 2028 (Every 3 years)	
Reviewed	Autumn Term 2025	
Version No	1	

Section 1: Our School and Policy Aims and Objectives

Our School Context

Lode Heath School is a large co-educational secondary academy in Solihull for students aged 11–16. We provide a broad and inclusive curriculum and uphold the highest standards of academic excellence and behaviour. Our ethos is rooted in kindness, respect and aspiration, and we expect our students to treat others as they would wish to be treated. We encourage active participation in school life, including extra-curricular activities, and we promote the message: "Do something, be involved."

Aims

Our Accessibility Plan aims to ensure that Lode Heath School continues to make all reasonable adjustments to remove barriers for students, staff and visitors with disabilities. We aim to ensure equal access to all aspects of school life: curriculum, environment and information.

Objectives

- To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
- To improve the physical environment to enable better access for disabled individuals.
- To improve the availability and accessibility of information for disabled students, parents, staff and visitors.

Section 2: Our Student Community

School and Pupil Data Analysis
Current pupil data shows that in January 2025 there were 182 pupils regarded as disabled under the definition within the Equality Act 2010. Pupil data is collated according to primary area of need, but for some pupils this is more challenging as they have co-existing conditions or areas of need.

Broad Area of Need	Primary Need	Number of pupils where...		
		EHCP	SEN Support	Total
Communication and Interaction	SLCN	1	12	13
	ASD	7	40	47
Cognition and Learning	SpLD	0	32	32
	MLD	2	21	23
	SLD	0	0	0
	PMLD	0	0	0
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	SEMH	1	41	42
Sensory &/or Physical	HI	0	2	2
	VI	1	1	2
	MSI	0	0	0
	PD	1	6	7
Not identified	NSA	1	13	14
	OTH	0	0	0

What the data tells us
The number of students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) at our school grew from 0.9% in 2024 to 1.2% in 2025. This is still 1.9% lower than the national average for secondary schools. Meanwhile, 14.5% of our students receive SEN Support, which is 1.1% higher than in other secondary schools across the country. The most common type of need is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), followed by Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, and then Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD). We also have more students with ASD than the national average.

Section 3: Consultation with Stakeholders

This Accessibility Plan was developed in consultation with the school's leadership team, SENCO, site manager, parents, governors and students with disabilities. Their input was gathered via audits, student voice activities, staff training evaluations and parental feedback mechanisms.

The consultation process involved:
- Review of the 2022 accessibility audit
- Parent and student feedback via annual review meetings and EHCP consultations
- Staff feedback through CPD evaluations and line management structures
- Regular liaison with external professionals and the Local Authority

Section 4: Good Practice in School

Access to the Curriculum
At Lode Heath School, we strive to enable access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability. The following statements outline the range of strategies we use to help achieve this:
- All teachers receive ongoing CPD in inclusive practice and are expected to plan with differentiation and personalisation in mind.
- Specialist interventions are provided, including nurture groups and 1:1 support.
- Students benefit from visual timetables, overlays, learning scaffolds, and access to assistive technology.
- Staff work closely with external agencies and follow individual student passports and EHCPs.

Pupils are supported to access the benefits, services and facilities as part of the wider curriculum offered by the school.

Access to the Physical Environment
At Lode Heath School, we strive to enable access to the physical environment for pupils with a disability. The following statements outline the range of strategies we use to help achieve this:
- The school has four accessible toilets, disabled parking bays, ramps, and lifts in the main building.
- Classrooms are equipped with high-contrast lighting, acoustic dampening (carpeted floors), and blinds to support sensory needs.
- Annual audits inform capital improvements, such as signage, doors and stair access.
- Adjustments are made for individuals, including ergonomic furniture, stair lifts, and taxi drop-off access

Access to Information
At Lode Heath School, we strive to enable access to information for pupils with a disability. The following statements outline the range of strategies we use to help achieve this:

- Key information is available in large print, coloured backgrounds, or digital formats as needed.
- Students use overlays, reading pens, iPads and laptops to support their access to learning.
- The website is compliant with accessibility standards, although further improvement is planned for increased user-friendliness.
- Staff are trained to communicate accessibly with students and parents, and alternative formats are available on request.

Section 5: Accessibility Action Plan

Area 1: To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum

Target	Actions / Strategies	Resources	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Embed inclusive teaching across all curriculum areas	CPD on adaptive teaching; peer observations	CPD budget, time for development	Ongoing	SENCO, AHT T&L	Lesson visits show inclusive practice is consistent
Improve access to practical subjects (e.g. PE, DT, Science)	Purchase adapted equipment	Capex and SEN resources	Sep-25	Curriculum Leads	Students with SEND participate fully
Improve assessment access	Train staff on access arrangements; trial use of technology	Exams officer time, SEN budget	Annually	Exams Officer, SENCO	Students access assessments without disadvantage

Area 2: To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure disabled pupils can access all benefits, services and facilities offered by the school

Target	Actions / Strategies	Resources	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Upgrade accessibility signage	Replace and reposition signs	Site budget	By Dec 2025	Site Lead	Clear, accessible signage throughout site

Target	Actions / Strategies	Resources	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Improve accessible toilet provision	Review layout and fittings; declutter storage	Maintenance budget	Ongoing	Site Lead	Toilets meet compliance and usability standards
Improve lift and stair access in older blocks	Survey access needs; consider portable lift options	External funding may be required	2026	Trust Estates Team	Improved movement across site for all users

Area 3: To improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils so information is available equally to all pupils

Target	Actions / Strategies	Resources	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Ensure website accessibility compliance	Audit and adjust content structure	ICT/web support	By July 2026	IT Lead	Website meets WCAG 2.1 AA standards
Provide key information in accessible formats	Include format options on all parent communications	Admin time, training	Ongoing	Office Manager	Parents/ carers can request accessible formats easily
Train staff on communication formats	CPD on visual supports, use of technology	SEN training time	Ongoing	SENCO	Staff use accessible formats proactively

Section 6: Sources of Information

A variety of sources of information have been used to develop this Accessibility Plan:

- Lode Heath School Accessibility Audit (Equality Act Audits, 2022)
- Equality Act 2010 and Schools (DfE, 2014)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 Years (DfE, 2015)
- pdnet Accessibility Planning Toolkit (2020)
- Stakeholder feedback (2023–2025)
- School Improvement Plan

- School CPD and Inclusion Logs