

Bedford College Academies Trust

**Accessibility Plan Policy**

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| **Status:**Statutory | **Member of staff responsible:** Business Manager | **Implementation date:**April 2019 |
| **Issue No:**1A | **Approved by:**BCAT Board 4 April 2019 | **Next Review Date:**March 2022 |

**Our Vision**

“Our vision is to provide all of our pupils with a first-class academic education comparable with the very best schools nationally. We also aim to develop those skills and qualities in our pupils’ character which, hand-in-hand with exam qualifications, will deliver success and resilience in later life”.

1. **Purpose**

This policy supports the legislative framework for responding to requests for information under the statutory access regimes established by:

* The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA);
* The Data Protection Act (DPA);
* The Disability Discrimination Act;
* The Equality Act (2010);
* Any other legislation that provides a right of access
1. **Rationale**

The Bedford College Academies Trust (BCAT) Access Plan pays due regard to Government law including the Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014) Part 3 which links in to the SEND Code of Practice (2014) (and to past legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 and the SEN and Disability Act 2001).

This policy is divided into four Sections:

Section 1: Access to the Curriculum – for Pupils.

Section 2: Access to Pastoral Support – includes the principles of past county and national initiatives, including ‘Every Child Matters’ (ECM) and aspects of the ‘Social and Emotional

Aspects of Learning’ (SEAL) – for Staff, Parents and Pupils.

Section 3: Site Accessibility – for Staff, Parents, Pupils and the Community.

Section 4: Access to Information – for Staff, Parents, Pupils and the Community.

This Access Plan details policies and initiatives, how these are monitored, reviewed/evaluated and how these evaluations are developed and embedded into school systems and practice.

The Access Plan is an ‘umbrella’ document: It encompasses existing policies and development plans, implemented and monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors.

This Plan is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors.

1. **Section 1: Access to the Curriculum**

This section of the Access Plan is monitored by the Assistant Principal (Teaching and

Learning).

Pupils across the Key Stages have an appropriate (differentiated and personalised) curriculum to fit their needs. The following policies support this aim:

* Policy for Assessment Assessment recording, reporting
* Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
* Medical Needs Policy Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Principle features of BCAT academies are:

* Within their teaching team, Heads of Department monitor pupils’ progress.
* The progress of every individual pupil and each pupil group is monitored and evaluated, to ensure that they are fully accessing the curriculum resulting in excellent progress
* Pupils classified as ‘Pupil Premium’ are identified, and their curriculum progress is tracked and supported by teaching staff and the Senior Leadership Team.
* Data from previous schools, reading and spelling tests and Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) inform differentiated teaching and Learning Support interventions, together with information from parents, pupils and professionals.
1. **Section 2: Access to Pastoral Support**

This section of the Access Plan is monitored by the Assistant Principal/SENDCo, outside professionals, such as Educational Psychologist (EP), Behaviour Support Service (BSS), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), who support the school, contribute additionally to this work.

Pastoral support enshrines the principles of Every Child Matters. Pupils across the school have access to appropriate pastoral support dependent on their age and specific needs and the Pastoral Manager is employed to work with all pupils to help them feel safe and secure at school.

The school’s various separate policies contribute to supporting these aims:

* Attendance Policy
* Equality & Diversity Policy
* Behaviour & Discipline Policy Pupil Behaviour and Exclusions
* Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
* Sex and Relationships Policy
* Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Principle features of Bedford Academies Trust are;

* Designated Child Protection Staff on site, with developed links to Social Services and Bedford Borough Council Education Teams.
* Looked After Children are identified and monitored (linked to Borough professional and following Borough guidelines).
* Pupils classified as ‘Pupil Premium’ are identified and their curriculum progress is tracked by Pastoral Manager and the Senior Leadership Team.
* Pupils who act as ‘Young Carers’ are identified and monitored (linked to County professional).
* The Behaviour Support Service support our work.
* Individual Behaviour Plans and Pastoral Support Plans support pupils’ targets to impact positively on their social and emotional development.
* Borough Educational Psychologists closely support the work of the school, and of individual pupils, as required by their needs.
* The school links to the MASH relating to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Team around the Child/Family (TAC/TAF) initiatives.
* Sustained and developed links to GPs and local NHS mental health services (CAMH) closely inform support for specific pupils/work generally in supporting pupils.
* Risk assessments identify pupils who require enhanced monitoring through medical/mobility needs or behaviour issues.
* Pastoral staff are able to give information and advice to parents on how to support their child as needed. They cannot, however, give details of specific conversations without pupil’s permission.
* Staff have access to counselling services provided by an external Employee Assistance Programme.

**Section 3: Site Accessibility**

Responsibility for this section of the Access Plan lies with the Business Manager with contributions from a range of professionals supporting the school and from individuals within the school.

Pupils, staff, parents and visitors to the school have an equality of opportunity to access the curriculum and we aim to make all areas of the site accessible where possible. Where buildings cannot be adapted, changes will be made to the curriculum – typically this will mean re-rooming to accessible accommodation.

The following policies support these aims:

* Equality Policy
* Health and Safety Policy

Principle features of Bedford College Academies Trust are;

* An annual audit of the site.
* Health and Safety issues identified and addressed on a continuous basis by a range of people within the school.
* Risk assessments are written principally for two purposes: for activities and for groups of pupils; and for specific pupils (as generic for their time in school, and/or for specific activities, or to take into account their specific disability).
* Risk assessments identify evacuation procedures for individual pupils whose movements are compromised by their disability.
* The medical conditions of pupils affecting health and safety and site accessibility, compiled as a separate document by the Office Manager, is circulated to staff in school on a need to know basis.
* The medical conditions of staff affecting health and safety and site accessibility are known on a need to know basis by the Principal/Head-teacher and related staff.

**Section 4: Access to information**

This section of the Access Plan is monitored by the Business Manager, with support from the other staff. The school liaises with the Local Authority to ensure compliance with Local Authority and government statutes. Our aim is to ensure that Pupils, Parents, Staff and visitors have access to the information that they need, with due regard to confidentiality.

**Responses to requests for information**

* All school policies and other relevant documents are posted on, and may be downloaded from the school website or hard copies may be requested at a small charge.
* Parents/pupils may request copies of pupil record files, including paper and electronic files. A small charge will be levied for administration and photocopying charges.
* Parents/pupils may not be given access to records which contain information on other staff/pupils which would breach our confidentiality and/or the Data Protection Act.
* All requests for information should be made, preferably in writing, to the Business Manager.
* Any complaints should be addressed through the school’s Complaints Procedure.

**Information provided by the school**

**Pupils have access to information by:**

* Feedback from their subject teachers (verbal and written) relating to their work completed in class, at Parents’ Evenings and Mentor times;
* School reports;
* The SEN review process;
* The Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) where provided;
* Representation on/by the Pupil Voice;

**Parents have access to information by:**

* Talking to teachers and support staff at Parents’ Evenings;
* School reports;
* Pastoral Mentors contact with parents;
* Half termly newsletter;
* School website;
* By prior appointment to visit the school;
* Specific requests or information (see above);
* Through appointments with teachers or members of the Pastoral team.

**Visitors/external agencies/individuals have access to information (on a need-to-know basis only) by:**

* The school website;
* Contact with professionals within school;
* By written request to the Business Manager.

**Accessibility of information**

* The school aims to provide information in an accessible format and will respond to individual needs and requests as they arise.

For example

* The school will seek support from outside agencies to provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, audiotape or Braille for pupils, prospective pupils or parents who have difficulty with standard forms of printed information.
* The school will also make information for parents available in a range of different formats and languages, should the need arise, and be aware of font size and legibility when producing written information.