| Staffordshire University Academy Trust | | SEAC Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan (Adapted from SUAT Trust Policy Document ) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved by: | SEAC LAC | Issue Date: | Sept 2026 | Review Date: | Following Trust update | | |
| Policy Owner: | Inclusion Leader/Mrs Jessica Talks | | | | | | |
| Audience: | LAC | ☒ | Trustees | ☐ | General Public | ☒ | |
| | Staff | ☒ | Parents | ☒ | Pupils | ☐ | |

# Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan (2026)

**Table of Contents**


**1. Trust Ethos, Vision & Values**

1.1 Disability Equality Mission statement
1.2 Background
1.3 Trust's Strategic Priorities
1.4 Strengths and Weaknesses

**2. The General Duty**

**3. Specific Duty- How we will meet the General Duty**

3.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme
3.2 Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers
3.3 The Trust Board and Members
3.4 Removing barriers
3.5 Disability in the Curriculum, including teaching and learning
3.6 Eliminating harassment and bullying
3.7 Reasonable Adjustments
3.8 Trust Facility Lettings
3.9 Contractors and Procurement
3.10 Information, Performance and Evidence
   a. Student Achievement
   b. Learning Opportunities
   c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions
   d. Social Relationships
   e. Employing, promoting and training disabled staff
3.11 Impact Assessment
3.12 Reviewing/Monitoring

| Staffordshire University Academy Trust | | **SEAC Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan** (Adapted from SUAT Trust Policy Document ) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved by: | SEAC LAC | Issue Date: | Sept 2026 | Review Date: | Following Trust update | | |
| Policy Owner: | Inclusion Leader/Mrs Jessica Talks | | | | | | |
| Audience: | LAC | ☒ | Trustees | ☐ | General Public | ☒ | |
| | Staff | ☒ | Parents | ☒ | Pupils | ☐ | |

**Appendix 1 DES and Accessibility Action Plan Appendix 2 Review of previous DES and Accessibility Action Plan**

**This policy relates to all Academies in Staffordshire University Academies Trust.**

## 1. Trust Ethos, Vision and Values

### 1.1 Disability Equality Mission Statement

At Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT) we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for:

- pupils with disabilities in relation to education and associated services;
- staff with disabilities in relation to employment rights, conditions and opportunities;
- and all parents and members of the local community with disabilities in relation to additional services offered by or at our academies.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel confident about disclosing their disabilities in the certain knowledge that they will receive a positive and supportive response which facilitates their full participation in the full range of activities offered by our academies.

In particular, the achievement and participation of pupils and pupils with disabilities will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We will make reasonable adjustments in relation to teaching and learning and wider aspects of academy life to make sure that the educational environment is as accessible as possible.

We will use our accessibility planning duty to ensure that there is a rolling programme of improvements over the next three years in relation to access to the curriculum, access to information for both pupils and their parents and access to all of our Academies buildings, their facilities and amenities for all. We will seek to foster a positive response to disability among all members of our Academy's community and to eliminate bullying, harassment or the less favourable treatment of people with disabilities wherever and whenever it is likely to occur.

**At SUAT, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in, and visit our communities. In making this assertion, we subscribe to the social model of disability. The Disability Equality Duty (DED)**

### 1.2 Background Information

**Definition of disability**

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

It extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

- Individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is “clinically well-recognised”, although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**The Duty**

The Disability Discrimination Act of 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard to the following when carrying out their functions as employers, as providers of education and associated services and as providers of services to the wider community:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA;
- Eliminating harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people’s needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

**This general duty is also known as the Disability Equality Duty (DED).**

**A specific duty under the 2005 legislation required all schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme and an associated action plan covering a three-year cycle. This is the substance of the rest of this document.**

### 1.3 SUAT’s Strategic Priorities

SUAT is committed to achieving a level of excellence which ensures the success of every student. Ensuring the success of every student requires pupils who are responsive to learning, staff who are committed to the success of all pupils, and all parents to be supportive of the educational process.

**Mission Statement**

To enable pupils to achieve their full potential and become equipped to lead a successful adult life.

**SUAT Aims**

To encourage pupils to grow to their full potential and to develop confidence and pride in their achievements, so they can achieve emotional and economic well-being.

To promote a culture of high expectations amongst the whole SUAT community of schools so that pupils can make a positive contribution to society.

To provide a broad and balanced curriculum enabling all pupils to follow an appropriate pathway which helps them to develop as lifelong learners.

| Staffordshire University Academy Trust | | **SEAC Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan** (Adapted from SUAT Trust Policy Document ) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved by: | SEAC LAC | Issue Date: | Sept 2026 | Review Date: | Following Trust update | | |
| Policy Owner: | Inclusion Leader/Mrs Jessica Talks | | | | | | |
| Audience: | LAC | ☒ | Trustees | ☐ | General Public | ☒ | |
| | Staff | ☒ | Parents | ☒ | Pupils | ☐ | |

To give all pupils equal opportunities so that they receive access to high quality education, regardless of race, gender or disability.

To encourage pupils to develop and maintain positive relationships and reasoned, informed attitudes, values and beliefs.

To foster links with our academy's communities and beyond and to promote a tolerance of different beliefs and cultures.

To enable pupils to explore their spiritual, cultural and moral development.

To encourage pupils to make healthy choices in relation to their lifestyle.

**1.4 Strengths & Weaknesses**

SUAT recognises that it has both strengths and weaknesses upon which to improve to ensure that all pupils, staff, parents, visitors and volunteers are not discriminated against due to their disability.

| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
|---|---|
| Academic mentoring | Additional involvement in extra-curricular activities required |
| Pastoral support system and staff | Identification of disabled parents / carers |
| Physical environment | Physical environment |
| Accessibility | Accessibility |
| Timetabling of pupils to accessible classrooms where required | |
| Sensitivity in the way in which the academy addresses the issue of disabilities | Special resources available i.e. height adjustable cookers, physiotherapy rooms. Ad hoc depending on student need. |
| Consultation with external agencies | |
| Academy literature asking about disability / promoting the welcoming nature of the SUAT academies | |
| SEN staff and resources | |

| Staffordshire University Academy Trust | **SEAC Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan** (Adapted from SUAT Trust Policy Document ) |
|---|---|

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved by: | SEAC LAC | Issue Date: | Sept 2026 | Review Date: | Following Trust update | | |
| Policy Owner: | Inclusion Leader/Mrs Jessica Talks | | | | | | |
| Audience: | LAC | ☒ | Trustees | ☐ | General Public | ☒ | |
| | Staff | ☒ | Parents | ☒ | Pupils | ☐ | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Access to counselling provision | |
| Communication via website / newsletters | |

## 2. The General Duty

The production of this disability equality scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of the life of our Academies and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty i.e. to produce a Disability Equality Scheme for each of our Academies.

## 3. The Specific Duty

### 3.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme

SUAT academies aim to consult disabled pupils, staff, parents and disabled members of the community who may use the Academy's facilities, through:

- involvement on focus groups that are established, where necessary, in each academy
- involvement of the pupil council
- encouraging pupils from the local Special Schools to visit the site
- communication in the newsletter and on the websites
- consultative staff and pupil questionnaires
- consultation with external agencies i.e. relevant District Access Groups and Staffordshire Voluntary Sector

We continually review the results of these consultations and take into account the views expressed and include these in the relevant Academy action / improvement plan on that Academy's web site (see Appendix 1). Examples of appropriate adjustments already made by our Academies are:

- Ramps provided where necessary
- A lift giving access to all floor levels, where there is more than one storey
- Substantial investment into ICT provision including ground floor rooms
- Disabled pupils timetabled appropriately i.e. ground floor classrooms, if possible
- Consultation with parents of disabled pupils prior to admission to begin planning arrangements
- Additional SEN Teaching Assistants provided, where appropriate

The focus groups will meet on a regular basis, if appropriate, no less than bi - annually and individuals will continue to be consulted, to further develop the action plans and to monitor the action taken by the Academies in progressing the action plan.

Each Academy's records identify all pupils with SEN and/or a disclosed disability and records of their progress are kept. Any individual feedback from pupils, parents or carers regarding specific actions taken to involve pupils and the outcomes that have been achieved are recorded on the student's file.

SUAT recognises that pupils with a disability may face a range of barriers and discrimination. We will, wherever possible, endeavour to remove any barriers to disabled pupils, even if this means treating the student more favourably. We do not tolerate discrimination or bullying on the grounds of disability. This is included in our Anti-bullying and Equal Opportunities Policies.

### 3.2 Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers

SUAT is committed to involving disabled pupils, staff, parents and carers in review meetings of this policy. The focus groups potentially developed under section 3.1 will meet on a regular basis, no less than bi - annually, and individuals will continue to be consulted, to further develop the action plan and to monitor the action taken by the academies in progressing the action plan. This process will be overseen by the Local Academy Councils (LACs).

### 3.3 The Local Academy Council (LAC)

All nominations received to become a member of the Local Academy Council of an Academy are treated equally. Disabled representatives are welcomed and proceedings are made accessible. The parent members of the LAC are accessible to all parents and their contact details are made available. Regular articles in each Academy's newsletter clarify the LACs role and explain how it contributes to the life of the Academy.

### 3.4 Removing barriers

SUAT, and its Academies, continue to be proactive in removing barriers to disabled pupils and members of the community that may wish to access each Academy's facilities (see Disability Access Plan for each Academy). Action already taken includes:

- Ramps
- Investigation into feasibility of chair lifts
- Lift installed providing access to second floor, where appropriate
- Resources in enlarged print
- Availability of academy literature in different formats when requested
- Changes to the timetable to ensure accessibility
- Specialist equipment made available to staff / pupils
- Disability awareness training is made available to staff on a regular basis.

### 3.5 Disability in the Curriculum, including teaching and learning

SUAT encourages positive attitudes towards people with disabilities. Our staff are aware of our disabled pupils' needs and make adjustments to their resources and teaching styles of these pupils wherever required.

SUAT acknowledges Disability in the curriculum as a weakness and aims to make improvements by raising the profile of disability issues in the curriculum through our PSHE courses and by the promotion of disability awareness issues.

**3.6 Eliminating harassment and bullying** SUAT's harassment and bullying policy is explicit in how discrimination, bullying, harassment of disabled children and adults will be dealt with.

### 3.7 Reasonable Adjustments

Where a reasonable adjustment is made the relevant focus group or individual will be consulted in order to assess its effectiveness.

### 3.8 Academy Facility Lettings

Each Academy makes facilities and resources available on a lettings basis to all members of the community. Where possible requested facilities will be made available on the ground floor and additional reserved parking will be provided.

### 3.9 Contractors and Procurement

Contractors and procurements are chosen from approved lists, often using the County Council's DES.

In addition, the catering staff at each Academy promote that a range of foods e.g. vegetarian, gluten/wheat/dairy free can be made available to pupils to pre-order.

### 3.10 Information, Performance and Evidence

**a. Pupil Achievement**

Assessment data is recorded for all pupils' achievements including those with SEN or a disability. In addition, EHC Plans include information relating to pupils' SEN or disability. The EHC Plans are accessed electronically and are updated immediately information is obtained. All teaching staff update the progress on a termly basis. A SEND register is maintained and updated no less than every half-term. Records are kept that show individual assistance that each pupil is receiving and procedures are in place to map and assess provision (i.e. 1:1 or in-class support). Annual reviews of pupils with SEN and disabilities are conducted and include meetings with parents, staff and external agencies as required e.g. Visually Impaired Advisor.

**b. Learning Opportunities**

For pupils mostly in our secondary schools there are programmes with the local colleges for those who request or are chosen for this. Pupils with SEN or disability have regular meetings with the relevant careers staff in each Academy. The Academies work closely with the pupils to prepare and support those with SEN requirements and disabilities through work experience opportunities. We follow the information and guidance given by external agencies.

**c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions**

Pupils with disabilities are not over represented in any of our Academy's exclusion figures. Pupil admission forms ask parents/pupils in a sensitive manner to disclose any disability in order to enable that Academy to aid disabled pupils to make the most of their time with us. In our Academies a senior member of staff discusses each new intake with the feeder schools, student welfare staff and SENDCo and ensures that all staff are aware of individual needs. Any pupils with particular disabilities are invited with their parents to take a tour of the Academy and meet with the pupil welfare staff, and a

representative from the relevant external agency if appropriate, to discuss their individual needs so that appropriate transitional provision can be put in place.

**d. Social Relationships**

Our Academies all have their own specific arrangements but, in general, all pupils are integrated into tutor groups. Classrooms can be made available at break and lunch times for social interaction. Some pupils choose to spend these times in the SEND rooms with staff. The Trust acknowledges that it is difficult to monitor social relationships at lunch and break-times although this is done within the SEND area.

**e. Employing, promoting and training disabled staff**

SUAT is an equal opportunities employer that has a workforce that is representative of its local communities. In line with Staffordshire County Council's recruitment and selection procedures, we operate an interview guarantee scheme for any disabled applicant meeting all of the selection criteria. Candidates invited to attend for interview are also asked if they have any special requirements that will enable them to attend.

**3.11 Impact Assessment**

Impact assessment will take place following any action taken.

The Trust will continue to monitor each of its policies and procedures upon review and will consider the DED at each stage of the process.

**3.12 Reviewing/Monitoring**

The action plan will be reviewed by the Trust Board and monitored by the Local Academy Councils no less than annually.

Action will continually be taken to increase the number of disabled pupils, parents / carers and members of the community who are involved in the focus groups, within each academy.

This Disability Equality Scheme will be revised every three years or earlier if appropriate.

**Member of SUAT Staff Responsible:** **Chief Executive Officer**

**Designated Member of LAC**: **Named in each Academy**

**Director Responsible:** **Chair of Trust Board**

| Staffordshire University Academy Trust | | **SEAC Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan** (Adapted from SUAT Trust Policy Document ) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved by: | SEAC LAC | Issue Date: | Sept 2026 | Review Date: | Following Trust update | | |
| Policy Owner: | Inclusion Leader/Mrs Jessica Talks | | | | | | |
| Audience: | LAC | ☒ | Trustees | ☐ | General Public | ☒ | |
| | Staff | ☒ | Parents | ☒ | Pupils | ☐ | |

**SEAC Accessibility Action Plan 2026**

**Aims**

a. To **increase the involvement** of those with disabilities in deciding action that impacts upon them.
b. To increase **access** for those with a disability to the physical environment of the Academy, the curriculum and ensure equality in regards to access to information
c. To **evaluate and report to parents** on the success of the action plan in meeting its targets

| **Action** | **Success criteria** | **Lead person** | **Timescale** | **Review** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1)Further develop systematic procedures that **collect views of reasonable adjustments** by pupils with a disability, their parent and advocates | Annual meetings with parents and pupils will collect views on reasonable adjustments. Analysis of views will influence change.<br><br>A SEND specific survey of pupils and parents will be completed as routine. Analysis of views will influence change. | Inclusion Lead /SENCo | Summer 2026 | Ongoing |
| 2)Further develop systematic procedures for **monitoring the implementation of reasonable adjustments** throughout the **curriculum and extended school services.** | Monitoring routines are established and feedback and subsequent support improves practice and provision further.<br><br>100% of SEND pupils access clubs. | Inclusion Lead/SENCo<br><br>Personal Development Lead | September 2026 | |
| 3)Further develop systematic processes for **evaluating the impact of reasonable adjustments** on cohorts with a disability and report annually to the LAC | Book scrutiny's and pupil voice demonstrate exceptional progress for all individuals. | Inclusion Lead/SEN Co | September 2026 | |

| Staffordshire University Academy Trust | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **SEAC Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan** (Adapted from SUAT Trust Policy Document ) | | | | | |
| Approved by: | SEAC LAC | Issue Date: | Sept 2026 | Review Date: | Following Trust update | | |
| Policy Owner: | Inclusion Leader/Mrs Jessica Talks | | | | | | |
| Audience: | LAC | ☒ | Trustees | ☐ | General Public | ☒ | |
| | Staff | ☒ | Parents | ☒ | Pupils | ☐ | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4)Publish annual **reports to parents** on the success of the action plan in **reducing discrimination** and identifying further targets. | Specific strategies to reduce discrimination to be included on Inclusion Development Plans. | Inclusion Lead/SEN Co | Termly Inclusion Newsletters | Ongoing |
| | Inclusion Newsletters, available to parents, shares reducing discrimination strategies updates on targets. | | | |
| 5)Agree targets in **three key areas** and ensure that these are included within the **Academy Development or Improvement Plan** and that resources are identified to ensure their implementation | Key Areas included on Inclusion Development Plan | SLT | | |
| 6)Increase **access to the curriculum** by: Improving provision & practice further | All staff receive need specific CPD.<br><br>Pre and Post cue routines are embedded.<br><br>All foundation schemes consider & reflect specific adjustments for SEND.<br><br>Pupil Passports include adjustments needed for foundation subjects.<br><br>Links with other schools and specialist settings can inform practice and enhance provision in-house. | Inclusion Lead /SENCo | Termly | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7)Increase **access to the physical environment** by: Ensuring access for all | Audit of provision / physical environment is an ongoing process.<br><br>Any short-fall addressed in Asset Management Plan.<br><br>Reporting to site manager ensures safety and access for all. | Office/ Compliance Manager | Ongoing | |

| Staffordshire University Academy Trust | **SEAC Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan**<br>(Adapted from SUAT Trust Policy Document ) |
|---|---|

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved by: | SEAC LAC | Issue Date: | June 2023 | Review Date: | February 2025 | |
| Policy Owner: | Inclusion Leader/Mrs Jessica Talks | | | | | |
| Audience: | LAC | ☒ | Trustees | ☐ | General Public | ☒ |
| | Staff | ☒ | Parents | ☒ | Pupils | ☐ |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| 8)Increase **access to written materials** by: Ensuring individual needs are met. | Advised strategies identified on Pupil Passports.<br><br>Resources adapted and/or purchased as required.<br><br>Provision for SEND is audited. Any shortfalls are addressed.<br><br>Inclusion Toolkits accessible in all classrooms / Phases | Inclusion Lead /SENCo | Ongoing | |