Accessibility Policy

Document Name	Accessibility Policy
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Responsibility	School Improvement Team
Approved by	Trustees

*subject to any relevant changes in legislation or other appropriate guidelines

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Statement of Intent

Vantage Academy Trust is committed to taking all steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage and works closely with pupils with disabilities, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove any potential barriers to their learning experience.

The school is active in promoting an inclusive, positive environment by ensuring that every pupil is given equal opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy school life. The school continually looks for ways to improve accessibility within the school through data collection, parent questionnaires and discussions.

This policy must be adhered to by all staff members, pupils, parents and visitors.

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 1996
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Early Years Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Development Plan
- Data Protection Policy

2. Definitions

A person is defined as having a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the school does not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Advisory Board will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the Accessibility Plan.
- Approving the Accessibility Plan before it is implemented.

The Principal will be responsible for:

- Creating an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving the school's accessibility, in conjunction with the Local Advisory Board
- Ensuring that staff members are aware of pupils' disabilities and medical conditions where necessary.
- Establishing whether a new pupil has any disabilities or medical conditions which the school should be aware of.
- Consulting with relevant and reputable experts if challenging situations regarding pupils with disabilities arise.
- Working closely with the Local Advisory Board, LA and external agencies to effectively create and implement the school's Accessibility Plan.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the Principal and Local Advisory Board to ensure that pupils with SEND are appropriately supported.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy and the Accessibility Plan at all times.
- Ensuring that their actions do not discriminate against any pupil, parent or colleague.

All staff members and governors will partake in whole-school training on equality issues related to the Equality Act 2010. Designated staff members will be trained to effectively support pupils with medical conditions, for example, understanding how to administer insulin, in line with the Administering Medication Policy.

4. Accessibility Plan

The school's Accessibility Plan demonstrates how access will be improved for pupils with disabilities, staff, parents and visitors to the school within a given timeframe. It will be presented as either a freestanding document or as part of another document, such as the School Development Plan. The Accessibility Plan will be structured to complement and support the school's Equality Information and Objectives Policy, as well as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

The plan has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the school's physical environment to enable pupils with disabilities to take advantage of the facilities and education on offer
- To improve the availability and delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to measure the necessity of making reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities where practicable. It will be used to advise other school planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

The school will collaborate with the LA in order to effectively develop and implement the plan. The LA will prepare accessibility strategies based on the same principles as the school's Accessibility Plan. The LA will also provide auxiliary aids and services where necessary to help the school provide suitable support to pupils with disabilities.

During Ofsted inspections, the inspectorate may include the school's Accessibility Plan as part of their review. Both this policy and the Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

5. Equal Opportunities

The school strives to ensure that all existing and potential pupils are given the same opportunities, and is committed to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness. The Accessibility Plan will detail any barriers which are hindering the opportunities for pupils with SEND. The aim of the plan is to take appropriate measures in order to overcome these barriers, allowing all pupils equal opportunities.

Staff members will be aware of any pupils who are at a substantial disadvantage and will take the appropriate steps to ensure the pupil is effectively supported. Wherever possible, teaching staff will adapt their lesson plans and the curriculum to allow all pupils to reach their full potential and receive the support they need. The school will ensure that all extracurricular activities are accessible to all pupils and make reasonable adjustments to allow pupils with SEND to participate in all school activities.

6. Admissions

The school will act in accordance with its Admissions Policy. The same entry criteria will be applied to all pupils and potential pupils.

The school will strive to not put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at the school. All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all opportunities available to any member of the school community.

Information will be obtained on future pupils in order to facilitate advanced planning. Prospective parents of statemented pupils, and pupils with SEND, are invited to a transition meeting prior to the pupil starting school in order to discuss the pupil's specific needs.

7. Curriculum

The school is committed to providing a healthy environment that enables full curriculum access and values and includes all pupils regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual and emotional needs. No pupil is excluded from any aspect of the school curriculum due to their disabilities or impairments. The school aims to provide a differentiated curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress.

The head of department for each subject and the SENCO will work together to adapt a pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP), with advice sought from outside agencies where appropriate, to allow all pupils to reach their full potential.

Where areas of the curriculum present challenges for a pupil, these are dealt with on an individual basis. The class teacher, in discussion with the pupil and their parents, will ensure that all adjustments possible, in line with common sense and practical application, will be made for any disability or impairment. Physical education lessons will be adapted, wherever possible, to allow pupils with disabilities to participate in lessons.

There are established procedures for the identification and support of pupils with SEND in place at the school. Detailed pupil information on pupils with SEND are given to relevant staff in order to aid teaching, e.g. 'Single Page Profiles'.

Specialist resources are available for pupils with visual impairments, such a large print reading books. Learning support assistants are deployed to implement specific literacy, numeracy and speech programmes.

8. Physical Environment

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff members, parents and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within the school premises. There are no parts of the school to which pupils with disabilities have limited or no access to.

The school has toilet facilities suitable for people with disabilities which are fitted with a handrail and an emergency pull cord. There are provisions for nappy changing.

Where entrances to the school are not flat, a ramp is supplied for access. Wide doors are fitted throughout the school to allow for wheelchair access. The corridor flooring and lighting is designed to support those who are visually impaired.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when new legislation or guidance concerning equality and disability is published. The Local Advisory Board and Principal will review the policy in collaboration with the SENCO.

Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed.