

Acton Academy Nanaimo

Accessibility Plan

2026 – 2029

Kindergarten to Grade 7 • Group 3 Independent School • Nanaimo, British Columbia

Section 1: Introduction

Acton Academy Nanaimo is a Group 3 independent school serving learners in Kindergarten through Grade 7. Our campus is at 71 Caledonia Avenue in downtown Nanaimo, in an owned building with wheelchair access and nearly an acre of outdoor space beside the Millstone River.

We are a learner-driven community. Children work in multi-age studios — Spark for younger learners and Discovery for older elementary learners — with guides rather than traditional grade-by-grade classrooms. Our mission is that each person who enters our doors will find a calling that will change the world.

This plan describes how we will identify, remove, and prevent barriers so that students, families, staff, and visitors with disabilities can take part fully in school life. It is a public document. We will review and update it at least once every three years.

Territorial acknowledgement

Acton Academy Nanaimo respectfully acknowledges the Snuneymuxw First Nation, upon whose traditional and unceded territory we live, guide, play, and learn.

Definitions

The following definitions are taken from the Accessible British Columbia Act.

- Disability: an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.
- Impairment: a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic.
- Barrier: anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment. Barriers can be physical, attitudinal, related to information or communication, technological, or created by a policy or practice.
- Accessibility plan: a plan to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization.

Types of barriers we look for at school:

- Learning — anything that limits how a child can engage with work, represent what they know, or take part in studio life.

- Architectural and physical — building design, doorways, washrooms, paths of travel, playgrounds, parking, and outdoor grounds.
- Attitudinal — assumptions, low expectations, or a lack of disability awareness.
- Policy or practice — rules and habits that unintentionally exclude someone.
- Information, communication, and technology — websites, notices, forms, videos, and digital tools that some people cannot use.
- Resources — gaps in tools, time, or training that keep a support from being offered.

Section 2: Framework guiding our work

The Accessible British Columbia Regulation, under the Accessible British Columbia Act, came into force in September 2022. Independent schools became prescribed organizations on September 1, 2023. Schools must have:

- an Accessibility Committee,
- an Accessibility Plan, and
- a way for the public to give feedback on the plan and on barriers.

The Act asks us to consider six principles when we write and update this plan: inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design.

In plain language, that means people with disabilities belong here; needs change and so should we; no two people with disabilities are the same; this work is shared; people should have a say in what helps them; and we design spaces and programs to work for as many people as possible from the start.

Section 3: The Accessibility Committee

Acton Academy Nanaimo has established an Accessibility Committee to help us identify barriers and advise on how to remove and prevent them.

To the extent possible, the committee will include:

- school leadership,
- a staff member with lived experience of disability, or who supports learners with disabilities,
- a parent or caregiver of a child with a disability,
- at least one Indigenous member, and
- a person familiar with the building and grounds.

At least half of the members will, to the extent possible, be persons with disabilities or people who support persons with disabilities. Members may come from inside or outside the school. We welcome interest from families and from local organizations such as Nanaimo Association for Community Living.

The committee meets at least three times each school year. It reviews feedback, walks the campus, and advises the Lead Guide and the Authority on priorities. Meeting notes are kept. Personal information shared with the committee stays confidential.

Committee members will be named on this page once appointments are confirmed by the Authority.

Section 4: Consultation

We identify barriers in several ways. Some of this work is already under way; some will happen in the first year of the plan.

What we do	Description	When
Review of practices	Look at enrolment conversations, studio practice, emergency procedures, and family communications through an accessibility lens.	Fall 2026
Campus walk-through	Walk the owned building and outdoor grounds, including wheelchair access to studios, washrooms, gathering spaces, and paths.	Fall 2026, then each fall
Staff conversation	Guides and support staff discuss what helps and what gets in the way in Spark and Discovery studios.	Fall 2026
Family invitation	Invite parents and caregivers to name barriers and successes, including through the feedback tool.	Fall 2026 and ongoing
Feedback tool	A simple form on the website and a paper copy at the office. Comments may be anonymous.	Posted with this plan
Committee review	The committee reviews what we have heard and recommends priorities to the Lead Guide and Authority.	Each committee meeting

Section 5: Accessibility feedback tool

Anyone may comment on this plan or on a barrier they have met at Acton Academy Nanaimo. You do not have to give your name.

Ways to reach us:

- Email hello@actonacademynanaimo.ca with the subject line Accessibility.
- Use the feedback form on our website, www.actonacademynanaimo.ca.
- Leave a written note at the office at 71 Caledonia Avenue.
- Speak with the Lead Guide. You may bring a support person.

We ask, in plain language: what happened, where it happened, what would help, and whether you would like a reply. We log comments within ten school days. If you leave contact information, we will acknowledge your note. Urgent safety concerns are handled right away through our usual safety procedures.

Feedback is used only to improve accessibility. We do not share names without permission.

Section 6: Accomplishments and barriers

What is already in place

- The school owns its building at 71 Caledonia Avenue, and the building has wheelchair access.
- Studios are multi-age and learner-driven, so children can often work at their own pace and show learning in more than one way.
- Enrolment conversations include what a learner or family may need in order to take part.
- Core skills and projects use a mix of hands-on work, discussion, and digital tools, which makes it easier to offer another format when needed.
- Service animals are welcome, in line with the B.C. Human Rights Code.
- We tell families clearly that we are a small Group 3 school and what supports we can and cannot provide.

Barriers we are watching

Barriers we expect to keep working on:

- Outdoor surfaces, drop-off, signage, and emergency exit routes for people who need extra time or assistance.
- Website, forms, and family notices that are hard to use with a screen reader or that are not written in plain language.
- Videos and digital platforms without captions or another way in.
- Noisy multi-age rooms, with no quiet option nearby.
- Field trips and celebrations planned as if every child can walk, hear, or process the same way.

The committee will turn this list into more specific items after the first campus walk-through and the first round of family feedback.

Section 7: Three-year plan

Year 1 is 2026–2027. We will update the status of each item when the committee meets.

#	Action	Timing	Status
1	Post this plan and the feedback form on the website. Tell families they exist.	Year 1	In progress
2	Confirm committee members, including an Indigenous member if one is not yet appointed.	Year 1	In progress
3	Complete a written walk-through of the building and grounds each fall.	Years 1–3	Not started
4	Where a space is not yet fully accessible, write down a respectful interim measure and train staff on it.	Year 1	Not started

5	Write a short process for requesting an accommodation for a student, staff member, or visitor.	Year 1	Not started
6	Review the website, enrolment forms, and family notices for plain language and basic digital access.	Year 1–2	Not started
7	Add captions or a written summary to school videos when we can.	Years 1–3	Ongoing
8	Give staff and volunteers a short annual orientation on disability, respectful language, and how to receive feedback.	Years 1–3	Not started
9	Check field trips, sports, and celebrations against a simple access list before they are finalized.	Years 1–3	Ongoing
10	Include accessibility in any renovation or change to the building or grounds so we do not create new barriers.	Years 1–3	Ongoing

Section 8: Monitoring and evaluation

The Accessibility Committee meets at least three times a year to review progress and new feedback. The Lead Guide reports to the Authority at least twice a year. A short public note on progress will be posted with this plan each September.

The full plan will be reviewed and updated by August 2029, or sooner if we change the building, grade range, or program in a way that creates new barriers.

Section 9: Giving feedback

Questions, comments, and feedback about this plan or about barriers at Acton Academy Nanaimo may be sent to:

Acton Academy Nanaimo

71 Caledonia Avenue, Nanaimo, BC

hello@actonacademynanaimo.ca

www.actonacademynanaimo.ca

Section 10: More information

For more about the Accessible British Columbia Act:

- [Accessible British Columbia Act](#)
- [Accessible British Columbia Regulation](#)
- [Plain-language summary of the Act](#)

Approved by the Authority that operates Acton Academy Nanaimo.

Next full review: on or before August 2029.