



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Introduction

Our school's mission statement talks of valuing the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, with a particular emphasis on disability.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 aims to end discrimination against people with disabilities and to improve access in all areas of life. Since 2002, it has been unlawful for schools and Local Education Authorities to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in admissions and exclusions, in education, and in associated services.

From 1st October 2004 it has been unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities by preventing them from having access to premises. Along with all other public buildings, our school is required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable access.

What is Disability?

The Disability and Discrimination Act states that 'a person suffers from a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities'. Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday lives. Disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

Aims

Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children, and this of course includes pupils with disabilities.

We will ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils to benefit from the education our school provides. We will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his or her disability.

We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage. We will do our best to anticipate the needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities before he or she joins the school.

Removing Barriers

The school must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils and members of staff, parents, carers and visitors are not disadvantaged.

The Physical Environment

We will endeavour to improve provision for disabled pupils and staff by developing the physical environment of the school, within the limits of the resources available. Where necessary, we will try to improve the following:

- access to the school, by installing setting-down and picking-up points, ramps, handrails.
- movement around the building, for example by adaptations, such as improved colour schemes, for people with impaired sight; lowered and appropriately shaped handles for doors.

- information and communication technology, by selecting appropriate hardware and software;
- signage, for example by putting it in clear print.

The Curriculum

We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We plan our out-of-school activities and school trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.

We use language that does not offend, and we make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language.

Our library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities.

The school regularly reviews the way resources are matched to the needs of all the children. If necessary, to improve our provision, adjustments will be made to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training.

We seek and respond to guidance from the parents and the children.

Information

Information normally provided in writing (lesson content, texts, library resources and information about school events) will be made available in alternative formats if necessary.

We always take account of disabilities, be they the pupils' or their parents/carers. For example, communication with a parent who is visually impaired may need to be by telephone rather than by letter.

Staffing

When advertising posts, or interviewing applicants, or deciding on appointments, the governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.

Should a member of staff become disabled, the governing body will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements, or to the premises, in order to enable them to continue in post.

All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training, and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.

This school will liaise with specialists to support individual pupils. Among these specialists are the following: physiotherapists, educational psychologists, speech therapists, doctors, school nurse, social workers and the staff of voluntary/ statutory agencies. We benefit from the LEA's advice.

Policy Into Practice

The governing body is responsible for the school's duty not to discriminate.

The Head Teacher will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception.

All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents or staff with disabilities.

Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues, so that we can work towards resolving them.

We will consult with disabled pupils, parents/carers and members of staff to assess the effectiveness of our policies and practices.

Monitoring

The Head Teacher implements the school's disability equality policy on a day-to-day basis, and ensures that all staff are aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them.

This policy will be reviewed at any time on a request from the governors, or at least once every three years.