

MODEL POLICY FOR DEVELOPING AND REVIEWING OUR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

School name: Morley Place Academy

3-year period covered by the policy: 2020-2023

Policy agreed (name): Lisa Hillyer

Policy to be reviewed (Insert proposed review date): Sept 2023

Introduction

It is our intention to remove, as far as we can, those barriers which make it hard for children and adults with a disability to take part in the day to day life of our school and benefit from the educational experiences and services we provide.

We aim to ensure that our school is a welcoming place that understands and responds effectively to children and adults with disabilities and we recognise the importance of a review and planning procedure associated with continuous development and improvement.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a 'physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability

- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.
- Schools are allowed to treat disabled children / young people more favourably than non-disabled children / young people, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with children / young people without disabilities
- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.

The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

School governing bodies and proprietors must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

The Responsible Body

The responsible body (in maintained schools this is the governing body) must prepare -

- an accessibility plan;
- further such plans at such times as may be prescribed. An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period -
- increasing the extent to which disabled children / young people can participate in the school's curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled children / young people are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by the school; and

- improving the delivery to disabled children / young people— (i) within a reasonable time, and (ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, of information which is provided in writing for children / young people who are not disabled.
- An accessibility plan must be in writing.
- During the period to which the plan relates, the responsible body must keep its accessibility plan under review and, if necessary, revise it.
- It is the duty of the responsible body to implement its accessibility plan.

Schools have had a duty to produce an accessibility plan since September 2002. These initial plans should have been in place by April 2003.

The Statutory Policies for Schools (Sept 2014) states that it is a requirement that maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools, sixth-form colleges, further education colleges and Pupil Referral Units must review their accessibility plan every three years. It also states that approval should be by the governing body however, they are free to delegate the approval right to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the head teacher.

Other relevant legislation, regulations & guidance;

Children & Families Act (2014)

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Regulations (2014)

The SEND Code of Practice (revised April 2015)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014) (Updated 2017)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)

Disability Discrimination Order (2006)

The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 & 3

DfES “Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils”

Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003

The School’s Context

We are an Academy School for children who age from 7 years to 11 years. The school comprises of 1 building covering a small site of one storey construction.

The School's Aims

To deliver the highest standards of care, teaching, learning and leadership so that children can achieve to their highest potential.

Formulating our Accessibility Plan

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified by a planning group who consisted of:

- Head of Academy
- SENCO / Inclusion Manager
- Business Manager

Process Our accessibility plan has been developed as follows:

- 1) Access audit and review of current activities completed
- 2) Actions to eliminate barriers identified (with short-term, medium term and long term targets).
- 3) Goals and targets set which can be measured & include time frames.
- 4) Consultation with school staff, AAB and other bodies i.e. parents/ carers,
- 5) The Plan's contents checked.
- 6) Publication of the plan
- 7) Implemented the plan and allocated adequate resources.
- 8) Evaluated the plan every 3 years (with the accessibility plan under on-going review and revision as necessary).

In addition to this we will;

- continually review the environment of the school, the way we plan, prepare and deliver curriculum and the information we provide for children / young people so that we can improve the access for both individuals and groups;
- work to provide an atmosphere where all children / young people feel safe and valued;
- promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with a disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.
- examine those parts of our active and extra-curricular activities which may have limited access for children / young people with a disability and see if it is possible to provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.

Accessing the School's Accessibility Plan

The accessibility plan will be on the school's website and available in the policy folder at school.

Other School Policies & Documentation

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Health & Safety (including off-site safety)
- Inclusion
- Behaviour Policy
- School Prospectus
- Academy Development Plans

Attached is a set of audits and action plans relating to the key aspects of accessibility.

AUDITS & ACTION PLANS

Access Audit Date: 10.9.2020

Lead member of staff: Sarah Fitzpatrick

Section 1

The school can deliver the curriculum to all children / young people. Give details of items developed, current practise and things to be developed.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
Teachers and assistants have been trained to teach and support disabled children / young people. Staff are confident about meeting the needs of children / young people with a disability.	✓			Many staff have taught children with disability in the past. If a new child arrived at Morley Place Academy with a disability that staff did not have specific knowledge of – multi agency working would ensure that knowledge would be obtained.
All school staff and members of the AAB will have access to	✓			SENCO attends termly network meetings and shares relevant info Staff to be offered training when appropriate

training on disability equality and inclusion.				or when new updates/ info needs sharing
We take advice to ensure our classrooms are optimally organised and resourced for disabled children / young people.	✓			Work closely with outside agencies to ensure equipment is suitable allows full access to classroom and school when required.
Positive images of people with different abilities are apparent in the classrooms and the school generally.		✓		Discussed as part of assemblies and new reward initiative launched in Sept 2020 with positive role models.
Staff plan alternative ways of providing experience and understanding of parts of the curriculum. i.e. All children / young people are encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities. Alternative forms of exercise are given in PE and games for disabled children / young people.	✓			All children have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum and appropriate support is offered or sourced if its additional to school resources. Residential visits and school visits are available to all children (with appropriate adjustment if required)
Lessons are responsive to diversity. Lessons allow children / young people to work individually, with a partner, in groups and whole class. There is extensive peer support and collaborative learning in support of those with a learning disability.	✓			Teachers plan activities and opportunities for children to work collaboratively. The use of strategies allow the children to work with other children of different abilities, backgrounds and disabilities.
When planning the deployment of additional adults, there is a consideration of pupils with disabilities so that if needed, they benefit from high staffing ratios and smaller group activities in order to ensure their inclusion and raise attainment.	✓			The use of additional adults is planned carefully to take in to account the needs of all pupils but especially those children with disabilities.
Staff recognise and allow for the mental effort/additional time required by some disabled children / young people, e.g. using lip reading, processing time for children / young people on the ASD Spectrum.	✓			Staff ensure they are inclusive with the time provided for mental processing. Additional aids are utilised for any children that require them.
When renewing computer hardware and software, machines and materials are chosen to support children / young people with a disability, e.g. vocalising braille, touch screen, assistive technology.				Not required at the moment but would be purchased as and when needed supported by ICT technician.

Provision of laptops is considered to aid recording and / or communication.	✓			Children that require them have access to i-pads or lap tops to aid in recording work. Purchase of Clicker to be April 2021.
School visits are subject to a regular review to ensure increased levels of access or alternative experience.	✓			The accessibility for all children is considered when booking a visit or visitor.
The school links with other schools to share good practice.	✓			Within Delta and inclusion network meetings.
Staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation. When curriculum units are developed the originators always ask if there could be a disability dimension.	✓			All children are considered when subject specific sequences of learning are designed.
Access Arrangements are used when appropriate to support children / young people with accessing assessments.	✓			Every child is treated as an individual and access arrangements are considered carefully to ensure that no child is disadvantaged in any way.
The school signpost children, young people and families to further support e.g. Together Information Exchange, ASCETs, Autism Family Practitioners, SAIDSEND, IFSS	✓			The academy works closely with other services to ensure that the relevant children are supported in the best possible way.
A governor takes particular interest in, and responsibility for promoting disability awareness and inclusion.	✓			AAB reports termly include inclusion updates. All AAB members take an interest in this area

Section 2:

The school is designed to meet the needs of all children / young people.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
The size and layout of areas allow access for all children / young people, including wheelchair users.	✓			Ramps have been fitted and doors widened to ensure allow access. Careful consideration of classrooms made for children requiring a wheelchair.
In considering the school budget there is a clear plan to improve access and resources for those with a disability.				Not really needed at present as school fully accessible for disability needs
There is a plan which shows priorities for major and minor				N/A

works, costed and included in the School Improvement Plan.				
The school has procedures to ensure the rigorous maintenance of specialist equipment and facilities.	✓			Specialist equipment is routinely maintained by a specialist provider.
Emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform all pupils including children / young people with SEN, including alarms with both visual and auditory components.	✓			Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are reviewed and updated termly (last PEEP's dated October 2020)
Personal Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in place to provide people with any form of disability, who cannot be adequately protected by the standard fire safety provisions within a premises, with a similar level of safety from the effects of fire as all other occupants.	✓			See above point
With regards to 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)', there a policy in place for the effective and safe administration of medication. Personal hygiene and medical issues are dealt with full attention to the safety and dignity of all concerned i.e. children / young people taking medication, those with limited toileting training.	✓			Relevant staff attend annual administering medicines training. Designated toileting area with a shower for those children with toileting issues.
Pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements are safe. Disabled parking spots are available.	✓			Pathways of travel are safe and accessible. Disabled parking spaces available.
There is a positive attitude to the recruitment and employment of staff with a disability and a good knowledge about the levels of support they are entitled to.	✓			All leaders involved in the recruitment of staff have attended safer recruitment training.
Furniture and equipment is selected, adjusted and located appropriately. Steps are taken to reduce the background noise for HI children / young people and advice sought from other agencies to take appropriate measures in the classroom.	✓			Advice, support and guidance are accessed form a wide range of agencies including OT, PT, ASCETS, HI Team and HI Team.

The décor and / or signage is not confusing or disorientating for children / young people with a visual impairment, autism or epilepsy. Colour schemes provide colour & tonal contrast for VI children / young people. Labels and signs are presented pictorially and in written word if needed for people with a disability.		✓		More visual pictures needed for signage in and around school.
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Section 3:

The school delivers materials in other formats.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
Information is provided in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in braille for children / young people and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with forms of printed information.		✓		Check that letters state alternative versions of information can be available.
Information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly or people with disabilities e.g. reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams.	✓			
ICT facilities are used to produce written information in different formats as appropriate.				
Staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities.	✓			Regular staff training with regards to technology and remote learning.
External agencies have raised staff awareness i.e. VI, HI, ASCETS, occupational / physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, school nurses, Health visitors...	✓			Training from outside agencies with all staff.
There is an effective process to deal with both complaints and positive suggestions from the parents of children / young people with a disability.	✓			

Checking the School's Access Plan

When a new Access Plan is formulated (every 3 years), a check will be completed prior to publication.

Lead member of staff: Sarah Fitzpatrick

Date for check: 2023