Woodchurch High School

A Church of England Academy

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Reviewed: February 2016

Approved by Full Governors: March 2016

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

Contents

1. Introduction 3
2. Vision/Philosophy 4
3. Information Gathering 5
4. School Accessibility Plan 5
5. Access to the Curriculum 6
6. Access to Written Information 7
7. Pupils Joining the School 7
8. Preparation for Pupils Leaving 8

This Accessibility Plan replaces the previous three year plan dated July 2009 and the Disability Policy dated September 2009 and becomes effective from February 2016.

This policy should be read alongside:

- EQUALITY Act 2010: Schedule 10, Paragraph 3.
- Disability Discrimination prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) (England) Regulations, 2005.
- Special Needs Code of Practice 2014

1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 provides the definition of disability:

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is *'...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*

Section 28D of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ("the Act") *requires local authorities and schools to prepare accessibility strategies and plans for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can access and make use of the education and services provided by schools, over a prescribed period of times by which further such strategies and plans must be prepared. This section also provides the Secretary of State to make regulations prescribing the dates by which further such strategies and plans must be prepared and the periods to be covered by accessibility strategies and plans.*

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 amended Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ("the Act") to extend the Act to schools and further and higher education.

Part 4 includes the so-called "Planning Duties". These are twin duties imposed upon local education authorities and schools to prepare accessibility strategies and plan respectively for, over a prescribed period, increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum, improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of the education an associated services provided or offered by the school and improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils.

With the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, there is a keen interest, in particular, on schools compliance with the duty to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. It is anticipated in the interest of keeping bureaucracy to a minimum, most schools will want to expand their access plans for disabled pupils so that they

include access improvements that will benefit disabled staff, disabled parents and other disabled users of school, premises and services.

Equality Act 2010 Schedule 10 highlights:

An accessibility strategy is a strategy for, over a prescribed period –

- Increases the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the schools' curriculums;
- Improving the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools.
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are disabled.

An accessibility plan is required by law and the responsible body must keep its accessibility plan under review. There must be regard to the need to allocate resources for implementing the plan.

2. Vision/Philosophy

"Our vision is to continue our work on Social Inclusion thus offering an inclusive learning environment which is equally accessible to all and enable children with different needs the opportunity to learn together."

The school is fully committed to the principles in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO) World Conference on SEN; Access and Quality – June 1994):

- Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain acceptable levels of learning;
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, abilities and learning needs;
- Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs;
- Every child with special educational needs must have access to mainstream schools that should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting those needs.

The school is committed to providing all its children with an education of the highest possible standards, irrespective of age, ability, aptitude, sexual orientation or special educational need. We will ensure we provide our pupils with the skills necessary to become independent learners and take their place in the adult world and work as responsible caring citizens. We will strongly promote the Social, Moral, and Spiritual, Cultural, Emotional and Physical development of our pupils.

We strive to make our school accessible to all pupils to enable them to participate fully in the school curriculum both the formal curriculum and the extra-curricular activities.

3. Information Gathering

Schools are required to collect information in order to formulate meaningful access plans. The information we have collected and collated before creating this plan is as follows:

- The nature of our school population for whom we are planning.
- The nature of our school, including a consideration of the impact of our existing plans and priorities.
- The procedure for preparing disabled pupils prior to starting at the school.
- Pupils already in school and moving through it including identification and recording of their needs.
- The nature of the future intake.
- The level of staff awareness of Equalities legislation, school policies, practices and procedures designed to ensure pupils with Medical, Physical Impairments are not disadvantaged.
- The presence of disabled pupils and their participation in the life of the school, for example, patterns of attendance and exclusions, the participation of disabled pupils in after school clubs and school visits.
- The impact on disabled pupils on the way the school is organised, for example school policies and practices for administering of medicines, timetabling, anti-bullying policy, school trips and teaching and learning.
- The ways in which the curriculum has been modified as the pupils needs have become more complex.
- How the school ensure the curriculum suit the needs of the individual child.
- How classroom organisation is determined with pupils disabilities in mind, there are flexible arrangements to cater for pupils with walking frames; wheelchairs and to enable support staff to be accommodated in lessons.
- The ways in which information is currently provided for disabled pupils.
- Outcomes for disabled pupils including exams, reaching target grades and achievements in extra-curricular activities.
- The school's response to the needs of parents' disabilities prior to the children joining the school to ensure we are able to communicate with them successfully immediately we have contact with them.
- External agencies that the school access for specialist advice.

4. School Accessibility Plan

The physical environment is safe for children with a range of physical abilities:

- The school is fully adapted to ensure pupils are able to access all parts of the school and all other opportunities on offer. The school is set out on 2 floors

and there are 2 lifts either side of the building. The school was built in 2011 and the planning took into account the needs of pupils with a wide range of disabilities.

- All corridors, doorways and rooms are wide enough for wheelchairs to access.
- All staff and pupils ensure that corridors are uncluttered to reduce barriers to access. There are housekeeping staff on duty throughout the day to ensure the school is maintained to a high standard.
- The school environment includes small areas called 'pods' that the pupils can access for 1:1 support, small group work or for study periods.
- There is a designated car park for pupils and staff with disabilities. There are spaces near to the school building for pupils who receive specialist transport to and from school. They are met at the beginning and end of the day by Teaching Assistants who ensure they disembark/enter from the vehicles safely. There is a separate electronic door which the pupils have access to and they are escorted safely onto the school premises.

5. Access to the Curriculum

- As part of the SEND reforms the school the school has published their Local Offer which provides clear, comprehensive, accessible and up to date information about the available provision and how to access it.
- All areas of the curriculum will be available to pupils regardless of their disability.
- The Local Authority Sensory Support Service provide support to the pupils and advise school on how best to modify the curriculum and materials to ensure they are accessible to the child.
- The school has a high number of experienced Teaching Assistants who are based in curriculum areas and implement the strategies as outlined in each of the pupils' 'Person Centred Plan'.
- The school liaise with a wide range of professionals for advice as to how best to meet a pupils' needs including the Local Authority Educational Psychologist, Paediatricians, Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists and Response.
- The school work closely with parents/carers and welcome input from the Parent Partnership.
- The SEND Teaching and Learning Leader organises training for specific staff in order to improve access to the curriculum. Staffs have regular whole school training and disability is of high priority.
- The SEND teaching and learning leader is responsible for the implementation of 'First Teaching' in place across the whole school.
- All pupils' progress is monitored by the Pupil Progress Leader and SEND Teaching and Learning Leader and interventions are put in place if they are not meeting their target grade.
- The school provide a wide range of intervention including social skills programmes, small group English and Maths, supported study sessions and mentoring.
- The SEND Teaching and Learning Leader works closely with the examinations officer to ensure access arrangements are in place.

- During lesson observations a range of senior staff will monitor and review the participation of disabled pupils to inform future developments in inclusion.
- The school in liaison with specialist NHS staff purchase specialist equipment for pupils including high stools, writing slopes, pencil grips, sensory resources and modified books.
- The school has an inclusion pod which is staffed and is for disabled pupils who prefer a designated place during break and lunchtimes which they can go to.
- The school has a person centred approach to addressing the needs of disabled pupils. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs and pupils who are identified as having additional needs receives a 'Pupil Centred Profile' which outlines their barriers to learning, the child's views as the what would work for them, strategies to address their identified needs and targets are set and regularly reviewed.
- A small number of pupils whom the school identify as requiring a higher level of support receive an Additional Support Plan which can, if appropriate, form the evidence to request a statutory assessment of their special educational needs.
- The school have over 30 pupils in receipt of a Health Care Plan and this is reviewed annually or more regularly if required.
- All pupils in receipt of a Health Care Plan and who participate in either a day or residential trip will have a risk assessment completed. In some instances arrangements will be made for the pupil to have specific staff support.
- Attendance at extra-curricular activities is positively encouraged.
- The school have employed a Social Inclusion Officer who has extended the opportunities available to disabled pupils including bespoke PE activities, Friday Fun Club and Sunday morning club. There are also regular enrichment trips to a range of venues. The school have arranged residential trips in England and are planning a trip to Paris.

6. Access to Written Information

- All information issued by the school aims to be user friendly and is available in whatever format is required.
- All written information is kept in an individual folder, which is kept securely in a locked office.

7. Pupils Joining the School

- The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for the transition of Year 6 pupils to the school and leads a team of staff. All pupils are visited in their primary school and a discussion takes place to ensure that there is an awareness of their needs.
- Disabled pupils are identified and receive an enhanced transition which includes additional visits to the school. Children who have an Autistic Spectrum Condition and/or social communication difficulties are provided with visual aids, photographs and timetables in preparation for their transfer.

- Pupils are introduced to key staff who will be working with them prior to starting as this enables them to build up a relationship with them.

8. Preparation for Pupils Leaving

- The school purchase the services of Mploy to provide specialist careers advice and disabled pupils are supported to access the service.
- All Year 10 disabled pupils participate in one week's work experience and where necessary are supported by a teaching assistant.