

## Disability Equality and Accessibility Policy

### Introduction

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. According to the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan will be reviewed every 3 years or where operational needs dictate and approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Principal. At The Free School Norwich, the Plan will be monitored by the Principal and evaluated by the Board of Governors. The current Plan will be appended to this document.

At The Free School Norwich, we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

### Aims:

Our Aims are:

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs.

- To improve the physical environment of the school where necessary to increase the extent to which pupils, staff and other members of the school community with a disability, medical condition or other access needs can access education and associated services.
- Continue to raise awareness and improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and other members of the school community.

1) The Accessibility Plan has been developed and drawn up based upon information supplied by the Local Authority, and consultations with pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school. The document will be used to advise other school planning documents. It is structured to complement and support the School's Equality Objectives. The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum Plan
- Equal Opportunities
- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- School Improvement Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Prospectus
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicines Policy

We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty. The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website. The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through the Governing Body. The school will work in partnership with the Local Authority in developing and implementing this Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

2) The Free School Norwich is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to adhering to the principles of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

3) The Free School Norwich Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipates the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

The Free School Norwich Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information.

### **Increasing Access to the Curriculum for Pupils with a Disability**

Improving teaching and learning lies at the heart of the school's work. Through self-review and Continuous Professional Development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote excellent teaching and learning for all children. We aim to meet every child's needs within mixed ability, inclusive classes.

It is a core value of the school that all children are enabled to participate fully in the broader life of the school. Consequently, all children have always been encouraged to attend age relevant after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and educational visits.

### **Increasing Physical Access to the Environment of the School for Pupils with a Disability**

The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the governing body. It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of this accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

### **Current Good Practice**

We gather information about any disability or health condition in early communications with parents and carers of children who are new to school. For parents and carers of children already at the school, we ask parents to keep the school informed of any changes to the information they have provided.

### **Physical Environment**

There are no areas of the school to which disabled pupils have limited or no access at the moment.

Disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extracurricular activities present particular challenges, for example lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction impairments, after-school clubs for pupils with physical impairments and school trips for pupils with medical needs, however all reasonable adjustments are made to support as full an involvement as possible.

### **Curriculum**

Through planning for individual need, we aim to provide as inclusive an approach as practically possible. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, however all reasonable adjustments are made to support as full an involvement as possible.

We seek advice and support from the relevant professionals in order to ensure that we have made adequate and reasonable adjustments.

### **Information**

Different forms of communication are made available as needs are identified to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is provided in a range of different formats available for disabled pupils, parents and staff as needed.

### **Access Audit**

The school is housed in a Georgian Grade II listed building, King's House, across 3 storeys.

- There are two accessible toilets in school, one in the front entrance lobby and the other in the KS1 corridor. Both fitted with handrail and emergency pull cord.
- An access door and ramp has been installed at the rear of King's house.
- Ramps and wide gates have been installed in the school playground area to ensure access.
- All doorways in the building are wide enough to accommodate wheelchair access.
- A lift to all three floors has been installed by the access door at the rear entrance to the school.
- The front entrance features a secure lobby adjacent to the main school office. This is accessible by a small flight of stairs with handrails at either side.
- The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked. Personalised evacuation plans are put into place as required.

Whilst we acknowledge that the size and height of the school site could potentially present challenges when moving around the school, we make reasonable adjustments as the need arises, utilising the lift where necessary and 2 evacuation chairs are available in the event of an emergency. The school does not have any dedicated visitor parking, however suitable arrangements for disabled visitors are made when appropriate. Visitors to the school use on-street parking, or car parks in and around the city centre area.

### **Management, Coordination and Implementation and Review**

- We consult with other professionals and services when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.
- The Governors and Senior Leadership Team work closely with the Local Authority.
- We work closely with parents to consider their children's needs.
- The policy is reviewed annually and/or as children's needs change.

The annual review is then shared with staff. We make links with other schools to share best practice through regular SENCo network meetings and other communications as needed.

### Complaints

The school works in partnership with parents wherever possible to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs. If there are any complaints relating to the provision for pupils with access needs these will be dealt with in the first instance by the Principal. The SEND governor or chair of governors may be involved if the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily.

### Action Plan

#### **Aim 1: To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.**

Our key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability, medical condition or other access needs. Provision may include: Liaison with specialists, CPD for staff, a differentiated curriculum, specialist resources to support learning and access to the curriculum, a range of support staff including trained teaching assistants and access arrangements in place for statutory testing.

<b>Targets</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
To identify pupils who may need adapted or additional provision	To liaise with pre-school providers to prepare for the new intake of children into Early Years Foundation each year.	May to July annually	Principal, EYFS Leader and teachers	Provision set in place ready for the start of the academic year.
To identify pupils who may need adapted or	To liaise with educational	As and when the need arises	Principal, Vice Principal, SENCo	Provision set in place ready for the start of the

additional provision	establishments to prepare for the intake of new children who transfer within year.			academic year.
To comply with the Equality Act 2010	To review policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure.	On-going	Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors.	All policies clearly reflect inclusive practice.
To establish and maintain close liaison with parents.	To ensure collaboration and information sharing between school and families.	On-going	SLT and all teaching staff	Clear collaborative working approaches through regular meetings, risk assessment reviews, provision reviews and action planning.
To establish and maintain close liaison with outside agencies for pupils with additional needs.	To ensure collaboration between all key personnel.	On-going	SLT/SENCo, all teaching staff and outside professionals	Clear collaborative working approaches through regular meetings, risk assessment reviews, provision reviews and action planning.
To include pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs as fully as possible in the wider curriculum including	Create personalised risk assessments and access plans for individual children. Liaise with external agencies, identifying	On-going	SLT, SENCo and all teaching staff, extracurricular service providers and educational visits	Evidence that appropriate considerations and reasonable adjustments have been made.

trips and residential visits as well as extracurricular provision.	training needs and implementing training where needed. Ensure that actions, including emergency evacuation procedures, are clear and that staff are capable of carrying them out.			
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**Aim 2: To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs can access education and associated services.**

<b>Targets</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
Improve the physical school environment where necessary	The school will take account the needs of pupils with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting and colour schemes, clear signage, e.g. colour	On-going	SLT, site manager and governors	Evidence that appropriate considerations have been made wherever physical school improvements are carried out.

	coded zones for fire evacuation procedures and more accessible facilities and fittings.			
Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs.	Create personalised risk assessments and access plans for individual pupils. Liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and implementing training where needed. Ensure that actions, including emergency evacuation procedures, are clear and that staff are capable of carrying them out.	On-going	SLT, SENCo, all teaching staff and site manager	As full as possible inclusion for all pupils.  Safe evacuation in an emergency.

**Aim 3: Improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and other members of the school community.**

<b>Targets</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
To enable improved access to written information for pupils, parents and visitors.	Create and offer information in alternative formats, e.g. enlarged print, keep	On-going	SLT, teachers, admin team and SENCo	Evidence that appropriate considerations and reasonable adjustments

	information up to date on the school website. Send regular SEND Update Newsletters home. Access arrangements are considered and put into place for statutory testing.			have been made .
Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for parents with a disability, medical condition or other access needs so as they can fully support their child's education .	Adopt a proactive approach to identifying the access requirements of parents and make reasonable adjustments where possible, for example, use of a signer for parents' evening.	On-going	Whole school team	Evidence that appropriate considerations and reasonable adjustments have been made, so that parents can fully support their children in their education.

**Principal:** Mrs Tania Sidney-Roberts  
**Chair of Governors:** Mr Andy Skeggs  
**Approved:** October 2018  
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