

Policy title	Accessibility Plan
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KEY FACTS:

This plan enables schools to ensure compliance with laws regarding opportunity for pupils/potential pupils.

It is reviewed every three years.

The Hayfield School will comply with statutory requirements and guidance.

Individuals are responsible for their discriminatory actions.

The school's liability extends beyond the life of the pupil at the school.

The spirit of the law is to make/consider reasonable adjustments.

The plan outlines The Hayfield School's duties around accessibility and how to deal with claims.

Guidance for creating our plan is given in the Appendix.

1 Background

- 1.1 On 1 October 2012, The Equality Act replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It extends protection from discrimination in some areas and has placed new duties on schools. (For further information see the Equality and Diversity Policy).
- 1.2 The Act makes it unlawful for The Hayfield School and the school's governance committee, which is the responsible body of a school, to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to:-
 - 1.2.1. Admissions;
 - 1.2.2. The way we provide education for pupils;
 - 1.2.3. The way we provide pupils access to any benefit, facility or service;
 - 1.2.4. By excluding any pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 1.3 The protected characteristics are:
 - 1.3.1. sex;
 - 1.3.2. race;
 - 1.3.3. disability;
 - 1.3.4. religion or belief;
 - 1.3.5. sexual orientation;
 - 1.3.6. gender reassignment;
 - 1.3.7. pregnancy or maternity;
- 1.4 There is a still a requirement to have an accessibility plan outlining how we intend to improve access for disabled pupils to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information.
- 1.5 The Equality Act applies to all schools in England and Wales. (Equality Act 2010: Schedule 10, Paragraph 3 and Disability Discrimination regulations 2005). This Accessibility Plan is reviewed every three years.

- 1.6 Any person such as staff in schools who act on behalf of The Hayfield School and the schools governing body, are responsible for their own discriminatory actions and The Hayfield School and its governing body is also liable unless it can prove that it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the staff member from doing the discriminatory action, or from doing anything of that kind.
- 1.7 The school's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but relates also to events afterwards such as the provision of references, or former pupil networks.

2 Disability Discrimination Act

- 2.1 The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in the former Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). There are some minor differences as follows:-
 - 2.1.1 the definition of disability is less restrictive;
 - 2.1.2 direct discrimination can no longer be defended as justified;
 - 2.1.3 failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be defended as justified;
 - 2.1.4 from September 2012, we are under a duty to make available auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments, where these are not being supplied through a Statement of Special Educational Needs or from other sources.

3 Definition of Disability

- 3.1 The Act defines disability as when a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.
- 3.2 Some specific conditions such as multiple sclerosis, cancer or HIV are considered as disabilities regardless of their effect.
- 3.3 Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least twelve months.

4 Reasonable Adjustments

- 4.1 We aim to ensure that nothing we do as a school places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils. However, where we have to do so, we make sure that we take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- 4.2 When it is reasonable to do so, we provide auxiliary aids or services for a disabled pupil, when such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces compared to other non-disabled pupils.
- 4.3 Where an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEND system (i.e. via a Statement/EHC Plan) there should be no assumption that it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Any decision would be taken on the basis of the facts of an individual case, including cost implications.
- 4.4 There is no legal definition of auxiliary aids. We interpret this to mean any or all of the following: helpful; providing support or assistance; and that these can be things or persons which help. We include hearing loops, adaptive, keyboards and special software.

- 4.5 Our SEND policy defines what provision we make available including reasonable adjustments in our school. We will consider what is reasonable in the context of our school, given the circumstances of each individual case.
- 4.6 Where the auxiliary aid has a benefit to the rest of the child's life outside of school, it would be unreasonable for our school to make such provision; e.g. hearing aids.
- 4.7 We consider that effective and practicable adjustments for disabled pupils will involve little or no cost or disruption, and will therefore be considered as reasonable. Where substantial adaptations are required which are not contained within our three-year accessibility plan, we reserve the right to deem these as unreasonable.
- 4.8 It is our aim to ensure that disabled pupils play as full a part as possible in school life and our accessibility plan and reasonable adjustments help support that aim. Where any adjustment would have a detrimental effect on other pupils, we would not consider it to be *reasonable*. For example, if a geography field trip were planned to involve climbing and a wheelchair user could not take part, we would carefully consider how the disabled pupil could participate viably, but we would not cancel the trip because to do so would be detrimental to other pupils.

5 Our Vision

- 5.1 Our vision is to create a safe, happy and supportive environment in which each individual feels valued and respected, where true potential is recognised, high expectations are fulfilled, and personal achievements celebrated. For example, we believe that every child has the right to be happy, healthy, safe and successful, loved, valued and respected, and to have high aspirations for their future.
- 5.2 Inclusion is the process of taking the necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy school life.

6 Our duty around Accessibility for Disabled Pupils

- 6.1 Our accessibility plan focuses on the following areas for implementation:-
 - 6.1.1 increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
 - 6.1.2 improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
 - 6.1.3 improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.
- 6.2 Our plan also includes the resource implications of implementing the Plan.
- 6.3 Our approach includes the following:-
 - 6.3.1 access, audit and review (See appendix 2) (ie the nature of the schools' population, context, future pupil numbers, staff training needs, impact of anti-bullying strategies, timetabling, trips, medicines, clubs, outcomes for SEND in external exams, views of parents, pupils, voluntary sector, symbols, signage, font size etc);
 - 6.3.2 identify actions;
 - 6.3.3 set goals and targets;
 - 6.3.4 consult on the proposed plan;
 - 6.3.5 publicize the plan;
 - 6.3.6 implementation; and
 - 6.3.7 evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan.
- 6.4 Our accessibility plan is outlined on the attached proforma at Appendix 1.

7 Discrimination Claims

- 7.1 Claims for discrimination on the grounds of disability against our school must be heard by the First Tier Tribunal (SENDIST) in England.
- 7.2 Such claims of discrimination or harassment which would be brought by a parent of a pupil against our school, would be brought to the Tribunal by the parent. This must be brought within six months of the act to which the claim relates. Any remedy will not include compensation.-

8 Monitoring & Evaluation

- 8.1 The named person in our school who is responsible for this plan is the SENCO.
- 8.2 The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this Plan is implemented and to ensure that it is fair and equal to all.
- 8.3 It is the responsibility of all staff to monitor the success of this Plan by ensuring that the priority areas are addressed by them in the classroom, particularly with regard to the provision of information and curriculum access.
- 8.4 Our Accessibility Plan and any updates will be shared.
- 8.5 Progress reports are provided termly to our school's Governors Sub Committee by the SENCO and thereafter reported to our Senior Leadership Team.
- 8.6 Any failure to meet target deadlines are reported to the Governors sub-Committee meeting.

9 Related Policies, Guidelines, Templates and Forms

Special Educational Needs;
Equality & Diversity; Intimate Care;
Allegations of Abuse against Teachers & Other Staff;
Safeguarding Children including Child Protection;
Health & Safety; and
Premises Management.

APPENDIX 1

OUR ACCESS PLAN

This has been produced after reviewing our existing plans (in particular upcoming refurbishments and our SEND policy), looking at options for improving accessibility within existing arrangements and an audit of the school site for accessibility. We monitor the implementation of the Plan and keep this under review to the access needs of the school.

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe	Goals Achieved
Short term	Availability of written material in alternative formats.	We are aware of the services available through the LEA for converting written information into alternative formats.	If needed we can provide written information in alternative formats.	Term 2 2016/17	Delivery of information to disabled pupils improved.
Short term	Availability of written material on A4 pastel colour paper and in a dyslexic-friendly font	Aware of advice on moving away from A4 white and/or gloss paper, and away from certain fonts.	A4 worksheets, letters etc are produced on a soft/pastel colour paper and in an appropriate font e.g. Arial	Term 3 2016-17	Learning outcomes and wellbeing of students with a specific learning difficulty improved.
Medium term	Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing and installation of window blinds to benefit pupils with visual impairments	Seek advice from Vi service at DMBC on appropriate colour schemes and blinds.	Several classrooms are made more accessible to visually impaired children.	Term 3 2016/17	Physical accessibility of school increased.

Medium term	Incorporation of appropriate soundproofing when refurbishing to benefit pupils with hearing impairments	Seek advice from Hi service at DMBC on appropriate colour schemes and blinds.	Several classrooms are made more accessible to hearing impaired children.	Term 3 2016/17	Physical accessibility of school increased.
	Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum.	Following our ongoing lesson observations, it has become apparent that some teachers would benefit from training on differentiating the curriculum.	Teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled children's needs with regards to accessing the curriculum.	Term 2&3 2016/17	Increase in access to the curriculum
Long term	We plan to improve access to designated areas over successive financial years. We will decide which of our entrances and exits have priority.	Planned use of major capital delegated resources and discuss with DMBC using Schools Access Initiative Funding.	In time, it is our intention that the school's entry and exit areas will be fully accessible.	Term 3 2016/17	Physical accessibility of school increased.
Long Term	To assess the feasibility of permanently installing a	Planned use of major capital delegated resources and	Allowing ease of access to all of our facilities for	Term 3 2016/17	Accessibility of building increased.

	concrete disabled access ramp to a number of key entrances and exits.	discuss with DMBC using Schools Access Initiative Funding.	disabled pupils.		
Long Term	To look at the use of the ground floor classrooms and recreation areas to assess feasibility of a disabled toilet being installed in the HayZone building	Planned use of major capital delegated resources and discuss with DMBC using Schools Access Initiative Funding.	Increasing our toilet facilities for disabled pupils.	Term 3 2016/17	Accessibility of building increased.
Long Term	To assess and install if appropriate the option of low level base units in the Catering classroom to allow wheelchair users to fully access kitchen facilities.	Planned use of major capital delegated resources and discuss with DMBC using Schools Access Initiative Funding.	Allowing full access to Our Catering facilities for disabled pupils.	Term 3 2016/17	Accessibility of building increased.
Long term	To assess the feasibility of installing a sensory room as part of HayZone for use by ASD students.	Planned use of major capital delegated resources and discuss with DMBC using Schools Access Initiative Funding	Happier/calmer ASD students resulting in higher attendance in lessons and higher AtL scores, resulting in more learning and greater progress.	Term 1 2017-18	Increased inclusion of ASD students

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IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO ACCESS: A
CHECKLIST

This list should help you identify barriers to access that exist in schools. The list is not exhaustive. It is designed to encourage a flexible approach to the further questioning of the accessibility of your school.

Section 1 : How does your school deliver the curriculum?		
Questions	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers & teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?	X	
Are your classrooms optimally organized for disabled pupils?		X
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?	X	
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	X	
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups & the whole class?	X	
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama & physical activities?	X	
Do staff recognize and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?	X	
Do staff recognize and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	X	
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?		X
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	X	
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	X	
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	X	

Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	X	
Section 2: Is your School designed to meet the needs of all pupils?		
Questions	Yes	No
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms; the assembly hall; canteen; library; gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities; playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?		X

Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?		X
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	X	
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEND; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?	X	
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?		X
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?	X	
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?	X	
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics and noisy equipment?		X
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted & located appropriately?	X	
Section 3 : How does your School deliver materials in other formats?		
Questions	Yes	No
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?		X
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities eg, by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?		X

Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	X	
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	X	