



BLENHHEIM
SCHOOLS

Beech Hall Accessibility Policy

Accessibility Policy and Action Plan

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Disability Policy.

Accessibility Policy

Introduction

Accessibility planning is an integral part of the school's annual planning cycle. The Accessibility Plan, created in accordance with the planning duties of the Equality Act 2010 (as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and 2005 (SENDA)), forms part of the whole school development plan while remaining as a permanent agenda item in the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) meetings, ensuring it is a focus of attention.

Original legislation required the plan to cover a fixed 3-year period, as determined by the government. However, recent DfE guidance allows schools to choose any 3-year period. The school's plan covers the 3- year period as specified in its title. The school has adopted the format of planning for a rolling 3-year period; a new year is added at each annual review and the details of the completed year, annotated to record what has been achieved, are archived and made available on request to any appropriate inspection body. The coherence of the plan and its influence upon other developments is monitored by the SLT on an annual basis.

The Accessibility Plan draws on the guidance set out in:

- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- "What Equality Law Means For You As An Education Provider" (2014)
- Equality Act 2010: What Do I Need to Know? Disability Quick Start Guide" (2011). Over its 3-year period, the plan aims to:
 - a) increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;
 - b) improve the physical environment of the school 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 school;
 - c) improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information



which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Adequate resources will be allocated for the implementation of this plan.

Definitions of Disability and Special Educational Needs

Disability is defined as follows by the Equality Act 2010:

A person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day- to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial; for example it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

The definition of Special Educational Needs in the Children and Families Act 2014 includes pupils with significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age, or a disability which means that a pupil cannot make full use of the general educational facilities provided for pupils of his or her age in mainstream schools. Not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa.





The SEND Code of Practice makes it clear that the definition of disability includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long term health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

Progressive Conditions Considered to be a Disability

A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are Specifically Excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

Objective of the Accessibility Policy and Plan

To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

Principles

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admission and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty) in matters of admission and education
- To have and regularly to update an Accessibility Plan which meets the statutory requirements by being in writing and covering the three strands over time, as noted in the introduction, above.





The SEND Code identifies a clear focus on the participation of children and young people and their parents in decision-making at individual and strategic levels. The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles, and endorses the key principles, which underpin an inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Management

In formulating the plan, the SLT may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

The SLT's terms of reference are:

- To review the school's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled;
- To make decisions with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects, to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities, by means of reasonable adjustments and to implement, evaluate, and continue to review the effectiveness of any measures taken;
- To continue to review the school's Disability Policy;
- To continue to review the school's Accessibility Action Plan.

Learning and Teaching

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The school has:

- Appropriately trained SEND staff in each of its educational settings each equipped to deal with the range of mild or moderate learning difficulties experienced by children who, with our support, can benefit from the curriculum we follow.
- A strong and successful record of supporting children with a range of SEND needs by planning with parents and children, seeking advice from appropriate professionals and training staff with regard to any child's specific needs.
- Students are assessed for SEND upon admission and other times when a need is identified.

The school has a procedure for dealing with accessibility in advance of a child's admission or, in the case of the emergence of a disability, the following procedures are in place:

Pre-Admission

A lot of planning takes place before the child arrives at school. This will include:

- Information gathering from parents, the child's current school and relevant external agencies.
- Writing an individual accessibility and/or education plan tailored to the needs of the child. This will involve meeting with parents and meeting with the child to discuss their preferences. It may also involve meeting with external agencies who specialise in dealing with that particular disability, who can offer support to the school when planning the appropriate provision for the child.
- Providing adequate training for staff, who will be responsible for that child, so that they feel confident to carry out the plan.
- Providing the correct resources for the child so that he/she has as much access to the curriculum as is reasonably practicable.





After Admission

Planning and undertakings will include:

- Managing and recording the pastoral care of the child through the school's pastoral system and fostering the child's social and emotional development, with appropriate documentation.
- Reviewing the plan with the parents and child and, where relevant external agencies, at appropriate intervals so that planning can be put in place for the following term.
- Communicating with future schools with regard to the child's needs.

If the onset of disability occurs during a child's time with us, all of the above will be put in place.

Training

The overall planning of staff training is undertaken by the Director of Inclusion, SENDCO and Head. Training is given to the whole staff (full-time and part-time) on SEND and Disability on at least a two-year cycle. Training is undertaken on a whole staff basis with regard to learning styles, learning differences, learning difficulties and multi-sensory teaching over an extended period.

Training is undertaken on a 'need-to-know' basis with regard to, for example, asthma, epilepsy, anaphylaxis, colostomy management, cystic fibrosis and other conditions. Training will continue to be tailored to provision for and understanding of specific conditions as appropriate.

Pastoral Care

The overall management of pastoral care is the responsibility of the Deputy Headmistress. Pastoral Care is an agenda item at each meeting of the SLT and forms part of the annual development plan.

A Health and Safety Committee, comprising appropriate members of staff, meets termly to consider all matters of Health and Safety.

Arrangements for Health and Safety on trips and visits are scrutinised and approved by the Head and Educational Visits Co-ordinator.





Physical Environment

The Head has overall responsibility for the school's physical environment. The school recognises that environmental adjustments cannot readily be made in response to the arrival of a child with a disability and that, therefore, longer-term planning is needed to ensure that environmental factors are improved including access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is where the Action Plan becomes a part of the policy. The plan below sets out the action being taken by the school as positive steps to promote equality and eradicate discrimination for all.

Disability Policy Review

The responsibility of review is the

Senior Leadership Team. The terms of reference are:

To review the school's policies, procedures and facilities, as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled, and to prepare an audit of current provision.

To make recommendations with a view to improving accessibility of the school's education to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities, by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future by preparing an Accessibility Plan.

To review such plans and policies as necessary at least every three years. An audit of current provision.

Admissions

Admission to the school is on a non-selective basis (no written assessments are taken). We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with physical disabilities provided that our site can cope with them. The school's policy is to enrol pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, provided that the school can accommodate their needs within the parameters of reasonable adjustments.





The school asks parents of prospective pupils if special needs should be taken into consideration. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as considered appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

The life of the school is enhanced by inclusive policies, but equal importance must be given to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

Delivery of the Curriculum

Through INSET, staff meetings and other initiatives, such as online learning, we train classroom staff on developing inclusive approaches towards teaching.

Classroom Arrangements

Freestanding tables and chairs in most classrooms mean that furniture can be rearranged easily to accommodate disabled students. Where appropriate for learning needs, the school encourages the use of laptops or other portable devices. The majority of rooms are fitted with blinds, which might be of benefit to students with visual impairment. Lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve. For example, provision may be made for dyslexic and dyspraxic students to use laptops in lessons and for tests.

The school keeps detailed records of pupils' needs and the range of support provided, which it uses to make application for extra provision in public and formal examinations.

Delivering Material in other Formats

ICT and photocopying facilities are available to produce large print information. Visits School visits are open to all, provided the appropriate medical practitioner declares any individual with a medical condition is well enough to travel. However, the school might need to consider the transport and accommodation needs of a wheelchair user.

Policies

Details of the Equal Opportunities policy, including disability, are published in the staff handbook. This policy and plan should also be read in conjunction with the SEND and Inclusion Policy.





School Design: Access to Buildings

The school is situated over several building. The main building front entrance is accessed via several steps, while the back door is flat and is wheelchair accessible. A ramp has been built outside near the back entrance so that pupils with mobility difficulties are able to access the back door of the main building from the carpark, they also access the Art and Food Tech block, without having to use the cobbled drive. Lower stable block, the Music, Drama, Science Lab and D & T room are all accessible with no steps. Food Tech and Art have one step up and a portable metal ramp has been purchased to enable wheelchair users to access. Classrooms on Ivy Bank have four steep steps up and are not wheelchair accessible.

Emergency Evacuation

If a pupil with a disability is admitted to the school, relevant staff will be provided with training to support the pupil's emergency evacuation. Within the structure of the current premises, a number of modifications may be possible in order to increase accessibility for disabled pupils and parents.

Should it be beneficial for a pupil with a disability, the school will create a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), consulting, as relevant, with the pupil's medical practitioner and the emergency services.

In planning for emergency evacuation, if appropriate, the school will consider, for example:

equipping fire alarms and bells with additional visible signals to meet the needs of any deaf pupils.

acquiring an 'evac-chair' or similar equipment to facilitate the emergency evacuation of a pupil with mobility difficulties.

Interpretation

In this policy, the term "senior manager" means a School Head and their designated deputies.

This policy applies to all employees in all Schools.





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