



Pinfold Street
Primary School



Accessibility Policy and Plan 2022

Date of Policy:

July 2018

Date of Review:

January 2022

Date of Next Review:

January 2025

Introduction

At Pinfold Street we believe that every child should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. This should take into account of their individual strengths and needs and should allow each child to fulfil their potential and be 'prepared for life'.

Legislation and Guidance

The equality duty (Equality Act 2010) extends to all those with **protected characteristics**. This makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

General equality duty

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (PSED) has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies must have due regard to the need to:

1. **Eliminate discrimination** and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
2. **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a **protected characteristic** and people who do not share it,
3. **Foster good relations** across all characteristics - between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The duty to have "due regard" to equality considerations means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications. The guidance suggests that it is good practice for schools to keep a note of any **equality consideration**, and that publishing it will help to demonstrate that the due regard duty is being fulfilled.

Eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act

Evidence that the school is aware of the requirements of the Act and is complying with the duties may include:

- Copies of policies (for example, the behaviour policy, child protection policy, curriculum policy) where included information has been effective in increasing schools ability to eliminate discrimination, reduce bullying etc.
- Awareness raising sessions with Governors, staff and pupils and the impact of these.
- Information on the action the school has taken to reduce discrimination such as responding to feedback from parents and pupils.
- Impact of aspects included within the curriculum aimed at eliminating discrimination and samples of work produced e.g. photographs of displays.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Evidence of compliance with this aspect might include:

- Recording of feedback from pupils/parents on action taken to reduce gaps in attainment between diverse cohorts of pupils e.g. providing social skills support or a sanctuary for those with autistic spectrum disorders
- Evaluation of action taken by the school to remove/minimise disadvantages experienced by disabled pupils e.g. additional support evidenced through TAs timetables, increased use of IT to reduce reliance on reading text etc.
- Steps to meet the particular needs of those with a disability through reasonable adjustments evidenced through teachers planning.
- Accessibility plans aimed at increasing active participation.

Fostering good relations across all characteristics

- The evidence that schools might use to demonstrate this might include:
- Identifying and evaluating the impact of curriculum content that aims to promote tolerance and friendship and develop understanding of different disabilities.
- Recording of activities (school/class organisation for instance) that aims to reduce prejudice and increasing relationships between diverse pupil groups.
- Impact of increased involvement with local communities/ partnerships with other schools that is aimed at increasing empathy between different groups of pupils

Specific duties:

The specific regulations require schools since April 2012:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the new PSED, and
- To prepare and publish equality objectives.

These objectives will relate to all the protected characteristics and not just to disability. Schools will then need to update the published information at least annually and to publish objectives at least once every four years.

In addition to its inclusion within the PSED equality objectives, schools have a duty to make **reasonable adjustments** for pupils with a disability. The DfE non-statutory guidance states that this duty can be summarised as follows:

- Where something a disabled pupil is placed at a disadvantage compared to other pupils, then the school must take reasonable adjustments to try and reduce/remove the disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.
- Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

Reasonable adjustments

Factors a school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment, may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the SEN route. Cost will play a major part in determining what is reasonable.

The guidance states that many pupils with a disability will have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). However, if the EHCP doesn't provide the necessary aid, then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide these will fall to the school. The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the **accessibility planning** duties and the existing EHCP provisions which are part of education legislation. In addition to the duty to consider reasonable adjustments for particular individual disabled pupils, schools will also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils generally.

Accessibility planning

Schools and LAs need to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. These are the same duties as previously existed under the Disability Discrimination Act and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010. Accessibility plans in schools are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can **participate in the curriculum**;
- improving the **physical environment** of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of **accessible information** to disabled pupils.

Schools will also need to have regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school development plan. Under the new specific duties, there are no longer requirements to create equality schemes.

Aims and Objectives

1) Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum

The curriculum covers teaching and learning and wider provision embracing after school clubs; leisure, sporting and cultural activities; and school trips. Planning for improved access to the curriculum includes consideration of school and classroom organisation and support, timetabling, curriculum options, deployment of staff and staff information and training. Curriculum audits can support the school to review patterns of achievement and participation by disabled pupils in different areas of the curriculum, e.g. the inclusion of physically disabled children in PE, and then to identify action to increase participation.

2) Improving the physical environment of schools

This strand of the planning duty covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, heating, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs, interior surfaces, room decor and furniture. Improvements to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops, communication aids, well designed (passive) room acoustics and way-finding systems. The provision of 'quiet' areas and improvements to the physical safety of the environment, indoors and outdoors, may also enhance access for children with learning disabilities. Improved access in existing buildings can often be achieved by rearranging room space, removing obstructions from walkways, changing the layout of classrooms, providing designated storage space or reallocating rooms to particular subject specialisms. Physical aids to access education cover ICT equipment, desks, chairs, writing equipment, science equipment and the like. E.g. through enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept keyboards, communication aids, switches, photocopying enlargement facilities, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor co-ordination and poor hand/eye skills such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

3) Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

This part of the duty covers planning to make written information normally provided by the school to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to those with a disability (including those with significant low reading acquisition levels). This might include alternative formats such as large print, the use of ICT and the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or in sign language. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and views expressed by pupils or their parents about their preferred means of communication. The school should consider how all information normally provided in a written format including work sheets, timetables, school examination papers, newsletters, information about school events, trips and extracurricular provision could be made accessible to all those with a disability.

Our accessibility plan (at the end of this document) has been drawn based upon the needs of the school and the school site, in conjunction with parents, staff and governors and will advise other school documents. The plan is structured to complement and support the schools equality objectives. We understand that Walsall LA will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 and will advise upon compliance with that duty.

We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access and values all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

Our plan shows how access can be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school in a given time frame and anticipates the need to make adjustments to accommodate their needs where practical. The plan will contain relevant and timely actions to:

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as much as necessary to ensure pupils are, as equally, prepared for life as able bodied pupils; this covers teaching and learning, the wider curriculum (after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities)
- Improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary and within a reasonable timeframe
- Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include: handouts, textbooks, school information, school events and newsletters. This information should be made available in preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

Whole school training will recognise the need to continue to raise awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010. The plan should be read in conjunction with other school policies such as the curriculum policy, equality objectives, SEND policy, health and safety policy, behaviour policy and school improvement plan.

It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of the accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans.

Monitoring Arrangements

This document will be reviewed every 3 years but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary, in line with school monitoring and evaluating.

Accessibility Plan

1) Improving the curriculum access	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement
All school visits and trips are accessible to all pupils	Ensure venues and means of transport are vetted for suitability	All pupils are able to access all school trips and take part in the full range of activities	As required	-
Review PE curriculum to ensure PE is accessible to all pupils	Review PE curriculum to include disability sports where possible	All pupils have access to PE and are able to excel at sport, for example via support from an adult	by July 2022	Increase in access to all school PE activities for all disabled pupils
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils	by July 2022	Increase in access to the National Curriculum (<i>data to be gathered</i>)
Ensure support staff have specific training on disability issues	Identify training needs during appraisals	Raised confidence of support staff	On-going	-

2) Improving the delivery of written information	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement
Availability of written material in alternative formats Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats	The school will make itself aware of the services available through the LA for converting written information in all current school publications and promote the availability in alternative formats for those that require it.	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes.	by July 2022	Delivery of school information to disabled pupils improved. Delivery of school information to parents and the local community improved

3) Improving the physical access	Activity	Timescale
Accessible car parking <i>(to maintain)</i>	Bays to be signed	by July 2022
Ramps <i>(to maintain)</i>	Available on all entrances	by July 2022
Staircases <i>(to maintain)</i>	Colour-contrasted handrails to both sides of staircases, colour-contrasted edging	by July 2022
Lift <i>(to maintain)</i>	Annually inspected and tested	By July 2022
Steps <i>(to maintain)</i>	Colour-contrasted edging	by July 2022
Accessible toilet <i>(to maintain)</i>	To provide one unisex accessible toilet and ensure all facilities are accessible/fully working	by July 2022
Accessible toilet changing facility <i>(to maintain)</i>	To provide an adjustable-height changing facility	by July 2022
To be aware of the access needs of disabled children, staff, governors and parent/carers	Create access plans for individual disabled children as part of the SEND process Ensure staff/govs can access all areas of the school used for meetings Annual reminder through newsletters to parent/carers to inform school of any access issues Ensure a PEEP is prepared and reviewed if someone at school becomes physically impaired	As required

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