

## SOUTHSEA INFANT SCHOOL

School Accessibility Policy, Audit and Plan, September 2019 – July 2022

STATUTORY

### **School ethos, vision and values**

At Southsea Infant School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for individuals of all ethnic groupings, classes and abilities or disabilities. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose a disability and to participate fully in school life. We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school environment is as accessible as possible.

Southsea Infant School encourages pupils and staff to:

- acknowledge and accept different and diverse abilities and disabilities
- remove or break down stereotype or prejudice
- develop respect for themselves and for others
- appreciate that everyone has a contribution to make to the school and wider community

## Definition of a Disability

### What do we understand by 'disability'?

The Equality Act 2010, underpinned by the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) defines disability as 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. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

The Equality Act (2010) sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions and local authorities have towards children and young people;

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people.
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability.
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.
- Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities. Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.
- The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

- School governing bodies must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

### **Information from pupil data and school audit**

#### *Pupil data*

Pupils will be identified as having disabilities according to the use of the Local Authority's 'Profile of Need' as agreed between the LA, Social Care and the Health Authority.

#### *School information*

##### Strengths

- Experience – we have successfully included pupils with a range of disabilities including Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Pragmatic Language Disorders and Visual Impairment
- We have an onsite Resource Provision for children with Communication difficulties. This provision has very experienced staff who share their expertise with the rest of the school.
- Knowledge –teachers and teaching assistants have received training in meeting the needs of pupils with specific disabilities
- Adaptations – the school and grounds have been adapted to meet the needs of our learners with VI.
- Resources – specific resources have been brought in and used to aid access to the curriculum e.g. sloping boards, Ipads and books with darker lines for children with VI.
- Liaison with parents and external agencies – this has proved very effective for specific pupils, e.g. educational psychology service, specialist teacher advisors and speech therapists.
- The school's Inclusion Manager is non-classed base for 0.4 FTE. She is able to liaise effectively with parents and external agencies.

## Barriers

- Experience – not all members of staff have experience of working with pupils with disabilities and the school has had limited experience of pupils with significant physical or mental disabilities.
- Knowledge – due to normal staff turnover, not all current staff have participated in past training, and the training which has been received has sometimes been largely reactive, in response to specific pupils rather than proactive to increase knowledge, skills and understanding of staff in a systematic way.
- Adaptations – the school is a two-storey Victorian building with all the limitations this causes e.g. the stairs are narrow with several turns making wheelchair access a challenge and the semi-open plan nature of each base might make it harder for pupils with hearing impairments to access the curriculum.
- Resources – many resources have been ‘pupil specific’ and are now no longer needed or used, there is not a general bank of resources available for use as and when they are needed; knowledge of what resources are available is patchy.
- Liaison with external agencies – this is not always possible within reasonable time frames due to the limited time available from the agencies; knowledge of what agencies are available is limited and often changeable.

## Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

- SLT
- Specialist teacher Advisors for the Sensory Impairment service
- Head teacher
- INCo
- Site manager

## The Accessibility Plan:

The plan below sets out our current position and the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act 1995 - Legislation.gov.uk)

- a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- b) improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information, which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled

## **Introduction**

It is our intention to remove, as far as we can, those barriers which make it hard for children and adults with a disability to take part in the day to day life of our school and benefit from the educational experiences and services we provide.

We aim to ensure that our school is a welcoming place that understands and responds effectively to children and adults with disabilities and we recognise the importance of a review and planning procedure associated with continuous development and improvement.

## **The Responsible Body**

The head teacher, INCo and SEND Governor will create an accessibility plan, approved by the governing body and review and enhance the plan every three years as part of the policy review cycle.

### **Other relevant legislation, regulations & guidance:**

Children & Families Act (2014)

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Regulations (2014)

The Statutory Policies for Schools (2014)

The SEND Code of Practice (revised April 2015)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)

## **Resources**

Funding for the implementation of the various aspects of the Disability Equality Scheme are as follows:

Increase access to the school curriculum:

- Core budget for salaries of Inclusion Manager and Senior Management
- Core training budget for INSET expenditure
- Core budget for adaptation of curriculum

All of our staff are committed to ensuring the well-being of our students and will give their all to create an engaging and rewarding learning environment. We work hard to ensure that our curriculum is relevant and diverse enough to cater to individual interests, learning styles and all abilities.

We are committed to delivering the highest standards of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision. Inclusion is at the heart of our ethos and we work hard to identify all students who need extra or bespoke support to assist them in learning.

### **Process**

We will:

- evaluate the plan every 3 years (with the accessibility plan under on-going review and revision as necessary);
- continually review the environment of the school, in the way that we plan, prepare and deliver the curriculum and the information we provide for pupils so that we can improve the access for both individuals and groups;
- work to provide an atmosphere where all pupils feel safe and valued;
- promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with a disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.
- encourage all stakeholders to feel comfortable in suggesting ways to improve the systems that we operate.
- examine those parts of our active and extra-curricular activities which may have limited access for pupils with a disability and see if it is possible to provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.
- work with professional external providers that have specialist knowledge in this area and we will consider any areas that they identify that we may need to review.

### **Key objective**

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

The accessibility plan:

Area	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Time frame	Achieved
<b>Equality and inclusion</b>	Ensure accessibility plan becomes an annual agenda in governors/SLT meetings	Clerk to add to agenda	Meet statutory requirements. School remains accessible to all with reasonable adjustments being made	Autumn 2019	
	Increase staff knowledge, skills and understanding of disability issues.	<p>Maintain a cycle of training over 3 years to cover most common disabilities.</p> <p>Specific staff training as required to meet the needs of particular pupils</p> <p>Class teachers and TAs use pupil passports to inform new staff of particular requirements of individual pupils</p> <p>Meeting with all staff, including lunchtime supervisors to ensure dissemination of knowledge</p>	<p>Staff feel confident supporting individual needs. Individuals feel their needs are being met with understanding. Difficulties are reduced and overcome</p> <p>All staff, especially those new to their roles, are aware of statutory requirements regarding disability</p> <p>All staff have the necessary training and knowledge to teach and support disabled pupils</p>	Annually	

		and information regarding specific pupils.	Staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils All staff have the necessary training and knowledge to support disabled pupils		
	Ensure relevant policies demonstrate appreciation of the impact of disability	Address during relevant policy reviews	Relevant policies will clearly reflect the impact and understanding when addressing accessibility for all and reflect up to date legislation	3 year cycle	
<b>Physical environment</b>	Reassess accessibility of school for different needs	Invite LA to complete new accessibility audit	All reasonable adaptations are made to support the needs of children and parents with disabilities	Summer 2020	
<b>Curriculum</b>	All equipment and resources available, safe and appropriate to needs	INCo/other specialists to train staff as required also to review and monitor equipment and use	Staff have appropriate resources / equipment and understanding in use and enabling access for pupils – trained as needed		
	Differentiation / reasonable adjustments in all areas of the curriculum	INCo to monitor and work closely with outside agencies : EP / NHS / SALT in ensuring appropriate practice and resources	Staff are able to work with outside agencies in ensuring best use of resources and equipment and enabling pupils to access the curriculum with their peers in an appropriate way that builds confidence and self esteem		



	Identify the current situation in the school regarding pupils with disabilities	A register of pupils with disabilities to be drawn up distinguishing between those who meet the criteria, those who are registered disabled and those who receive support from health or social services	All pupils with a disability, whether registered or not, are identified according to the criteria developed by Portsmouth's Children and Families Learning Directorate using the Profile of Need		
	Increase access for disabled pupils for all aspects of school life	<p>Ensure ICT hardware and software is appropriate for and accessible to pupils with disabilities</p> <p>Continue to assess all places used by the school for visits as to their suitability for the disabilities within the school. Make adaptations or alter trips to ensure accessibility</p> <p>All those responsible for running school clubs ensure they are accessible to pupils with disabilities so far as possible</p>	<p>Appropriate ICT is available for pupils with disabilities</p> <p>School visits are made accessible to pupils with disabilities where reasonably possible and after consultation with parents/ carers</p> <p>School clubs are accessible to pupils with disabilities so far as is possible given the limitations of the building</p>		
<b>Written/</b>	To ensure that all parents and	School prospectus and website – to include	All regular written information to pupils and/or parents		

<b>other information</b>	all other members of the community can access our information as needed  Support / alternative provision made to ensure that those parents unable to access school for parents for events and parents evenings receive information as required	information for parents and prospective parents regarding availability of adapted information  In response to parental request school supplies above information in accordance with their needs	presented in ways that meet specific needs		
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**Making the plan available**

The Disability Equality Scheme is part of what the school makes available to interested parties under The Freedom of Information Act. It is available in hard copy via the school office and will also be found as a link on the school’s web site.

The Scheme itself is designed to be accessible – the font is non-serif and well-spaced. It is available in larger font format or on disc if requested via the school office. It can also be recorded digitally if required.

**Access to the plan**

The Accessibility Plan is available on the school website and can be made available in a range of other formats on request.

**Other School Policies & Documentation**

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with other policies.

Policy written in conjunction with: SLT, ratified by governors, run through with teaching staff

12.11.2019

September 2022