Acorn School Policy

Accessibility Policy and Plan

POLICY STATEMENT

- At our school, we believe that every Pupil should be valued for the individuality and pride ourselves on our inclusive community. We aim to ensure that everyone remains and feels safe and stays healthy whilst enjoying their time at school. Our school is committed to the care and well-being of all of Pupils and the wider school community. Our school provides a safe, secure, and nurturing environment in which pupils thrive under our therapeutic approach. All of our school policies and procedures are carefully examined to ensure access and equality in diversity.

- Our school prides itself on addressing each person's unique, academic, physical, emotional, and social needs. The school community works together to create an atmosphere in which each member is valued and can flourish.

- Pupils have access to a full and balanced curriculum with careful consideration being given to resourcing and the development of the school environment in order to ensure it meets the needs of individual Pupils.

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1. Scope

1.1 Responsibilities

1.1.1 The Disability Equality Duty (2006) required schools to be proactive in promoting disability equality and eliminating discrimination; this has now been superseded by The Equality Act of 2010. The school continues to develop its ability to provide an inclusive, accessible environment for Pupils, Team Member, Parents, Carers, and other professionals.

1.1.2 To achieve this, the school aims to meet the five outcomes of the Children Act (2004) and have regard to the general duty to:

- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Eliminate disability-related harassment.
- Promote positive attitudes to people with disabilities.
- Encourage the participation of people with disabilities.

1.1.3 The school regularly reviews all of its strategic improvement plans and completes annual reviews of all policies to ensure the inclusion of Pupils with disabilities meets all aspects of the law.

1.1.4 The Leadership Team ensures that all policies, practices, protocols, and provision have regard to the Disability Equality Duty and the Equality Act of 2010, which extends protection from discrimination to people with what are termed, 'protected characteristics' in almost every area of life. The Operations Director for Education and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring the implementation of all policies and the full development of a strong ethos of inclusion, within all aspects of the life of the school.

1.1.5 It is the duty of all Team Members and everyone working in the school to implement the policies and continue to develop inclusive practices.

1.2 Complaints

1.2.1 Pupils, Parents, Carers and Team Members have access to the school's Complaints Procedures; these are also available to Social Workers and Case Workers. Pupils may raise a complaint via their tutors, other pupils or through the Senior Leadership Team. Complaint forms are available in different formats to suit a range of abilities and Pupils, or Team Member can be aided to complete these as necessary.

2. Accessibility

2.1 The Accessibility Plan

2.1.1 This plan addresses the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and refers to individuals who are disabled (both current and prospective) in a wide sense, including those with special educational needs, and with temporary or permanent physical disability. It also deals with access issues for disabled Team Member and visitors.

2.1.2 Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA): 'A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' The SEN and Disability Act (2001) extended the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) to cover education and entered in the SEND Code of Conduct, 2015.

- Not to treat disabled Pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled Pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled Pupils, where such improvement to access has been identified.

2.1.3 Should increased access be identified, the school will produce an Accessibility Plan that identifies the action the school intend to take over a three-year period to increase access for those with a disability in the three key areas outlined below. This will be published on the school's website and evaluated annually.

2.1.4 The three areas are:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled Pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled Pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Ensuring disabled Pupils receive information in a format they can understand and use such as large print, simplified text, visual supports, audio, or alternative communication formats so they have equitable access to the same written information as their peers

2.1.5 Key Objectives

- 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.
- To provide a caring and friendly environment.
- To provide resources that meets the needs of the individual Pupil and supports them towards developing independence.
- To promote an understanding of disabilities throughout the school and an awareness of the needs of Pupils with a disability.

2.2 Team Members

2.2.1 Team Member recruitment and employment decisions will be made based on fair and objective criteria. This is in line with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

2.2.2 We are committed to ensuring that, within the framework of the law, the school is free from unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of gender (including gender reassignment), colour, ethnic origin, nationality, age, marital status, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances, sexual orientation, or other relevant distinction. The requirements of job applicants and of existing Team Members who have, or have had, a temporary or permanent disability will be reviewed regularly to ensure that whatever reasonable adjustments are possible are made to allow them to enter or remain in school employment.

2.2.3 Where new health needs are identified for an existing Team Member, the appropriate Managers are informed, and every effort is made to support the Team Member and promote their safety and well-being. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that disabled Team Member can participate fully. Short term mobility needs are considered and, where necessary or appropriate, help and guidance will be given.

2.3 Education

2.3.1 The School provides all Pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, adapted and adjusted to meet the needs of individual Pupils and their preferred learning styles. The School endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum framework or similar, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum through:

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to Pupils' diverse learning needs.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of Pupils.

2.3.2 Team Members work hard to meet the needs of all Pupils with regards to accessing the curriculum and are supported by the Senior Leadership Team all aspects of school life. Each Pupil is viewed as an individual and supported in their progress towards an appropriately independent and aspirational future.

2.4 English as an Additional Language (EAL) Pupils

2.4.1 Some Pupils already have good language and literacy skills in two or more languages. Some Pupils are EAL learners who have not learnt to read or write in any language.

2.4.2 Some Pupils may have missed some or all their primary education and have not fully developed the language and literacy skills needed for secondary school. Some Pupils have an Education Health and Care Plan with language or literacy needs specified.

2.4.3 All these diverse groups benefit from teaching that develops their language and literacy. As Pupils progress through the secondary school, the language and literacy demand of the curriculum increases and Pupils need to develop a wider range of language skills, making the transition from spoken to written forms.

2.4.4 About 12% of Pupils who have been in the UK for less than 5 years and who are not yet fluent in English. It takes generally takes 2 years to develop social language skills in English but 5-7 years to develop proficiency in formal, written English.

2.4.5 Pupils who are new to English will be integrated into subjects from the moment they join the school and provided with additional support to meet their individual needs.

2.4.6 This strategy enables them to:

- Develop oral fluency quickly.
- Immediately feel part of the school.
- Develop friendships.
- Develop language in context.
- Experience the full curriculum.

2.4.7 If a translator is required, we will work with the Local Authority to secure appropriate funding for additional support.

3. Appendix 1

Aim	Current good practice	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Completion by
Improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary.	✓ Level car park. ✓ Level access from car park to entrance. ✓ All internal areas brightly lit (considering sensory needs)	• School site to be continuously evaluated with regards to physical access for Pupils and Visitors.	• Clearly labelled designated space requested. • Development of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for Pupils as required. • Provision of specific equipment, learning spaces or furniture to meet individual needs. • Provision of adapted and/or alternative work equipment and tools to meet individual's needs.	Headteacher/ Maintenance	On-going

Aim	Current good practice	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Completion by
Improve the delivery of written information to Pupils, Team Member, Parents, Carers and Visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, visual timetables, textbooks, and information	✓ Visual timetables are produced for Pupils if necessary. ✓ Class work is carefully differentiated to ensure it is in line with Pupil ability. ✓ The Accessibility Plan is placed on the website. ✓ Fire evacuation signs are clearly displayed. ✓ Termly and weekly reports are communicated via the parents preferred communication method.	• Newsletters to be completed half termly in a suitable format. • To ensure that classrooms, learning spaces and resources are ASC Friendly. • To ensure the Pupils have access to the recommendations within their reports. • Pupils and visitors to have clear written information and signage around the school. • Visitors safeguarding handbooks and information to be offered in alternative formats where necessary.	• To improve signage around school including visual clues to aid visually impaired and EAL.	Head Teacher/ Maintenance	On-going

Aim	Current good practice	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Completion by
To ensure that the curriculum is broad, balanced and appropriate to the needs of the Pupils.	✓ Highly differentiated lessons. ✓ Learning styles and needs taken into consideration when planning lessons.	• Curriculum to be reviewed on a continuous basis in order to ensure that all Pupils are making optimum progress and have access to the whole curriculum. • Learning spaces to be audited to ensure that they meet Pupil needs.	• Curriculum audit and lessons observations to highlight weaknesses in delivery. • Adapted timetables to be developed, where necessary, in order for Pupils to be able to access certain curriculum areas. • Classroom environments to be audited to ensure that they support the needs of Pupils with ASC, Sensory Disorders, and associated conditions. • Teaching and learning to be evaluated with regards to differentiation for Pupils with communication and processing difficulties.	Headteacher	On-going

Aim	Current good practice	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Completion by
To ensure that the needs of Pupils, Parents, Carers & Team Members are taken into consideration.	✓ Pupil needs are clearly identified before admission. ✓ Home/School communication is regular, and the changing needs of pupils are accommodated	• Parents and Carers to have clear lines of communication with the school and opportunities to find out further information through email, phone and in person. • Support to be readily available where Pupils and team member need additional support due to a disability with the appropriate support referrals made.	• People with disabilities to have greater access to information and the school should respond quickly to any request for information in an alternative format.	Headteacher	On-going