



ACCESS POLICY

*This Accessibility Policy is drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010 (see Appendix 1 for more information). School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.*

1. We are committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
2. Greenhall Nursery plans, over time, to ensure the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school.
3. An Accessibility Plan will be drawn up to cover a three year period. The plan will be updated annually.
4. The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:
  - Improve access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
  - Increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding and making reasonable adjustments to the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of the DDA). This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist **aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
  - Improve and make reasonable adjustments to the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.
5. The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which is undertaken regularly. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The audit will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.
6. The School website will make reference to this Accessibility Plan.
7. The School's complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.
8. The Plan will be monitored through the Curriculum and the Premises Committees of the Governors.
9. The Plan will be monitored by Ofsted as part of their inspection cycle.
10. We acknowledge that there is a need for on-going awareness raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter.



Updated: March 2015

Review date: March 2018

**Appendix 1**

**Background to the Disability Equality Scheme**



**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 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 Special Educational Needs route.

The guidance states that many pupils with a disability will have an SEN statement / EHC plan and auxiliary aids provided by the LA and so may not require anything further. However, if the disabled pupil does not have a statement / EHC Plan (or the statement / EHC Plan doesn't provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school (after the relevant provisions come into force). The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the **accessibility planning** duties and the existing SEN statement provisions which are part of education legislation, under which Local Authorities have a duty to provide auxiliary aids to pupils with a statement of special educational need. 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; and
- 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, but schools may choose to continue producing such a scheme, if it helps them to comply with the Equality Duty, and they can expand it to cover the additional protected characteristics.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Conclusion**

In regards to **disability**, schools need to:

- Identify where evidence of equality considerations is located within schools policies and practices.
- Carry out accessibility audits to identify potential barriers to access in the three areas of school life identified above and produce an action plan to ensure improvements
- Provide appropriate training for staff, governors and pupils
- Review and improve the school's arrangements through actions identified within the accessibility plan

### **References**

*The Equality Act 2010: Advice for school leaders, school staff, Governing bodies and local authorities* <http://preview.tinyurl.com/5wp9aa>

*Equality Act Guidance* downloads from the Equality and Human Rights Commission – includes *Guidance for education providers – what the equality law means for you as an education provider* <http://preview.tinyurl.com/3md47tk>

### **Disability Provision at Greenhall (January 2015)**

Greenhall Nursery is a LA Special Nursery that caters for children aged 2 – 5 years who have educational special needs resulting from a physical disability, sensory disability

## GREENHALL NURSERY



and/or developmental delay. The school is also commissioned by the Local Authority to support physically disabled children in mainstream schools through the PDSS.

The school is situated within a housing estate in the Holmcroft area of Stafford. It is a new purpose built building (1999), light, bright and spacious with excellent physical access throughout the building with specialist provision alongside normal early years provision.

The children come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, have a wide range of mobility and learning skills and receive specialised support to access all areas of the curriculum.

On entry into school a basic assessment of each child is made using our initial entry booklet and information from parents. Following initial observations by staff and therapists, a Personalised Learning Plan is put in place within six weeks of a child entering school. EYFS age and stage baselines are determined using the EYFS and EYFS B Squared system. These are updated every term with analysis of progress completed at the end of the academic year.

The school works very closely with parents and information is communicated to them by the written word, spoken word, photographs etc. Within the school children gain information from the written word, the spoken word, pictures, photographs, symbols and signing.

Riding for the Disabled, educational visits and visits to the school by performers give the children experience of the wider community. Links have been established with the local community and a range of visitors from the wider community contribute to the curriculum.