



# Forwards Centre

Part of Bolton Impact Trust

## Accessibility Policy and Plan

<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Christopher Fielding</b>
<b>Last Reviewed</b>	<b>May 2024</b>
<b>To be reviewed</b>	<b>May 2027</b>

## **Aims:**

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Our centre aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

At the Forwards Centre, we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally. We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that 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 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.

The Forwards Centre Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The plan relates to the key aspects of curriculum, physical environment and written information:-

- Increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils; this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve and maintain access to the **physical environment** of the centre, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the centre and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;

- Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables and information about the centre and events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

### **Current position and good practice**

We aim to ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers before admission. If necessary a risk assessment or medical care plan is written.

### **Curriculum**

Our children are taught using a variety of teaching and learning methods ensuring accessibility to the curriculum. This includes sensory breaks and staff trained in working with children with social, emotional and mental health needs, ADHD and those on the autistic spectrum. Every child has individual learning targets which are closely monitored and regularly reviewed. Every child is educated in small classes (9 children). Every child has a key worker anticipating and meeting individual pupil needs. All staff are CPI trained. Centre data is analysed to ensure that group trends are identified. Advice is sought and we work collaboratively with educational psychology, SEND and disability agencies to ensure pupils receive appropriate support and provision. We take full advantage of the opportunities available to provide educational visits that are accessible to all pupils. We make every effort to enhance inclusion at all times. We create a culture of understanding and tolerance so that all ability groups and all disabilities are accepted as part of our school community. Children and parents have access to our on-site counselling service.

### **Physical Environment**

The centre is accessed via ramp The majority of classrooms are one level with one class accessible via a portable ramp if required and one class accessible through a separate entrance via a pedestrian entrance. Internally, when making adjustments and improvements to the building, these are DDA compliant. The main entrance features a secure lobby and has been fitted with a low reception hatch, this being fully accessible to wheelchair users.

Currently, access to the playground is via steps. Wheelchair users would need to leave through the front entrance and enter the playground via a pedestrian gate.

On-site car parking for staff and visitor includes two dedicated disabled parking bays.

There are disabled toilet facilities available, in the entrance foyer. All these are fitted with a handrail and a pull emergency cord. The centre has internal emergency signage and escape

routes are clearly marked. Communal spaces are 'clutter-free' to facilitate easy movement around the buildings.

### **Information Access:**

Every classroom has their own interactive whiteboard, laptops are widely available for individual children, visual timetables are used, parents are invited to bi-weekly parents drop in. Key workers are in regular (often daily) contact with parents/carers to share information. Staff are available to support parents/carers with paperwork as the need arises. Letters are followed up by text messages and emails to parents/carers

### **Legislation and guidance:**

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

The plan will be made available online on the centre website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our centre is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The centre supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

Our Trust complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in the centre, the complaints procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

## Forwards Centre Accessibility Action Plan 2024-2027

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Target Curriculum	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Desired Outcome	Date completed
To ensure that staff are trained to support pupils with emotional needs	Trauma informed CPI updates yearly  All staff trained in the use of the Centre's SEMH Principles	Jan 25 and then annually  Autumn 24	C. Fielding	All staff are CPI and SEMH Principles trained	Sept 24
To ensure all staff are aware of provision required to support pupils with ASD, ADHD, Dyslexia and	All pupil provision maps to be informed by the full range of professional advice for each individual pupils	Autumn 24	N. Berry	Staff confident and knowledgeable in delivering identified provision for each pupil as needed.	
To ensure staff are trained to support pupils with medical conditions.	Update staff training annually in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asthma</li> <li>• Epilepsy</li> </ul> and as required in other specific conditions.  First aid training updates	Spring 25	D. Mills	Staff are confident in supporting pupils with asthma and epilepsy and other condition as required.  Sufficient number of first aiders trained.	
Target Physical environment	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Desired Outcome	Date completed

Access meets statutory requirements	Investigate funding to improve access to the playground/lower classroom via a ramp/platform lift.	Spring 25	C. Fielding	The building is accessible and meets the needs of users with specific disabilities	
Target Information access	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Desired Outcome	Date completed
To review all statutory policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	As policies are updated, review for inclusive practice and accessibility issues.	2024-2027	C. Fielding/LGB	Inclusive practice and accessibility is considered across all areas of practice.	
To enable enhanced access to written information for pupils, parents and visitors.	Forwards Centre (and BIT) website has facility to offer translations and auditory commentary  Auditing signage around the school to ensure that is accessible to all	Spring 25  2024--2027	C. Fielding	The written information we provide is clear and has options for those with visual impairments or those needing translation or auditory commentary.	

### Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every 3 years but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.