Policy Information Sheet

Name of Policy:	**Accessibility Plan**
Delegated Authority	☒ Trust Board ☐ Nominated Committee ☐ CEO ☐ CFO ☐Other _____
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Introduction

Hartlepool Free School (HFS) is committed to increasing access to the school for pupils, staff, parents, and visitors and will plan improvements over the period from opening in 2024 to achieve this. This accessibility plan has been written in accordance with the planning duty under the SEND Code of Practice 2017 which states '**All** schools must have regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice when taking decisions relating to pupils with SEN or disabilities, and the Children's and Families Act 2014 as well as the Equality Act 2010. It also takes into consideration the DfE's advice for schools on the Equality Act (page 29).

This accessibility plan is a plan for:

- Increasing the extent to which all pupils including those with a disability can participate in the school's curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which all pupils including those with a disability are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by the school; and
- Improving the design and delivery of written materials to all pupils including those with a disability, their parents/carers and fellow professionals
- Ensuring that teaching and all provision is differentiated to allow it to support all students to achieve their full potential.

We aim to do this

- Within a reasonable time
- In ways which are determined after taking into account individual pupils' needs.
- By giving due consideration to any preferences expressed by pupils or their parents/carers and lead professionals involved in the life of the child or young person.
- In collaboration with the young person's placing authority.

These areas are addressed in the action plans that follow.

Methodology

The Accessibility Plan has been drawn up and agreed by the school's leadership team. The plan will be reviewed by school staff on a term by term basis.

Key Objectives

In line with current legislation the key objectives of the Accessibility Plan are:

- That no pupil or prospective pupil is treated less favourably due to a protected characteristic or disability. All reasonable adjustments will be made in matters of admission and education.

- That, where practical to make reasonable adjustments, based on the information and advice received; the school will enable a prospective pupil including those with a disability to take up a place at the school if he/she satisfies the admission criteria.

- To make the school more accessible to all pupils and staff, including those affected by disability on a short-term basis – for example, if the use of crutches or a wheelchair is required for a fixed period as a result of an accident.

- To create a positive, nurturing and “can do” ethos towards the issues faced by all pupils thus enabling them to take full advantage of the educational experiences offered by King Edwin School.

Action Plans

Individual action plans, relating to the key aspects of accessibility are in place as a starting point to this new Academy. It is our aim that significant progress will be made over the three years of the plan. But, we acknowledge that there is a need for ongoing awareness and training for staff in equality awareness, with a specific focus on disability awareness and the need to inform attitudes on this matter. Teaching methods and techniques will also be developed over this period, which may create new challenges.

In terms of the physical environment, all reasonable efforts will be made to make adaptations. The approach therefore is to aim to make physical improvements while also being prepared on a case by case basis to move teaching and learning to areas that can be accessed.

Plan Availability

HFS makes its Accessibility Plan available in the following ways:

- Directly from the school Operations Manager

- Directly from the school web page

A copy can be provided in large print format or other formats and languages on request.

Review and Evaluation

The plan is valid for three years from 2024-2027 and a new plan will be drawn up on its expiry. The plan is reviewed annually by the school’s leadership team. It may be adjusted at review or at any other time as appropriate to meet individual needs.

Improving Curriculum Access

The steps we will take to ensure accessibility for all are:

Aim	Responsibility	Timescale
To work with professionals in school (Educational Psychologist and SENCO) and from placing authorities to ensure that our curriculum is accessible and engaging to all including those pupils with a protected characteristic including a disability and that the curriculum meets their individual needs.	School Management	Ongoing – reviewed annually
To encourage pupils to use an alternative means of recording by using laptops with specific software that supports a pupil's learning style or disability, voice recorders and other forms of technology where this is appropriate and will support their learning and achievement.	All staff	Ongoing review based on student needs
To ensure the format of Home Learning projects are accessible for all students	All staff	
To encourage all students to participate in leadership opportunities	All staff	
To ensure that all pupils have access to extra -curricular activities	All staff	
To develop the range of extra -curricular activities through pupil voice	All staff	
To ensure that all pupils regardless of need have access to the highest quality careers education, information, advice and guidance.	School Management Key Teachers	

All pupils will have Individual Learning targets that will be made in consultation with the pupil, parents/carers, key professionals and teaching staff and match to Education, Health and Care Plans. Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to support all pupils with a disability and to engage with and provide an appropriate response to students' different learning needs.

Improving Physical Environment

HFS aims to monitor, evaluate and improve the physical environment of the school as necessary and within a reasonable timeframe to meet the needs of all pupils and visitors.

Aim	Responsibility	Timescale
To review the systems in place for pupil/visitor access to the school building.	School Management	
To ensure that the site remains in good order including addressing any items of action arising from the termly Health and Safety site inspection.	Operations team	
To continue to maintain high quality Risk Assessments for all activities, all offsite education and individual pupils to ensure safe access and practice	Associate Principal Operations manager	
To implement appropriate access action plans for pupils/visitors who may be temporarily disabled e.g. use of crutches, in plaster etc.	School Management	

Improving Written Communication

We aim to include all pupils, parents/carers and fellow professionals in participating in the life of the school by providing access to written materials in several formats.

Aim	Responsibility	Timescale
To have visual timetables produced for identified students	School Management	
To have photographic evidence of participation of pupils in the life of the school	School Management All Staff	
To provide reports for parents/carers in written (including large print) and oral format as necessary	School Management All Staff	
To access signers and	School Management	

translators as required	Placing Authorities	
To post events and policies on the website	School Management Technical Department	
To liaise with educational psychologists to discuss the needs of individual pupils	School Management All staff	
To provide and produce appropriate learning materials in a format that is accessible to meet individual need	School Management All Staff	
To ensure that special arrangements are in place with examinations boards	Exams manager	

Staff Training

We believe in progress and learning for all and as a special school, must ensure that the needs of the students are understood and that education is adapted to allow students to reach their full potential. Regular staff training is offered so that staff are knowledgeable and equipped with the skills to meet the needs of all of our pupils. Our curriculum has been designed with our learners in mind and will be adapted as we become established.

Aim	Responsibility	Timescale
To ensure that there is clarity about the student's individual needs and their combined needs within their tutor groups.	Education Psychologist	
To ensure that there is ongoing staff training and development	School Management	
To ensure that all new staff undergo core training in the school approved behaviour management techniques, and are aware of the students individual needs	School Management	
To access appropriate training for key staff in specific areas to meet the needs of individual pupils	School Management	

To ensure that all staff have an understanding of Equality Legislation	School Management	

The Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information. Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness for staff and Trustees on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.