The Meadows School

Accessibility Policy

Updated: February 2020
Date to be reviewed: February 2023
Ratified by Governors: March 2020

Amendment Register

Amendment Number	Date	Detail	Amended By	Approved By
0	Feb 2019	Initial Issue	R Byatt	Headteacher
1	Jan 2020	Reviewed	R Virk	Headteacher
2	Mar 2020	Ratified by Governors	FGB	FGB

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1. Rationale
This policy has been adopted and written in relation to The Accessibility Policy at the Meadows School and should be read in conjunction with the Policies and Procedures and any DfE Policy, Statements and Guidelines.

2. Document Purpose

2.1. This policy reflects the values and philosophy of the Meadows School in relation to Accessibility. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. This policy is drawn up in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in 'Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students', issued by the DCSF

2.2. The Meadows School educates students with complex and multiple learning disabilities including autism and challenging behaviours. As a 'specialist provision' resources are adapted to ensure equality of access for all students regardless of disability. Individual needs are assessed and learning is resourced in order to ensure developmental progression in all areas.

3. Audience

3.1. This policy, having been presented to and agreed upon by the whole staff and Governing body is distributed for the information of:

- All teaching staff
- All teaching assistants
- All support staff

3.2. A Copy of the policy is available in:
- The Headteacher's Office

3.3. This is available for:
- School Governors
- External Professionals
- OFSTED
- Parents
- Visiting Teachers
- Other interested adults (social and psychological services etc.)

4. Definition of Disability

4.1. 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'.

5. Key Objective

5.1. To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for students, and prospective students, with a disability.

6. Principles

6.1. Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the school's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEN policy;

6.2. The school recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA)

- not to discriminate against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- not to treat disabled students less favourably
- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage

6.3. In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the Code of Practice (2002).

6.4. The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

6.5. The school provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum including:-

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to students' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students

7. Achieving the Objectives

This section outlines the main activities, which the school undertakes, and is planning to undertake, to achieve the key objective outlines above.

7.1. Education and related activities

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, and other external professionals that can support the school to ensure equality of access and developmental achievement commensurate with their potential ability.

7.2. Physical environment

The school will take account of the needs of students and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities, services and fittings.

7.3. Provision of information

The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

8. Accessibility Plan - Identifying Barriers to Access

Organisational	Completed	In progress	Under discussion	Not yet addressed
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all students irrespective of attainment or impairment? *(as part of a developmental programme differentiated to meet individual need)*	✓			
Preparation for entry into school *(Admissions Policy – within the resource of School, School Brochure and student information pack with Care Plans, Proforma for Challenging Behaviours and Moving & Handling)*		✓		
Grouping of students *(by year group and differentiated lesson plans in place plus individual support e.g. reading as relevant)*		✓		
Homework Policy and practice *(in place by developmental ability and ref school brochure)*		✓		
School discipline and sanctions *(reference Behaviour Policy)*	✓			
Exclusion procedures *(reference Exclusions Policy)*	✓			
School clubs and activities *(full access as relevant also reference e.g. Off Site Visits Policy)*		✓		
School trips *(full access with curriculum access statements and risk assessment in place)*	✓			
The school's arrangements for working with other agencies *(Open School Policy, EHCPs, Attendance and Behaviour Management Policies etc.)*	✓			

Attitudinal	Completed	In progress	Under discussion	Not yet addressed
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled students? *(Training is needs led and represented in school development plan. Risk Assessments also guide training)*	✓			
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled students, for example using lip reading? *(Individual developmental progression identified in lesson plan e.g. Teaching strategies and resources. Individual behaviour plan guided by Behaviour Small steps developmental criteria)*	✓			
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required b some disabled students to use equipment in practical work? *(as above)*	✓			
Are there high expectations of all students? *(All students are baselined with SMART targets set for the student to achieve within their zone of potential development, also reference e.g. Work Related Learning and Whole Curriculum Policy)*	✓			
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation? *(reference Equal Opportunities Policy)*	✓			
Access to the curriculum *(As above with differentiation if necessary, reference curriculum access statements)*	✓			
School policies e.g. anti bullying, SEN policies, health & safety *(All in place with annual review)*	✓			
Interaction with peers. *(Part of developmental criteria as held in behaviour small steps as evidence in Student portfolio)*	✓			

Physical Access	Completed	In progress	Under discussion	Not yet addressed
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled students? *(Resources component in scheme of work and lesson play)*		✓		
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities: classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all students*? (Single story building with e.g. disabled toilets and special features – issues – external of the school building and holdbacks on internal doors)*	✓			
Can students who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?	✓			
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parting arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed? *(signage established but parking needs upgrading)*		✓		
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL students, including students with SEN and disabilities: including alarms both visual and auditory components? *(a comprehensive system is in place, reference Health & Safety Policy)*		✓		
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?	✓			
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled students with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy? *(Any issues dealt with through EHCP)*	✓			

Physical Access (continued)	Completed	In progress	Under discussion	Not yet addressed
Are areas to which students should have access well lit? *(automatic lighting)*	✓			
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired students such as considering a rooms acoustics and noisy equipment)		✓		
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately? *(as a Special school all resources and provided and organised to reflect the whole school need)*	✓			
Access to school facilities *(equality for opportunity approaches reference Equal Opportunity Policy)*	✓			
Activities to support the curriculum e.g. drama group visiting school	✓			
School sports	✓			
How the school deals with emergency procedures (Regular documented checks and practice e.g. fire drill also Staff Handbook, Caretaker checks, Health and Safety Policy, First Aid Guidelines etc.)	✓			
Breaks and lunchtimes *(Whole school SEN policy with staff supported system including rotas)*	✓			
The serving of school meals *(Own kitchens with provision for special dietary requirements)*	✓			

Curriculum Access	Completed	In progress	Under discussion	Not yet addressed
Do lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve? *(differentiated Lesson Plans with linked EHCPs)*	✓			
Are lessons responsive to student diversity? *(as above)*		✓		
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class? *(reference teaching and learning styles policy and teaching strategy component within planning proformas)*	✓			
Are all students encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities? *(see curriculum rolling programmes re broad and balanced curriculum entitlement)*	✓			
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled students who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education? *(Individual differentiated programmes)*	✓			
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities? *(as identified in statement for SEN and represented in lesson planning formats)*	✓			
Teaching and Learning *(reference Teaching and Learning Policy)*	✓			
Classroom organisation *(Individually assessed and represented in lesson planning)*	✓			
Timetabling *(reference Equal Opportunities Policy and Statutory Guidance)*	✓			
Assessment and exam arrangements *(Academic, vocational and occupational routes available)*	✓			
Preparation of students for the next phase of education *(Work related learning policy which identifies progression regardless of ability towards end outcomes also Transition reviews and Connexions access)*		✓		

Information Access	Completed	In progress	Under discussion	Not yet addressed
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for students and prospective students who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information? *(Individual education plans would identify strategies and resources to meet need)*		✓		
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way, which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams? *(as above)*	✓			
Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats? *(specialist ICT facility with 'in class' and staff room hardware available)*	✓			
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities? *(professional development programme with support from ICT co-ordinator)*	✓			
School announcements *(Staff pigeon holes, notice boards as part of schools information systems including morning-after school-staff and PD days)*	✓			
Access to information *(School Council and through schools planned Information systems as above)*	✓			

9. Accessibility Plan - Key Recommendations

	Key Recommendations
Physical Access	Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe All emergency and evacuation set up to inform all students including students with SEN: including alarms with both visual and auditory components
Curriculum Access	Preparation of students for next phase of education Provide access to computer technology appropriate for all students
Information Access	Professional development programme in place for all staff with ICT

10. Access Plan - Physical Access

Time Scale	Targets	Activities	Outcome	By When	By Whom	Success Criteria
Short Term	Ensure all classrooms are optimally organised for all students					
Medium Term	Ensure appropriate signage is displayed around school, considering all disabilities					
Long Term	Review evacuation alarms so they have visual and auditory components					

11. Access Plan - Curriculum Access

Time Scale	Targets	Activities	Outcome	By When	By Whom	Success Criteria
Short Term	Ensure all students have the opportunity to access work related learning opportunities when in sixth form.					
Medium Term	Ensure an appropriate curriculum is designed and implemented to meet all diverse needs					
Long Term						

12. Access Plan - Information Access

Time Scale	Targets	Activities	Outcome	By When	By Whom	Success Criteria
Short Term	Communication audit to be completed to ensure all needs are being met when information is communicated					
Medium Term	Ensure appropriate strategies are used when providing information to students and perspective students					
Long Term						