



Accessibility Policy and Plan

Miss K Glasby
March 2017

Chair of Governors: Mrs Marlene Ranshaw

Date:

Review due date: March 2019

Rationale

The purpose of this document is to show how Welholme Academy aims to increase accessibility for children with a disability and adults working in and visiting the Academy. It complies with the Equalities Act 2010 and the Disabilities Act 1995

The Equality Act states that schools have a duty to make “reasonable adjustments” to make education and the setting accessible to all users and to make sure disabled students are not discriminated against.

Welholme Academy is an accessible school as disabled pupils can take part fully in the school curriculum and the physical environment does not restrict the child from taking advantage of the education and experiences on offer. We aim to reduce and eliminate any possible barriers to learning and access to the curriculum for anyone with a disability.

This document aims to increase the access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). (It also reflects the The Equality Act 2010 which legally protects people from discrimination)

1. increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum, which includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school, such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits
2. improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services, which includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education
3. improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information, which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled. eg. handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of the pupils` disabilities and the preferred format of pupils and parents/carers and be made available within a reasonable timeframe.

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

‘You’re disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.’

Vision and Values

Our children get one chance at education with us. It is our job as professionals to nourish the diverse talents of our children. We need to be mindful of where each child begins their learning journey and what their previous life experiences have been and then set out to widen their horizons, develop their attitudes to learning and enable them to live life to the full. It is the job of the adults who work in school to foster intellectual, cultural, physical, moral, and spiritual development. This helps the children to develop values that will guide them through life. At Welholme Academy we aim to do this in an environment where all children feel happy and secure.

Welholme Academy aims to treat all stakeholders, including pupils, prospective pupils, staff, governors and other members of the school community favourably and, wherever possible, takes reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage.

We aim to work closely with disabled pupils, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove or minimise any potential barriers to learning, which puts them at a disadvantage, but allows them to learn, achieve and participate fully in school life. The school is active in promoting positive attitudes to disabled people in the school and in planning to increase access to education for all disabled pupils.

As part of the school's continued communication with parents/carers and other stakeholders we continually look at ways to improve accessibility through data collection, questionnaires, parental discussions and pupil voice.

The context

The school, built in 1892, has good physical access and the building is on two floors with a lift to provide access to the first floor for wheelchair users or individuals with a leg injury or disability. There is a disabled toilet, ramp access to KS1 and KS2 and wide corridors/doors. The physical features of the school are a strength as all parts of the school are accessible to disabled pupils, staff and visitors. There are dedicated parking bays in the car park for disabled staff and visitors.

Access for pupils/adults to the building and all site users with disabilities is always given consideration.

Disabled pupils participate in all aspects of school life taking part in all off site activities and visits, school productions, after school clubs, team sports, P.E., cello, swimming, School Council and residential visits. We ensure through careful planning and risk assessments that children have equal opportunities to participate in every aspect of school life. When necessary, additional staff support is put in place to ensure full access and safety and where required, specialised transport is arranged to accommodate wheelchair users.

The Current Range of Disabilities at Welholme Academy

Welholme Academy currently accommodate children with a range of disabilities which include Autistic Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, Cerebral Palsy, medical conditions, Elios Danlos Syndrome, visual impairments, hearing impairments, Speech, Language and Communication Needs, Microcephaly, Developmental Coordination difficulty DCD (formerly known as Dyspraxia) Epilepsy, diabetes and learning difficulties.

Procedures for planning support

Prior to a child starting school any specific adaptations where possible will be put in place to support the needs of the child and their specific disability. School will contact the relevant professionals and a Multi-Agency Meeting (MAM) will be arranged with parents/carers to discuss the child's needs so that support can be planned and any adaptations to the building or curriculum can be made. It is very important that all agencies work together to plan the support using each

person's professional skills, knowledge and experience for assessments. We always work closely with the child's parents/carers as they know and understand best how to meet their child's needs.

Some children who attend Welholme Academy have asthma and all staff are aware of these children. Inhalers are kept in the classrooms and a record of use is noted. Staff are trained annually so they can support such needs.

Some children have allergies or food intolerances/cultural food choices. All medical information is collated and available to staff, on the staff noticeboard, the office board and in the Medical Room. We have competent First Aiders who hold current First Aid certificates and this is reviewed on a regular basis and a register kept with the Business Manager.

All medication is kept in a central safe and secure place which has easy access for First Aiders and staff members. Administration of Medicines consent forms MUST be filled in by parents/carers outlining the illness and amount and time of medication. All medication that is given is recorded.

A risk assessment will be carried out for any child who needs to use a wheelchair in and around the building. This form is completed with the parents/carer and the child. This will then be stored in the Business Manager's office.

Similarly if a child has a broken limb, has a temporary or needs to wear a sling or boot within the school building, a risk assessment will also be carried out with the parents/carers and child. In both cases the child's safety is paramount and any risks to them or others need to be considered and procedures put in place before they can return to school. As far as possible a GP or medical professional should state that the child is fit to attend school with their injury. If a member of staff has an injury or illness they should also complete a risk assessment and have medical clearance stating that they are fit to return to work.

To ensure that any child with a visual impairment can access the signage of the building all signs are displayed with tactile text and braille print. Any steps have high visibility tape to indicate where they are as do the stairs up to the next level of the building. Prior to starting school an accessibility/mobility officer from the Educational Service for Visual Impairment (ESVI) will carry out an assessment of the environment for a particular child and any adaptations are put in place where needed. This is reviewed should a change in the child's circumstances warrant it eg change of classroom or floor level in school.

ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Disabled pupils can fully participate in the whole curriculum. We provide high quality teaching for all children to improve disabled pupils' access to the curriculum by using a variety of teaching strategies.

We ensure disabled pupils are fully inclusive in whole class and group work and the development of interactive skills eg Kagan groups. We deploy appropriate support staff with key skills to support disabled pupils to access the curriculum, develop independence and promote social interaction.

Access to the curriculum is enabled by making adjustments where possible and where reasonable. All children, wherever possible, should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes both the National Curriculum and any extra curricular opportunities. Any adaptations will be made to meet the needs of the child after a risk assessment and full consideration of their individual needs. This will be carried out in consultation with the child, parents/carers, other professionals and in the case of some extra-curricular activities the external provider.

All children including children with disabilities are encouraged to take part in learning beyond the classroom. This can include:

Sports - football, athletics, dance, gymnastics, swimming

Music - cello, recorders, drums,

Outside visits, residential, visits to the local environment and points of interest.

In order to meet a child's individual, additional or more complex needs a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) may be devised to highlight any support needed and how it will be provided. This will include any specific resources needed or a piece of equipment that will ease their access to the curriculum. A One Page Profile will also be made to highlight what helps the child to learn and how they learn best. This also includes their views about how to help them best. This is reviewed with all involved with the child and if at the point of transition the next setting will also be involved to ensure continuity of provision. The main aims of the plan are to support the child so they can make progress academically and become more independent when accessing the curriculum

Welholme Academy works closely with the LA and outside agencies involved with pupils requiring additional support and with additional needs to ensure together we meet the needs of individuals. Sometimes a child may have a Statement of Educational Need or An Education Health Care Plan which outlines the child's needs and what should be put in place to support their needs and ease their access to the curriculum. This could be a specific resource of piece of equipment. In such cases staff will received training in how to use the equipment or use the resource eg visualiser, hearing loop, specific computer programme or app

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Assessment of the physical environment of the school to means that disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, activities, facilities and services provided without disadvantage. We ensure that the school environment meets the needs of disabled pupils so they can access the curriculum:

Adaptations to the physical environment can include:

- Organisation and planning of the classroom structure eg furniture, seating arrangements to ensure smoother movement around the classroom and easier access to learning
- Individual support is also in place to assist pupils with physical access to their learning.
- All doorways are wider to enable wheelchair access.

- Children with a visual impairment are given extra time to become accustomed to their new environment. They will often use a multi-sensory approach to do this. They will often 'trail' their hands around the peripheries of the classrooms and around the building. They should be allowed to do this in order to feel comfortable.
- Children with a hearing impairment will be seated in an area with minimal noise distractions eg heaters
- School will always work with external professionals and parents/carers and use their advice to ensure children with a disability have full access to the physical environment.
- Pen/pencil grips, thicker pencils/pens
- Slope boards
- Wobble cushions
- Adaptations to chairs or supports added
- Specific chairs purchased so ensure a child with a disability can sit comfortably with correct posture.

AVAILABILITY OF ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

This involves ensuring that information is accessible to all and if needed adaptations made to ensure easier access.

Adaptations to the curriculum can include:

- Hearing loops/wires to ensure hearing impaired access sounds more clearly (provided by Hearing Impaired Service when needed)
- Text size modified or font colour altered for easier access for children with a visual impairment.
- Computers and computer software also ensures maximum access for visually impaired pupils. Use of Ipads
- Children with specific reading and writing difficulties are given extra time in lessons and during testing
- Specific computer software programmes and computer equipment and personalised learning programmes assist pupils in meeting individual learning needs
- Ipads/laptops to access writing packages for poor pencil control and fine motor difficulties
- Specialist support programmes eg RELEASS, All By Myself, Lexia

In the event of a full building evacuation

All children/adults will leave the building in the event of a fire alarm or building evacuation procedure. Any child using a wheelchair will have a specific evacuation plan which will be discussed with parents/carers and the child as part of their risk assessment. This will involve consulting with the Fire Service around safe evacuation and following agreed procedures under their guidance. All staff will be made aware of these procedures.

Where a child is mobile but has a disability or injury in the event of a full building evacuation, they should join the line at the back and be supported by an adult. They should be given assistance to use the stairs if needed to ensure their safety and that of others around them.

Views of Parent/carers and children

Views of children and parents/carers are collated:

- during Parents' Evenings
- at MAM meeting reviews
- at Special Educational Needs and Disability Reviews
- school council meetings
- questionnaires

The management of any incidents of bullying

Children at Welholme Academy are very supportive, and caring towards any child with a disability and are very keen to help them. If any child is unhappy in school or is concerned that someone is being unkind to them they know they can talk to the adults in their class, The Pastoral Team or any other trusted adult in school. They trust that any incidents are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Any incidents are recorded on the central log and the Head teacher and Deputies are informed.

Child Protection

Miss Glasby is the designated teacher with responsibility for Safeguarding, Child Protection and Looked After Children. Mrs Turrell is the Deputy.

Please refer to Welholme Academy's Child Protection Policy on our school website www.welholmeprimary.com if you have any concerns about the care or welfare of a child or come into school to speak to one of the Pastoral Team.

Alternatively please call Children's Services on 014712 325555 or look on their website www.nelsafeguardingchildrenboard.co.uk

Equalities

At Welholme Academy we value all children and adults equally. The ethos of our school supports the development of self-respect and self-esteem in all children, staff and the community it serves. The governors and staff are committed to running an equitable and inclusive school in which every individual matters, irrespective of ability, age, beliefs, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, health, language, race, religion, sexual orientation and social circumstances.

Other documents linked to this policy:

Welholme Academy Equality Policy

Welholme Academy Anti-Bullying Policy

Welholme Academy SEND Policy

Welholme Academy Supporting children with Medical Needs Policy

Policies can be found at www.welholmeprimary.com

The Equalities Act 2010

www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (part iv Education)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/50/contents>

Date: March 2017

This policy will be reviewed in two years or sooner if any new developments warrant a change in policy

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (2017 - 2019)

The most recent audit of the physical environment of Welholme Academy was carried out in December 2016 by Mrs K Johnson (Business Manager) and Miss K Glasby (Deputy Head/SENCO). The audit tool used can be found at:

<http://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/sen/The%20Equality%20Act%20and%20Accessible%20Schools/Pages/AccessAuditChecklist.aspx>

A copy of the audit carried out can be requested from school.

These are the key objectives of the plan that will be focused upon over the next two year cycle. A review of progress will be held at the end of each year with the key people involved.

1. Access to the curriculum

Aim: To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum:

- To increase participation of all pupils in the school curriculum via the use of Aspire provision

Review impact: Termly reviews

Staff responsible: Mrs Jollands, Miss Glasby, Mrs Turrell

- Audit staff training needs in relation to increasing participation in the curriculum for children with a disability
- Access any professional development and training to support children with specific learning difficulties or physical needs. Eg ASD awareness
- Staff will be able to meet the needs of children with disabilities and differentiate accordingly.

Review impact; July 2016

Staff responsible: Miss Glasby, Mrs Turrell, Mrs Tanner

- Provide the specialist input of a speech therapist to develop speech and language skills in the early years. Started September 2016

Review impact: Termly with full review July 2017

Staff responsible: Miss Glasby, Mrs Alankar, Foundation Stage staff, Mrs Turrell, Ms S Howard (NHS), Mrs R Holden (NHS).

2. The Physical Environment

Aim: To ensure the physical environment is accessible for children with disabilities

- To ensure all signage outside the building has tactile text including directions to the disabled toilet
- To ensure all doors are accessible for wheelchair users

- Staff to be aware of the classroom environment and how it can ease access to the curriculum for children with a disability.
- Specialist professionals will support with strategies, advice and training.

Review impact: July 2018

Staff responsible: Miss Glasby, Mrs Gothorp, Mrs Turrell, all teaching staff and support staff.

Advice from health and safety officer

3. Availability of accessible information

Aim: To increase staff awareness of how to adapt resources and information so that it is accessible to those with a disability.

- Staff to be aware of how to adapt resources for children with specific reading difficulties and visual/hearing impairments. Eg colour backgrounds, use of overlays, variety of text/fonts, alternative methods of recording/communication, awareness of visual and hearing difficulties and how they can affect access to the curriculum.
- Professionals and external specialists to provide advice/training and support

Review impact: July 2018

Staff responsible: Miss Glasby, Mrs Turrell, all teaching and non teaching staff.