



LEIGHSWOOD SCHOOL

Accessibility Plan And Compliance with Public Sector Equality Plan

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Leighswood School

Accessibility Plan and Compliance with Public Sector Equality Plan

This plan is written to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The equality duty extends to all those with protected characteristics. This makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

General equality duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies must have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics - between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The duty to have “due regard” to equality considerations means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications. The guidance suggests that it is good practice for schools to keep a note of any equality consideration, and that publishing it will help to demonstrate that the due regard duty is being fulfilled.

Introduction

At Leighswood School we are aware of our duty under the Equality Act 2010 to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.

Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This plan sets out the proposals of the School and Governing Body, in consultation with stakeholders, to ensure equal access to education for all pupils. Through the provision of a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their age, 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. This includes:

- Improved awareness of Equality and Inclusion.
- Improved access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Increased 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; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of the Equality Act 2010). 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 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.

Leighswood school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is a set of actions showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

Vision and Values

Leighswood School is an inclusive school. There is equality of opportunity for all pupils to follow a full national curriculum timetable and to take part in extracurricular activities and the full life of the school. We aim to meet the individual needs of all pupils at the school effectively so that they benefit as fully as possible from the education they receive and attain their potential. We recognise the individual needs of all pupils and endeavour to maximise their potential, all adults in the school community share these responsibilities. Where pupils have additional needs staff have undertaken specialist training and/or specialist advice has been taken.

Specialist learning resources are bought, and environmental changes undertaken where appropriate. The impact of this work is to provide the correct environment for all our pupils to thrive and progress. The school aims to maximise the self-esteem of all its pupils. This, in turn, helps pupils to realise their potential.

We have clear policies that support accessibility, equality and inclusion. These have been developed and agreed by all staff, and governors.

Bullying.

We aim to provide a safe and secure environment for all pupils in the school. We treat bullying as a serious matter and have a clear anti-bullying policy which was written in consultation with pupils and staff, parents and other community members.

Child Protection/Safeguarding.

Child protection arrangements are in place and reviewed annually by Governors and staff. School procedures are regularly updated and reviewed.

Pastoral Care

We are a large school with a high adult to child ratio. All staff know pupils very well. We have a team of staff who offer pastoral care to our children, and a Family Support Worker who works with children and their families.

Health and Safety.

The school has regular health and safety checks by staff representatives and a governor. The Health & Safety Committee meets regularly to monitor the situation. All staff are aware of the need to report issues of health and safety immediately.

The school is equipped with disabled toilets and all main entrances to school are suitable for wheelchair access. There is a lift to facilitate wheelchair access to the KS1 classrooms. There are two upstairs classrooms at KS2 but this is considered before classrooms are allocated each

year. Should a child have unexpected difficulty with access to these rooms then a risk assessment would be completed and the child would join a different class for as long as required.

Curriculum Access

This plan aims to further develop a broad and inclusive view of the curriculum, extending beyond the classroom to all areas of the school life. It will emphasise development at all levels of the school organisation, planning and provision:

- Teaching and learning
- Clubs and after school activities
- Leisure, sport and cultural activities
- Visits and journeys
- Information and services provide by the school

As part of the whole school professional development, lessons and staff are observed and supported by the Co-head teachers and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Advice from a variety of external agencies has also been taken into account. The SLT ensures all staff within the school have Inset and guidance on new policies, government initiatives, pupil needs etc.

Our annual pupil and parent questionnaire gathers information about standards, ethos and provision for all pupils at school. Parents and pupils are asked to comment about any aspects of school life that could be improved to better serve their children. Pupils are regularly consulted through the School Council. These views were utilised in the development of this plan

Increasing the extent to which SEND pupils can participate in the curriculum

The School Development Plan (SDP) sets out priorities for improving the school curriculum to give a wide range of choices for pupils for improving the quality of teaching and learning with particular focus on the implementation of the learning challenge curriculum and for improving the children's involvement in their work. The school works hard to ensure that pupils with SEND participate fully in all aspects of school life. Pupils with SEND attend all schools trips, reasonable adjustments are made if necessary to any clubs or after school activities as appropriate. Risk assessments are carried out and additional staff plus resources are provided as necessary.

Awareness of, and compliance with this Act is demonstrated through:

- Policies: Safeguarding, Behaviour, SEND, Curriculum, Staff Conduct, Anti Bullying.
- Awareness raising sessions with Governors, staff and pupils.
- Information on the action the school has taken to reduce discrimination such as responding to feedback from parents and pupils.
- Impact of aspects included within the curriculum aimed at eliminating discrimination and samples of work produced e.g. photographs of displays.

Equality of Opportunity

Leighswood is advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Evidence of compliance with this aspect includes:

- Recording of feedback from pupils/parents on action taken to reduce gaps in attainment between diverse cohorts of pupils e.g. providing social skills support or a sanctuary for those with autistic spectrum disorders
- Evaluation of action taken by the school to remove/minimise disadvantages experienced by disabled pupils through provision of additional support evidenced through TAs timetables, increased use of IT to reduce reliance on reading text, and to facilitate recording.
- Steps to meet the particular needs of those with a disability through reasonable adjustments evidenced through teachers planning.
- Accessibility plans aimed at increasing active participation of all pupils. Fostering good relations across all characteristics

Leighswood demonstrates its commitment to equality through

- Identification and evaluation of the impact of curriculum, and how it promotes tolerance and friendship and develops understanding of different disabilities.
- Recording of activities that aim to reduce prejudice and increase relationships between diverse pupil groups

Since April 2012 the specific regulations require schools:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the new PSED, and
- To prepare and publish equality objectives. These objectives will relate to all the protected characteristics and not just to disability.

Leighswood will update the published information at least annually and to publish objectives at least once every four years. 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

When assessing the reasonability of an adjustment the school considers a number of factors. This 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 SEN route. Cost will play a major part in determining what is reasonable. 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, The school will also 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 at Leighswood 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.

Leighswood also has regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. The Accessibility Plan identifies how Leighswood is 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 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

At Leighswood we have made improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes:

Steps and stairways, lifts, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors and gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, room decor and furniture, interior surfaces, floor coverings, and signs,

Improvements to physical access include

ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, communication aids, improvements to the physical safety of the environment, indoors and outdoors, to enhance access for children with learning disabilities.

Improved access in existing buildings by rearranging room space, removing obstructions from walkways, changing the layout of classrooms, providing designated storage space or reallocating rooms

Physical aids to access education cover ICT equipment, desks, chairs, writing equipment, 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 specialist pens and pencils.

Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

Leighswood aims to make written information normally provided by the school to its pupils – such as hand outs, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to all. 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. Information in alternative formats can be made available on request.

The school considers 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.

Amendments and adaptations are made where appropriate to support pupils.

Parents and carers with a disability (including those with significant low reading acquisition levels) may obtain copies of relevant communications in alternative formats such as large print, the use of ICT and the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or in sign language, on request.

Accessibility Plan

Improving the curriculum access

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement
Training for Early Career teachers on differentiating the curriculum	Undertake an audit of staff training requirements	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled children's needs with regards to accessing the curriculum	Summer Term 2025 then as and when required	Increase in access to the National Curriculum
All out-of-school activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Review all out-of-school provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All out-of-school activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements	Autumn Term 2024	Increase in access to all school activities for all disabled pupils
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils	Autumn Term 2024 On-going as and when required dependent on the needs of school community	Increase in access to the National Curriculum

Improving the delivery of written information

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement
Ensure information shared via electronic media (newsletters etc are available for parents in alternative formats	Review all current school publications and promote the availability in different formats for those that require it	All school information available for all	Spring Term 2025	Delivery of school information to parents and the local community improved
Review documentation with a view of ensuring accessibility for pupils with visual impairment	Get advice from Hearing and Vision Support Service on alternative formats and use of IT software to produce customized materials.	All school information available for all	Summer Term 2025	Delivery of school information to pupils & parents with visual difficulties improved
Raise the awareness of adults working at and for the school on the importance of good communications systems.	Arrange training courses.	Awareness of target group raised	Summer Term 2025	School is more effective in meeting the needs of pupils.

Improving the physical access

Item	Activity	Timescale
Ensure the Forest school area is	Reviewing provision areas and how all children can access an appropriate forest	Spring 2025

accessible for all pupils	curriculum	