

Rugeley School Accessibility Plan

Introduction

The accessibility plan shows how school access is to be improved for children and young people/students, staff and visitors with disabilities in a given timeframe. It anticipates the need to make reasonable adjustments where ever practicable.

Purpose of Plan

The purpose of this plan is to show how our educational setting intends, over time, to increase accessibility to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information so that all children and young people with a disability can take full advantage of their education and associated opportunities.

Definition of disability

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.

Key Aims

To increase and eventually ensure for children and young people/students with a disability that they have:

- total access to our environment, curriculum and information and
- full participation in the school community

Principles

- Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with our aims and equal opportunities policy and SEN policy
- We recognise their duty under the Equality Act:
 - Not to discriminate against disabled children and young people in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
 - Not to treat disabled children and young people less favourably
 - To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled children and young people at a substantial disadvantage
 - To publish an accessibility plan
- In performing their duties the management team have regard to the Equality Act 2010

- Our setting
 - recognises and values the child or young person's knowledge/parents' knowledge of the child/young person's disability
 - recognises the effect their disability has on his/her ability to carry out activities,
 - respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality
- The setting provides all children and young people with a broad and balanced curriculum that is differentiated, personalised and age appropriate. The plan covers a three-year period, will be reviewed at least annually and will be cross reference in the SEF as appropriate.

Increasing Access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum

This 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.

Rugeley School has high ambitions for all its pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life. Our commitment to equal opportunities is an important aspect of our overall commitment to be a fully inclusive school. This plan identifies how the school meets the needs of pupils with a disability in response to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2014: 0 to 25 years.

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or a disability if he or she - has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or colleges.

'Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010- that is'... 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEND definition.' (SEND code of Practice 2014)

- At Rugeley school we offer a wide and diverse curriculum which includes access to cultural activities and teaching, the library offers a wide range of multicultural books and learning aids, we also encourage cultural celebrations through our school menu and class activities and events via support services and SLT,
- We regularly hold 'student voices' where our students can express any wishes, complaints, ideas and feedback where possible. This in turn is shared with respective staff.
- We have an education wifi network with access to monitored and regulated information for teaching purposes, this information can be accessed through our school iPads, school white interactive boards and pc's for children who enjoy and achieve productive learning through the use of IT equipment

- Children have access to iPads for communication purposes as well as sharing information/learning and fun time although we do not allow mobile personal phones on site for safeguarding reasons.
- Our school meals cater for religious requirements and also dietary requirements such as Halal options, gluten free and lactose free, vegetarian, vegan and life choices to ensure our food offering is inclusive and meet the needs of our children and parents/carers/guardians needs
- Lunch clubs are accessible for children who want to access computer time and sports activities or have quiet time during breaks
- Our access to the building is in line with DDA, any new projects we may wish to undertake which involve building changes or amendments go through architect's support and involvement to ensure we are compliant with the DDA 2015.
- We offer a fully functional Occupational Therapy service and room for children to access and programmes developed to encourage speech and language development plus meeting sensory needs.
- We offer support from a qualified speech and language therapist to ensure all our children have support with different ways to communicate and express their feelings and emotions
- We have a sensory room and equipment for our children who have sensory needs and the option to use many different sensory equipment and access to learning through play and sensory equipment
- There is access to outside play equipment suitable for our older children such as a larger slide and swing buckets for all ages
- We offer swimming activities to those who enjoy sensory time and swimming and exercise, the pool is heated to a higher temperature proven to support our childrens needs
- We have a sports hall inside and a running track outside to offer inside and outside access to sports and exercise
- We have indoor and outdoor trampolines plus access to all forms of exercise from roller blading to football to tennis and individual games as well as team sports
- We use movement breaks during the day to enable access to fresh air and breaks away from learning to re energise and re centre
- We are looking at developing our outside space to encourage further physical activity and meet sensory needs plus involve nature and woodland exploration through our forestry area – pending risk assessments and tree surveys

Improving access to the physical environment of the school

This includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

- We offer a fully functional Occupational Therapy service and room for children to access
- There is support from a qualified speech and language therapist
- We have a sensory room and equipment for our children who have sensory needs and the option to use many different sensory toys and access to learning through play and sensory equipment
- There is access to outside play equipment suitable for our older children such as a larger slide and swing buckets for all ages
- Disabled toilets on ground floor and first floor
- Lift access available in main school building
- Ramp access to the outdoor classrooms
- Appropriate and specific intervention programmes for all pupils
- Class Support and School Support in place for all pupils
- Escorts on educational visits / residential courses as appropriate to ensure equality for all

- Appropriate support for pupils with EHCP plans evident
- Sensory Diet programmes available to relevant pupils
- Catering options for all children, we are inclusive with our food offering which includes Halal options capturing cultural diversity as well as dietary needs such as gluten free and vegetarian options to allow all children to have choice
- Communication Profiles for all pupils
- Communication aids to support comprehension and expression specific to pupil need.
- Total communication approach and visual support eg: sign, symbol, objects of reference, written, verbal, used across the school
- Differentiated communication approaches for stakeholders where relevant
- Any future play outside equipment will be considered to be wheelchair accessible if we have a different cohort which requires access and where practicable
- Every effort will be made by School to accommodate the needs of disabled visitors and other colleagues. By prior arrangement, it may be possible to make certain facilities available to disabled users, depending on their needs and disability.
- We offer a written handout to all guests/ visitors to site which explains the health and safety policy and safeguarding policy, we can also read these leaflets out if required and pre-send out if asked in advance.

Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its children and young people available to disabled children and young people. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of children and young people's disabilities and children and young people's and parents preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.

- Information is given to staff in handover face to face meetings, text messages, phone calls, zoom calls, letters, time tables, textbooks and parent to child books.
- We offer a range of forms of communication to our parents, stakeholders, guardians and carers to ensure we are inclusive and all information is shared consistently.
- We have a suggestion box in school for any staff suggestions and ideas
- We have a nomination box where staff can nominate someone for going above and beyond at work
- We encourage staff who can, to work from home and access meetings via zoom especially during the pandemic
- We can offer preferred formats for parents who have expressed wishes to review information in a different format, we are open to listening to feedback and implementing change to be inclusive to all
- We have a designated email address where people can leave feedback and suggestions which is monitored regularly
- We have a robust complaints procedure in place if needed and a whistleblowing policy which is shared with every new employee
- The new staff induction explains all the Priory wellbeing services we have plus the links to websites which offer free confidential support to staff who may need this, plus mental health support, chat programmes and access to my priory for colleague support and interaction
- We make sure we use photos and symbols to explain any of our fire evacuation policies and procedures to children who can understand in this format, we may use other means of communication in school to ensure any emergency procedure is fully explained and understood. We have a qualified speech and language therapist on site to assist with these tasks

- Posters and pictures around school to help children understand the fire emergency procedure of where to go and also not to touch the fire alarm sounders unless in an emergency
- The school is a single storey building with wide corridors and several access points from outside.
- On-site car parking for staff and visitor includes a dedicated disabled parking bay. All entrances to the school are flat and all have wide doors fitted. There are disabled toilet facilities available.
- The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked
- We have a disabled car parking bay at the front of school which is clearly marked and visible
- We have the use of school fleet people carriers / busses with harnesses and seat belts for our children to be able to access school trips and local community events safely

Financial Planning and control

The Head teacher and SLT will review the financial implications of the accessibility plan as part of the normal budget review process.

- Any changes to our building structure or building improvements go through rigorous budget reviews, planning meetings and robust business cases are written to evidence the viability, sustainability and positive outcomes that will be achieved.
- A Portable Induction Loop could be purchased to be made available for users of hearing aids in reception. The Loop requires the person/visitor to adjust the setting on their hearing aid, which in conjunction with the Loop gives more clarity and pitch of speech. This is a portable device and can be used in any room where needed
- If our cohort of children changes to any child using a wheelchair we have access to providers to can make and install disabled access outside play equipment, we replace our outside play equipment each year and this can be added to our accessibility plan if required
- Improve and maintain 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 within a reasonable timeframe
- Ramps could be purchased to be used as part of our accessibility plan in case we needed to assist with access to the back of the building, although the front entrance is ramped into reception
- More handrails to be fitted to toilets
- We will consult with experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.