

POLICY

Policy number	PS09 Statutory
Policy name	Accessibility Strategy/Plan
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Review date	March 2020
Owner	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Context

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The SEN and Disability Act 2015 amended Part 4 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Regulations 2017 by introducing new duties on local education authorities (LEAs) and Schools in relation to disabled students and prospective students.
- 1.2 Individual schools are required to produce their own Accessibility Plan with the overall objective of increasing the accessibility of schools for students with a SEND.
- 1.3 This Strategy and plan will identify how improvement can be made to:
- Increase the extent to which SEND students can participate in the school curriculum.
 - The physical environment of schools to increase the extent to which SEND students can take advantage of education and associated services.

(This will be done within a reasonable period of time and will take account of views expressed by the students or parents about their preferred means of communication).

- 1.4 The Accessibility Strategy and individual School Access Plans will be reviewed and monitored regularly (annually or as required for individual students and staff). Strategies and plans will run for an initial period of three years.
- 1.5 The Accessibility Strategy will not be seen in isolation. It forms part of a number of documents produced by Autism Wessex in detailing arrangements to develop and promote the inclusion of SEND students.

2. DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

2.1 The Equality Act 2010 uses a broad 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.

2.2 Physical impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those effecting sight and hearing) and mental impairments include learning difficulties and mental illness (if it is recognised by a respected body of medical opinion).

2.3 An impairment is seen to affect normal day to day activities if it affects one or more of the following:

Mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing, eyesight, memory, ability to concentrate, learn or understand, and perception of physical danger.

3. Responsibility

3.1 Autism Wessex has a legal duty to prepare accessibility strategies for its school.

3.2 The Accessibility Plan may be inspected by Ofsted.

4. Increased access to the physical environment

4.1 Building improvements are undertaken through two main routes:

- All major capital schemes include measures such as ramps, lifts or toilets for the disabled to ensure that students can access the buildings and also fulfil the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- Student admissions to schools may be done in liaison with the Education Service for Physical Disability, the Hearing Impaired Service or the Visually Impaired Service as appropriate.

4.2 The School may use funds to support access in one or more of the following ways.

- Improved physical access to the school. This may include setting down and picking up points, ramps, handrails and lifts.
- Improve physical movement around the building, including adaptations for sensory disability such as improved colour schemes and access, to social areas, dining rooms etc.
- Improved accommodation within the building including toilets for disabled students, medical rooms and sound proofing for hearing impaired students.
- Provision of specialist furniture such as rise and fall tables, sinks, ovens, information and communication technology (both hardware and software).
- Reduction in home to school transport travel time by making a local school accessible.

5. Increased access to the curriculum

5.1 Portfield School is committed to providing equality of opportunity and access for all students, and to promoting high achievement for all. The key principles underpinning this commitment are expressed as follows:

- The best interest of each and every child and young person.

A carefully balanced approach is required with an emphasis on the needs of each child and the planned development of more individualised approaches to education.

- Early intervention

Early identification and early intervention are essential to overcome barriers to access to learning.

- The views of the young person

Students must be heard and take part in decisions about their education.

- Working with parents

Everyone involved with the child must work together, including parents, schools, other statutory and voluntary agencies.

5.2 Portfield School policies, practices and plans focus on promoting access for all young people to a broad, challenging and exciting curriculum which will enable them to play a full part in their School and wider community.

5.3 Our objectives include helping support Teachers and Teaching Assistants in developing and using inclusive approaches which enable all students to access opportunities to achieve the highest possible standards. Specific initiatives may include:

- Supporting and promoting the educational inclusion of SEND students through the audit of current practice, the promotion of a school self-review process, the dissemination of good practice through Autism Wessex guidance.
- Developing good practice in schools in writing, implementing and monitoring effective and manageable Education and Health Care Plans.
- Promoting effective practice in schools to work in active partnership with parents in meeting the needs of SEND children.
- Encouraging student participation and decision making in line with the SEND code of practice 2015.

- 5.4 Portfield School will provide a range of professional development programmes for its Class Teachers, and Teaching Assistants designed to equip them to meet the needs of children with a range of disabilities and learning difficulties.

Autism Wessex supervision and appraisal systems will promote us to audit our own training needs in the fields of inclusion and access, and to engage at appropriate levels with LEAs and other professional development opportunities.

6. Increased access to information

- 6.1 Autism Wessex has a duty to relay information to students with hearing and visual impairments. However it can also relate to other disabilities such as autism, speech and language disorders and specific learning difficulties.
- 6.2 Portfield School's provision for children with these disabilities is helped by good links with the Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired Services.
- 6.3 Autism Wessex provides Portfield School with information about its support services and the facilities they are able to offer. This information can be found at the Autism Wessex website www.autismwessex.org.uk
- 6.4 Portfield School ensures that it makes all information provided to students is student friendly.

7. Resources

- 7.1 Improving the physical environment of the school is an important aspect of the work undertaken by the Autism Wessex Senior Leadership Group.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.1 A formal review of the Portfield Accessibility Strategy will be undertaken on a regular basis. Adjustments to the property approach, internal and external routes, ramps, steps, access horizontally and vertically, doors, lavatories, fixtures and fittings, information and controls and means of escape will be made as they are identified as needing adjustments should the needs of students and staff change.

Appendices

APPENDIX A - Action Plan to increase access to the Physical Environment

APPENDIX B - Action Plan to increase access to the Curriculum.

APPENDIX C - Action Plan to improve access to information.

APPENDIX A

ACTION PLAN TO INCREASE ACCESS TO PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	TARGET	SUCCESS CRITERIA	MEANS OF EVALUATION	TIMESCALE
1.	To enable the school to comply with the Equality Act 2010	Required building work completed.	Requirements of the environment are met. Students have improved accessibility to school.	Ongoing as required
2.	Work undertaken to ensure accessibility for individual students if necessary.	Required building work completed.	Students have access to school.	Ongoing as required
3.	Schools Access to be developed in conjunction with Autism Wessex services.	Submissions included in programme in line with priorities in Portfield School Accessibility Strategy.	Improved accessibility to Portfield School and Magdalen Lane site.	Ongoing
4.	Initial School Access Plan written and implemented.	Plans produced and implemented in school and admin areas.	Governors Annual Report to Parents. Ofsted Inspections.	Annual Ongoing
5.	Accessible car parking	Dedicated alternative disabled parking space to be made available in the main car park.	Currently in place	Space to be allocated at Life Skills (November 2017)
6.	Entering the school (front gate)	Level floor from front door to reception desk. Low level bell on outside of front door at life skills.		
7	Moving around the school	Chair lift available for Pool room. Annual service		School admin hold the data

8	Appropriate width entrance doors; door handles at appropriate height; door entry systems at appropriate height; accessible reception facilities;	Low reception desk Reception staff trained in supporting individuals with mobility needs	Currently in place	On going
9	To have an Accessible Toilet compliant to a minimum standard of Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 1999.			Completed
10	Building management	Equality Act access issues considered in all new building development plans.		Ongoing as required
11	To provide provision for children with hearing impairment.	Adaptations to be considered if necessary. Alarm systems changed to include strobe lighting; special training to increase awareness, communication skills and learning simple signs	Required adaptations in place.	Ongoing as required
12	To provide provision for children with vision impairment.	Blinds installed in rooms regularly accessed. Corridors painted to indicate location and outside equipment painted with hazard stripes.	Adaptations in place as per external professional advice	Ongoing as required
13	To provide for children with specific medical conditions.	Flooring adapted to ensure to incorporate soft flooring. Soft furnishings purchased.	Adaptations in place.	Ongoing as required

APPENDIX B

ACTION PLAN TO INCREASE ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

	TARGET	SUCCESS CRITERIA	MEANS OF EVALUATION	TIMESCALE
1.	To promote the educational inclusion of SEND students through structured self-review processes, the dissemination and support of good practice, Developing Emotional Literacy Support	Continuous internal quality assurance (e.g. learning walks) of practice carried out shows evidence of improved inclusive education -	Outcomes measured against individual project specification success criteria. This may be the students EHCP's Observation of improved practice in schools. Links noted in School Improvement Plans.	On-going Teaching Assistants training commenced Autumn 2017
2.	To promote high standards and inclusive classroom strategies by providing training, guidance and support for schools on translating manageable EHCPs into effective practice, with ongoing monitoring and review.	EHCPs being used by teachers to meet students' learning needs, students meeting the targets set in EHCPs, and new targets based on careful review.	Surveys – staff, parents, students. INSET delivery and evaluations. Guidance documentation issued and feedback received. External evaluations – Ofsted etc.	On-going
3.	To support the school and promote effective practice in developing active partnership with parents and local authorities in meeting the needs of SEND students.	Active and effective involvement of parents and local authorities in partnership to identify and meet the special educational needs of their children.	.	On-going
4.	To provide training and support to implement national standards for our SENCO, SEN specialist teachers and support staff, and to support training programmes.	Schools fulfil the requirements of SEN code of practice.		On-going
5.	To develop clear guidelines on how to encourage student participation and decision-making.	Guidance published and disseminated to encourage student participation. School Council established		On-going (school council half termly)

APPENDIX C

ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION

	TARGET	SUCCESS CRITERIA	MEANS OF EVALUATION	TIMESCALE
1.	When identified all resources required to support students are implemented.	Documented in EHCP provision requirements section F	Feedback from schools, parents, students, services and agencies.	Ongoing and to be reviewed in the annual EHCP review
2.	To support Vision	Designated laptop and programmes, matte laminating pouches, specific criteria for learning materials e.g. large font size, specific font.	Resources in place	Ongoing as required