



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

School name: Highwoods Academy

3-year period covered by the policy: June 2017 – June 2020

Policy agreed: Disability and Accessibility Plan

Date: June 2017

Policy to be reviewed : June 2020

Introduction

At Highwoods Academy our values reflect our commitment to a school where there are high expectations of everyone. Children are provided with high quality learning opportunities so that each child attains and achieves all that they are able to. Everyone in our school is important and included. We promote an ethos of care and trust where every member of our school community feels that they truly belong and are valued. We work hard to ensure there are no invisible children here, recognising everyone's uniqueness and success. We recognise learning in all its forms and are committed to nurturing lifelong learners. We are a safe school, committed to improving children's confidence and self-esteem. We know that safe and happy children achieve.

This Accessibility Plan is drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting of progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that "schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation".

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and

- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.

Objectives

Highwoods Academy is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

The school recognises and values parent's knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out everyday activities and respects the parent's and child's right to confidentiality.

The Highwoods Academy Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a physical disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as the able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities 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 schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
- 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;
- 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 timeframe.

The Highwoods Academy Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information.

Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Curriculum Policies
- Emergency Plan
- Health & Safety Policy
- School Improvement Plan
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the governing body. It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of this accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all governors' committees will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010.

The Statutory Policies for Schools (Sept 2014) states that it is a requirement that maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools, sixth-form colleges, further education colleges and Pupil Referral Units must review their accessibility plan every three years. It also states that approval should be by the governing body however, they are free to delegate the approval right to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the head teacher.

Other relevant legislation, regulations & guidance;

Children & Families Act (2014)

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Regulations (2014)

The SEND Code of Practice (revised April 2015)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)

Disability Discrimination Order (2006)

The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 & 3

DfES "*Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils*"

Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003

Involvement and consultation

It is a requirement that disabled pupils, staff and those using school services should be involved in the production of the Disability Equality Scheme. Highwoods Academy has consulted with disabled pupils, staff and service users in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme by:

Consultation with disabled pupils / staff / parents to determine their priorities for the school with regards to disability equality over the next three years via:

Pupil discussion
Drop-in sessions
Parental involvement

Employment

As an employer we will ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote disability equality within our workforce. We will ensure equality of opportunity throughout all our employment practices, including, recruitment, retention and training.

Bullying and harassment of staff will be monitored and appropriate action taken to address and eliminate it.

The Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice lists key employment issues that are usually the most common ones to be considered, these include:

- flexible working arrangements
- appraisal and performance-related pay systems
- sickness absence
- redundancy selection criteria
- emergency evacuation procedures
- procurement of equipment, IT systems, software and websites
- information provision
- employee training and development
- employee assistance schemes offering financial or emotional support.

The Academy has made five commitments as an employer:

- a guaranteed job interview for those who meet the essential requirements for a job
- to consult disabled employees regularly
- to keep employees if they become disabled
- to improve the knowledge of employees about disability and
- to check progress each year, plan ahead and let employees know about progress and future plans

The school will, taking medical or specialist advice where appropriate, ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to allow new and existing staff with disabilities to work effectively within the school.

Making things happen

Disability Equality Action Plan

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty, Highwoods Academy has drawn up an action plan to make things happen, which outlines how the requirements of the DDA 2005 will be met. This action plan has been shaped in consultation with disabled people as outlined in the previous section.

This may include some of the good practice examples below:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Increase awareness of the ways in which parents of disabled children and young people can help to support their learning,
- Ensuring that the talents of disabled pupils are represented accordingly through the Able and Talented Registers.
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Monitor incidents of harassment and bullying of disabled pupils. Encourage pupils to report. Take action against offenders.
- If a number of incidents have been prevalent within a particular year group, use circle time, story time or assembly to investigate and address the issue with all pupils.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Use the school environment to promote positive attitudes to disability.
- Ensure that disability is represented in posters, collages, displays and learning materials.

Process

Our accessibility plan has been developed as follows:

- 1) Access audit and review of current activities completed
- 2) Actions to eliminate barriers identified (with short-term, medium term and long term targets).
- 3) Goals and targets set which can be measured & include time frames.
- 4) Consultation with school staff, governors pupils and parents/ carers,
- 5) The Plan's contents checked.
- 6) Publication of the plan (and included it in the governors' report to parents).
- 7) Implemented the plan and allocated adequate resources.
- 8) Evaluated the plan every 3 years (with the accessibility plan under on-going review and revision as necessary).

In addition to this we will;

- continually review the environment of the school, the way we plan, prepare and deliver curriculum and the information we provide for children / young people so that we can improve the access for both individuals and groups;

- work to provide an atmosphere where all children / young people feel safe and valued;
- promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with a disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.
- examine those parts of our active and extra-curricular activities which may have limited access for children / young people with a disability and see if it is possible to provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.

The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through the Governor Resource Committee.

The Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Approved _____

Date _____

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified by:

- **The Governing Body**
- **Head Teacher**
- **Inclusion Leader & Inclusion Team**
- **School Business Manager**
- **Pupil voice**
- **Caretaker**

A plan of the school buildings showing areas of accessibility is shown below

Increasing access for Disabled Pupils to the School Curriculum

At Highwoods Academy we are continually improving the quality of teaching and learning throughout school, through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) we aim to enhance staff's knowledge, skills, and understanding to promote excellent teaching and learning for all children. We aim to meet every child's needs within mixed ability inclusive classes.

We encourage all pupils to participate fully in the broader life of the school by attending after school clubs which are relevant to their age group, leisure and cultural activities an educational out of school visits. The only exception would occur if a child has breached school rules and it was deemed that exclusion from the after school club may be used as a suitable short-term sanction and to ensure the safety of others.

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Increase confidence of all staff in differentiation within the curriculum	Acknowledge staff training needs on curriculum access. Assign training for dyslexia, differentiation and recording materials	On-going – as required	Inclusion Lead/CPD	Raise staff confidence in strategies for differential and increased pupil participation.
Ensure that class support staff have received the specific training on disability issues	Be aware of staff training needs Staff access the appropriate CPD Outline any learning modules where required	As required	Inclusion Lead/CPD	Raise confidence of support staff
Ensure that all staff are aware of disable children's curriculum access	Individual Access plans for disabled pupils when required Information sharing with all agencies involved with the child.	As required	Inclusion Lead	All staff aware of the individual's needs
Out of school visits accessible to all	Ensure that staff have the knowledge and guidance when organising a trip to ensure that the trip is accessible to all pupils/staff	As required	Head	All pupils within school are able to access all education visits and take part in a range of activities.
Review PE curriculum to ensure PE is accessible to all	Gather information on accessible PE and disability sports Seek disabled sports people to come into school	As required	PE sports subject leader / Inclusion Lead	All pupils to have access to PE and to be able to enjoy and excel

Staff training in supporting pupils with SEND – focus on key areas of need within the school: SLCN, SPLD, ASD, Dyspraxia	Deputy Headteacher for Inclusion to deliver training where possible. Identify gaps in knowledge and seek external advice if necessary	As required	CPD for AH External specialist costs	Highly trained staff meeting the needs of all children
Interventions	SendCo & Inclusion Team to audit current interventions and their success/impact on progress. Provision mapping to be used across all year groups and within the ECAL (Every Child A	Summer Term 2018	Resourcing costs of identified areas to develop	Interventions are highly effective and having impact on pupils' progress

Improving access to the Physical Environment of the School

Highwoods Academy is continuing to grow and develop and provisions in exceptional cases, will be negotiated when a pupil's specific needs are known.

We have a wide range of equipment and resources available for use on a daily basis. Resources are constantly under review. The school's Improvement planning process is the vehicle for considering such needs on an annual basis.

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
The school is aware of the needs of disabled pupils, staff, governors, parent/carers and visitors of the school.	To create access plans for individual disabled pupils as part of the SEND support process when required.	As required	Inclusion Lead Headteacher	SEND Support Plans in place for disabled pupils and all staff aware of pupils needs
	Be aware of any access needs for staff, governors parent/carers and visitors to the school	Identified at induction and on-going	Headteacher	All staff and governors feel confident that their needs are met.
	Through questions and discussions find out the access needs of parents / carers – indicate on Newsletter & Admission forms	Annually	Headteacher	Parents have full access to all school activities
	Consider access needs throughout recruitment process	Recruitment process	Headteacher	Access issues do not influence recruitment and retention
	Ensure staff are aware of Environment Access Standards (see attached appendix)			
Layout of school to allow access for all pupils to all areas	Consider needs of disabled pupils, parents/carers or visitors when considering any redesigns	As required	Headteacher Governors Site Manager Assistant Headteacher Building Surveyor	Re designed buildings are usable by all
Ensure access to reception area is accessible to everyone	Improve access to reception area and car park area during any re- design	Consider in any new developments	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher	Disabled parents /carers / visitors feel welcome
Improve signage and external access for visually impaired people	Yellow strip mark on step edges	On going	Site Manager Assistant Headteacher	Visually impaired people feel safe in school grounds

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Ensure the safety of pupils during an emergency	<p>Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in place for all children with difficulties</p> <p>Develop a system to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities</p>	<p>As required</p> <p>Annually (Sept)</p>	<p>Headteacher Inclusion Lead</p> <p>Inclusion Lead</p>	All disabled pupils and staff working alongside are safe in the event of a fire.
Ensure accessibility of access to IT equipment	<p>Liaise with VI/HI on information with regard to any child that is visually or hearing impaired.</p> <p>Equipment to be put in place to ensure access IT including the Hall</p>	<p>As required</p> <p>On-going Additional software may be required</p>	Headteacher	Hardware and software available to meet the needs of children as appropriate.
Ensure that hearing equipment in classrooms to support hearing impaired	Seek support from LA hearing impaired unit on the appropriate equipment	As required	LA hearing officers	All children will have access to equipment if required
Fire escapes routes are suitable for all	<p>Ensure that all areas of school can have wheelchair access</p> <p>Ensure that visual checks are carried out on a daily basis – housekeeping, keeping areas free from obstruction</p>	<p>On-going and as a when required appropriate</p> <p>Daily</p>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Staff Members</p>	All disabled staff, pupils and visitors are able to have a safe independent pathway to exit the building in the event of an emergency.

Improving the Delivery of Written Information to Disabled Pupils

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupil's available to disabled pupils. Examples may include hand-outs, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable timescale.

In planning to make written information available to disabled pupils we again need to establish the current level of need and be able to respond to changes in the range of need. The school will need to identify agencies and sources of such materials to be able to make the provision when required. The schools IT infrastructure will enable us to access a range of materials supportive to need.

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Review information to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible.	Provide information and letters in clear print and in 'simple' English School office will support and help parents to access information and complete any school forms etc. Ensure that the school website and all documentation can be accessed by the visually impaired	During induction of pupil Ongoing On-going	Headteacher School Office –Admin staff School Office –Admin staff Headteacher	All parents receive information in a way that they can understand Parents/carers receive and understand what the headlines of the school information, where required
Improve the delivery of information in writing in an appropriate format	Provide enlarged print for pupils/parents/carers with a visual impairment	As required	Inclusion Lead Class teachers School Office –Admin staff	Provide excellent communication
Ensure that all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats	Guidance and training for staff on dyslexia and accessible information	On-going	Inclusion Lead	Staff receive a clear understanding
Annual Review of information to be accessible as possible.	Developing IEP's reviewing formats	On-going	Inclusion Lead	Staff more aware of pupils preferred method of communications
Languages other than English to be visible in school	Where possible welcome signs to be multi-lingual	2015	Inclusion Lead	Provide a welcoming environment for all parents to access their child's education
Provide information in other languages for pupils or prospective pupils who may have difficulty with hearing or language problems	Access to translators, sign language interpreters to be considered and offered if possible	As required	Inclusion Lead Local Authority EMTAS Use of parents	Pupils and/or parents feel supported and included within their education

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
<p>Provide information in simple language, symbols, large print for prospective pupils or parent/carers who may have difficulty with standard form of printed information</p>	<p>Ensure that the website is fully compliant with requirement for access by person with visual impairment</p> <p>Ensure that the Prospectus is available via the school website.</p>	<p>2015-2016</p>	<p>Inclusion Lead School Office –Admin staff</p>	<p>Ensure that all can access information about the school</p>

AUDITS & ACTION PLANS

Access Audit

Date: June 2017

Lead member of staff: Graham Rhodes

Section 1 The school can deliver the curriculum to all children / young people. Give details of items developed, current practise and things to be developed.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
Teachers and assistants have trained to teach and support disabled children / young people. Staff are confident about meeting the needs of children / young people with a disability.	✓			CPD as needed
All school staff and the governors have had access to training on disability equality and inclusion.	✓			
We take advice to ensure our classrooms are optimally organised and resourced for disabled children / young people.	✓			
Positive images of people with different abilities are apparent in the classrooms and the school generally.	✓			
Staff plan alternative ways of providing experience and understanding of parts of the curriculum. i.e. All children / young people are encouraged to take part in music, drama	✓			

and physical activities. Alternative forms of exercise are given in PE and games for disabled children / young people.				
Lessons are responsive to diversity. Lessons allow children / young people to work individually, with a partner, in groups and whole class. There is extensive peer support and collaborative learning in support of those with a learning disability.	✓			
When planning the deployment of additional adults, there is a consideration of pupils with disabilities so that if needed, they benefit from high staffing ratios and smaller group activities in order to ensure their inclusion and raise attainment.	✓			
Staff recognise and allow for the mental effort/additional time required by some disabled children / young people, e.g. using lip reading, processing time for children / young people on the ASD Spectrum.	✓			
When renewing computer hardware and software, machines and materials are chosen to support children / young people with a disability, e.g.	✓			

vocalising braille, touch screen, assistive technology.				
Provision of laptops is considered to aid recording and / or communication.	✓			
School visits are subject to a regular review to ensure increased levels of access or alternative experience.	✓			
The school links with other schools to share good practice.	✓			Outreach support sought
Staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation. When curriculum units are developed the originators always ask if there could be a disability dimension.	✓			
Access Arrangements are used when appropriate to support children / young people with accessing assessments.	✓			
The school signpost children, young people and families to further support e.g. Together Information Exchange, ASCETs, Autism Family Practitioners, SAIDSEND, IFSS	✓			
A governor takes particular interest in, and responsibility for promoting disability awareness and inclusion.	✓			

Section 2: The school is designed to meet the needs of all children / young people.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
The size and layout of areas allow access for all children / young people, including wheelchair users.	✓			
In considering the school budget there is a clear plan to improve access and resources for those with a disability.	✓			Adaptations as necessary
There is a plan which shows priorities for major and minor works, costed and included in the School Improvement Plan.	✓			
The school has procedures to ensure the rigorous maintenance of specialist equipment and facilities.	✓			
Emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform all pupils including children / young people with SEN, including alarms with both visual and auditory components.	✓			

<p>Personal Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in place to provide people with any form of disability, who cannot be adequately protected by the standard fire safety provisions within a premises, with a similar level of safety from the effects of fire as all other occupants.</p>	<p>✓</p>			
<p>With regards to <i>'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)'</i>, there a policy in place for the effective and safe administration of medication.</p> <p>Personal hygiene and medical issues are dealt with full attention to the safety and dignity of all concerned i.e. children / young people taking medication, those with limited toileting training.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>			
<p>Pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements are safe. Disabled parking spot is available.</p>	<p>✓</p>			
<p>There is a positive attitude to the recruitment and employment of staff with a disability and a good knowledge about the levels of</p>	<p>✓</p>			

support they are entitled to.				
Furniture and equipment is selected, adjusted and located appropriately. Steps are taken to reduce the background noise for HI children / young people and advice sought from other agencies to take appropriate measures in the classroom.	✓			
The décor and / or signage is not confusing or disorientating for children / young people with a visual impairment, autism or epilepsy. Colour schemes provide colour & tonal contrast for VI children / young people. Labels and signs are presented pictorially and in written word if needed for people with a disability.		✓		On-going Repainting of all teaching areas and corridors

Section 3: The school delivers materials in other formats.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
Information is provided in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in braille for children / young people and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with		✓		As required

forms of printed information.				
Information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly or people with disabilities	✓			
ICT facilities are used to produce written information in different formats as appropriate.	✓			
Staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities.	✓			
External agencies have raised staff awareness i.e. VI, HI, ASCETS, occupational / physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, school nurses, Health visitors...	✓			
There is an effective process to deal with both complaints and positive suggestions from the parents of children / young people with a disability.	✓			

Checking the School's Access Plan

When a new Access Plan is formulated (every 3 years), the following check will be completed prior to publication.

Lead member of staff: _____ Date: _____

Period of Plan being checked; _____

Does the plan cover;	Yes/ No	Comments
Access to the Curriculum?		
Access to the Physical Environment?		
Auxiliary aids and services?		
Teaching and learning practices?		
Staff training?		
Culture and ethos?		
Provision of written information?		
2. Are there targets that are;		
Short term?		
Medium term?		
Long term?		
3. Are there clear strategies to ensure targets fulfilled?		
4. Are there clear outcomes linked to the targets?		
5. Is there a realistic time frame?		
6. Are there indications as the resourcing of the plan?		

Recommendations

Insert any recommendations made as a result of the checking exercise.