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St Mark's Academy Accessibility Plan

Date of latest revision: 8th February 2022

Purpose

This Accessibility Plan is designed to ensure that St Mark's Academy complies with equality and disability legislation and best practice. The school is committed to providing an environment which respects and values all pupils, staff, parents and visitors and endeavours to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper and can fully access the school's facilities and services, including those with disabilities and special educational needs. In preparing this plan, the school took account of the school's public sector equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 and consulted with staff, parents and pupils.

This plan is made available on the school's website and is also available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

Duties on the school

- Not to discriminate against pupils and adults with a disability for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils and adults with a disability are not put at a disadvantage in comparison to pupils who are not disabled (the reasonable adjustment duty).
- The Accessibility Plan needs to be reviewed by the school every three years and it must be published in an easily accessible location such as the school's website.

Reasonable adjustment duty

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments* to allow pupils and adults with disabilities to access the educational provision and related services at the school.

We plan, over time, to increase progressively the accessibility of the school to pupils with disabilities (the planning duty).

Planning duty

- There are three strands to the planning duty:
- increasing physical access
- increasing access to the curriculum
- increasing access to written information.

Increasing physical access

Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by schools; for example: aids to physical access – ramps, handrails, lifts; or physical aids to access education – ICT equipment, specialist desks and chairs.

The reasonable adjustment duty does not apply to physical alterations to schools and we are not required to make physical alterations to the fabric of the school in order to meet the needs of pupils with a disability.

Increasing access to the curriculum

Increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school's curriculum, for example: staff information and training, classroom organisation, timetabling.

Increasing access to written information

Improving the delivery to pupils with disabilities of information which is already provided in writing to pupils without disability, such as handouts, timetables, newsletters; for example, in Braille, audio tape or large print formats, and the provision of information orally.

Communication with parents

In order to best meet the needs of a pupil with a disability, the school requires full information. Parents are expected to work with the school and provide full information about any disabilities, special educational need or other relevant information to the school before and after the pupil has started at the school.

Accessibility Audit

At Appendix 1 is an accessibility audit relating to the above three planning duty areas which we have completed prior to completing the Accessibility Plan.

Accessibility Plans

At Appendix 2 is an action plan relating to the above three planning duty areas which has been created as a result of the audit. Having identified the barriers to access we then identified strategies to eliminate the barriers. For each issue identified in the audit we:

- converted it into a target
- outlined any actions required
- identified whether the actions will be short, medium or long-term priorities
- identified the source of funding

The school is committed to delivering the accessibility plans within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking account of the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint regarding any aspect of this plan, please refer to the school's Concerns and Complaints Policy.

Review

During the period to which this plan relates, the school will keep the plan under review and will make revisions and updates as necessary.

The Education Director will monitor the school's compliance with the plan on an annual basis. The Trust will review the template plan every two years.

Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives (Public Sector Equality Duty) Statement for Publication
- Special Education Needs (SEN) Information Report
- Disability Policy
- Administration of Medicines and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Appendix 1: Accessibility Audit

Questions to ask	Issues identified	Barrier to access?	What sort of issue is it? *e.g. training, policy, documentation, physical environment, communication*	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
1. Culture and ethos –policies and practices				
1.1 Is everyone made to feel welcome, including those with physical disabilities or sensory impairments?	None			
1.2 Are there high expectations of all pupils and staff?	None			
1.3 Do staff, Local Governors and pupils share a philosophy of inclusion?	None			
1.4 Are pupils equally valued?	None			
1.5 Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	None			
1.6 Are lessons made accessible to all students?	None			
1.7 Do you make the best use of teaching assistants (LSAs, HLTAs)?	None			

Questions to ask	Issues identified	Barrier to access?	What sort of issue is it? *e.g. training, policy, documentation, physical environment, communication*	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
2. Staff training				
2.1 Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	None			
2.2 Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support pupils with a disability?	None			
2.3 Are your staff aware of how classrooms should be optimally organised for pupils with a disability?	None			
2.4 Have staff received training in ensuring that lessons are responsive to the diverse nature of pupil needs and abilities?	None			

Questions to ask	Issues identified	Barrier to access?	What sort of issue is it? *e.g. training, policy, documentation, physical environment, communication*	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
3. Provision of written information				
3.1 What provisions are made for making information available to all people who may need access to goods, services and facilities?	None			
3.2 Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for pupils and adults with disabilities?	None			
3.3 Do you provide access to internet resources appropriate for pupils and adults with disabilities?	None			
3.4 Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user-friendly for pupils and adults with visual disabilities e.g. by reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams?	None			
3.5 Do you have the facilities to produce written information in a variety of font sizes?	None			
3.6 Do you make use of RNIB guidelines formats? (RNIB guidelines may be obtained from www.rnib.org.uk)	None			

Questions to ask	Issues identified	Barrier to access?	What sort of issue is it? *e.g. training, policy, documentation, physical environment, communication*	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
4. The physical environment *Consider all the areas to which pupils should have access, including all academic, sporting, play, or social facilities. These would include classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playground and common rooms.*				
4.1 Are there any physical structures such as doorways, steps and stairs which may act as barriers for pupils and adults who use wheelchairs?	None			
4.2 Are toilet facilities and showers accessible to wheelchair users?	None			
4.3 Are there safe pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements?	None			
4.4 Is there any decor which may be confusing or disorientating for pupils and adults with a disability with a visual impairment, for example floors and walls which are the same colour?	None			
4.5 Are there any signs which may be confusing or inadequate, for example at the wrong height to be seen by wheelchair users or with little contrast between lettering and background, or with font which is too small to be easily visible?	Further work is required to review the effectiveness of signage around the building for those with accessibility needs.	Potential difficulty locating areas or resources.	Physical environment	Yes

4.6 Is there accessible storage to enable pupils and adults with a disability to access aids and equipment?	None			
4.7 Are there arrangements which might prevent the inclusion of people with disabilities that affect their hearing – including rooms with poor acoustics and noisy equipment?	None			
4.8 Are there non-visual guides to assist people to use buildings including changes in surfacing materials, lifts with tactile buttons etc?	None			
4.9 Do emergency and evacuation systems include alarms with both visual and auditory components?	None			

Appendix 2: Accessibility Plan template

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim: Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	
Current Good Practice	'One Page Profiles' personalised for individual students and constantly kept under review. These detail specific strategies and adjustments needed to assist students in accessing the curriculum and direct to the resources that might be required to do so. - Context sheets actively differentiates for all students with SEND needs and those underachieving. - Learning walks / book looks focus on engagement and development of all students, specific focus is given to students with SEND. - Vigorous use of data is used to track the attainment and progress of ALL students - Robust systems are in place for tracking, monitoring and challenging poor attendance of all students. - A large therapeutic provision is in place to support students with emotional needs, this is particularly responsive to the changing needs of students in light of the pandemic. - Our school culture is one that actively and visibly celebrates inclusion and diversity in a number of ways throughout the academic year. - A student support team, including pastoral and educational assistants, who are responsive to the ongoing changing needs of students as individuals. - Nurture groups, including breakfast club, help to ensure that students, where necessary, are given the space to prepare for and debrief from learning experiences in order to optimise these based on their own personalised need. They provide a sense of belonging and enable discussion of shared experience with peers.
Objectives	Short term - To maintain our personalised provision to cater to the needs of our diverse student community. - Continue to ensure embedded practice is maintained through appropriate staff training and induction. Medium Term - Continue to increase the visibility of students with a range of needs / disabilities within the resources associated with the curriculum. Long Term

	• Continue to implement cycles of curriculum review to ensure that it remains relevant; responds to the lived experiences of all students and is accessible by students of all needs and abilities.
Actions to be taken	Liaise with the Quality of Education Team to embed monitoring and review cycles, factoring in the diverse range of needs of the student community. Interrogate curriculum resources and enhance with those that are representative of our inclusive community.
Person responsible	NVZ
Date to complete actions by	July 2022
Success criteria	• Gaps between SEND and other students are narrowing / closed • Attendance for SEND students is high (at least above national average) • 'One Page Profiles' and context sheets are held, understood and implemented by all staff, in every lesson consistently.

Aim: Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	
Current Good Practice	• The site is fully accessible to all students, regardless of disability. The site is mostly on one level, lifts are available to escort students to higher floors, corridors are wide and signage is clear. • Disabled parking bays are available close to the main school entrance. These are placed in a quiet area away from busy local traffic. • Large external gates are automated to enable efficient access to site with a range of accessibility needs. • A range of toilets, including disabled and inclusive toilets, are available. • Student leadership teams were involved in the design and installation of new signage (for inclusive toilets).
Objectives	Short term • Ensure all signage is reviewed and adjusted to accommodate the needs of the current community Medium Term • Put in place monitoring cycles to ensure signage is reviewed regularly, involving students in the 'site-walk' process as appropriate. Long Term • Continue to develop the school signage based on the input of student voice, through student leadership and other groups.

Actions to be taken	Review current signage
	Create signage monitoring plan
	Engage student voice in the evaluation and design of signage in future
Person responsible	EHI
Date to complete actions by	July 2022
Success criteria	• Student voice shows that the school is easy to navigate by those with accessibility needs. • Student voice shows that they are involved in decisions made about the school environment. • Lateness or absence to lessons is not higher amongst students with accessibility issues due to environmental issues.

Aim: Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability	
Current Good Practice	• A range of resources are available tailored to the individual needs of students, including: laptops, reading pens, overlays, fidget devices etc. • Resources are translated as necessary into different languages of students. • Resources are varied according to student need through effective differentiation, for example increasing font size and printing out resources presented digitally to hard copy • 1:1 support from TAs and specialists as required to enable access to learning • Students are partners in the development of their one page profiles, expressing their own needs and knowledge of what best helps them to learn. Teachers use this to guide their practice. • Staff have had extensive training in Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) and Direct Vocabulary Instruction (DVI)
Objectives	Short term • Continue to embed CLT and DVI as pedagogical tools to support all students. Medium Term • Continual review and revisiting of training of all staff as meets the needs of our diverse community. Long Term • Ensure we keep abreast of, and respond to, pedagogical research to ensure our practice is informed by this.

Actions to be taken	Embed CLT and DVI across the curriculum. Provide staff with specific training to effectively meet the needs of individuals as these arise. Include the latest educational research in our approach to pedagogy and ensure this is disseminated effectively amongst staff.
Person responsible	RSE / JKH
Date to complete actions by	July 2022
Success criteria	• Learning walks and book looks show evidence of CLT and DVI in all lessons. • Bluesky and PASPro show evidence of a focus on key strategies and progress in staff competency in these areas over time. • Staff voice confirms that CPD is effective • Student with SEND achieve well in line with local and national benchmarks