



# **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**POLICY AGREED: SUMMER TERM 2021 BY FULL GOVERNING BOARD**

**POLICY TO BE REVIEWED: SUMMER TERM 2023**

## Introduction

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities, and services provided.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Our school aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including parents, staff, and governors of the school.

## Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of [schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010](#).

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled 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 undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## **Vision and values**

The School has a mission statement “Meeting individual needs and celebrating success” which underpins all its activity and embraces equality of opportunity. We seek to overcome barriers to learning by developing individual strategies within personalised planning for both in school and within the wider community.

Dee Banks School is committed to ensuring that admission decisions will be made by a process that is free from any discrimination on the grounds of disability, race, ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, or belief. The school must also feel reasonably sure that we are able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a happy, fulfilling, and successful school career. These aims must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at the school.

Our pupils will grow up in an environment where all people are of equal worth and to respect and value the difference between people and to celebrate the richness that there is in diversity.

We aim to make our physical environment as accessible as is possible within the constraints of our historic buildings and to create conditions where every member of our school community will get the full benefit of our education and resources. We are fully committed to the active promotion of equality of opportunity for all children, staff, and families in the school.

## **Information from pupil data and school audit**

Dee Banks School is a special school catering for pupils with profound & multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and autism. All our pupils have significant needs which require a high-quality accessible environment.

The school has been extensively developed over recent years to support:

1. PMLD access by
  - The installation of overhead hoist in all bathrooms and classrooms.
  - Installation of wide wheelchair friendly doors.
2. Early Years/KS1
  - The development of a series of rooms to support provision allowing for the wide breadth of need from PMLD to ASC.
3. 14 - 19
  - The development of 14-19 suite to support the different curriculum needs of our more independent 14+.
  - The development of a more sensory curriculum within 14-19.
4. ASC provision
  - Autistic specific environment.
  - Whole Department approach to ASC support mechanisms and teaching approaches e.g. TEACCH.

- Whole school approach to Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to support language and communication development.
5. Quality Initiatives to ensure positive outcomes for the school community
- Art Mark & Sports Mark.
  - International school.
  - Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) bronze award.

Following consultation with staff and parents, the school has set the following priorities for the development of information and data to support the school's accessibility plan:

- Development of pupil voice.
- Development of self-help group for parents facilitated by the school.
- Increased co-operation with multi professional teams.
- Increasing emphasis of teacher training and inclusive practise with University of Chester.

### **Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum**

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, schools have had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This plan sets out the school's proposals to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum:
  - To increase the access to externally accredited qualifications for all pupils but particularly post 14.
  - To increase the opportunities for work related learning including work experience for post 14.
  - To develop ICT access for PMLD pupils.
  - To increase participation in 1:1/small group communication and interaction workshops to develop these skills.

All staff have received basic training in supporting pupils with special needs, differentiated teaching etc. Specific needs training e.g. manual handling and child protection take place. Specific curriculum needs training e.g. behaviour, PECS are regular and ongoing.

- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

- Continue to improve the school building to enable a wide range of pupils to have full access to the curriculum.
  - Develop capacity within the local education community to widen curriculum opportunities for Dee Banks's pupils especially in mainstream primary settings.
  - Develop further partnerships with Chester schools to enable pupils on role at Dee Banks to have access to specialist facilities e.g. domestic science/science/sports.
  - To further develop partnerships with West Cheshire college to provide specialist environments for both vocational and leisure courses.
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.
  - To research and if possible, develop the school website to provide information in a variety of formats including Writing with Symbols, simplified text, spoken word information and pictorial sequencing of information.
  - Provide web signposting for activity sites for our pupils.
  - Further use of adapted materials e.g. sex education, health education.

The plan will be reviewed every 2 years by the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Board. Resources are constantly being sought by the fundraising mandate for improvements in the areas covered by the plan.

## **Background information**

### **School demography**

There are currently 110 pupils with a wide variety of learning difficulties and disabilities including a significant number with physical disabilities. None of the staff are registered disabled. Several parents have learning difficulties or additional needs.

### **Site characteristics**

The school site has been thoroughly surveyed and regularly upgraded to make it accessible to the whole school community. In recent years there has been a rebuilding programme which has greatly enhanced the facilities. The remaining part of the building has been the subject of a thorough overhaul and has been greatly improved to bring it closer to the standard of the new build. Work continues to be done to upgrade remaining areas. External signage has been greatly improved and disabled parking bays at the front and back of the school have been marked out allowing better access.

### **Priority Areas for development**

#### **Site**

- Making accessibility a priority in all new building plans and significant building refurbishments or changes of use.

## **Making it happen**

### **Management, coordination, and implementation**

- The Governing Board takes responsibility for the school accessibility plan and sets a clear direction for it within the full governing board meeting
- The plan will be reviewed and revised every 2 years to allow for budget priorities and these will be brought to the Full Governing Board for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- Clear priorities will be set within the School Improvement plan and Asset Management Plan which will be costed, and success criteria set.
- A variety of evidence e.g. questionnaires/consultation will be used to evaluate impact and success.

This plan should be looked at in the context of the following:

- School Improvement Plan
- Continuing Professional Development Priorities
- SEN policy
- Asset Management Plan
- Health and Safety Policies

Implementation will be set out within the school improvement plan or Asset Management Plan which will:

- Allocate lead responsibilities.
- Set out clear timescales.
- Identify the necessary resources, human and financial (including funding sources).
- Make clear what the anticipated outcomes are, with performance criteria where necessary.
- Build in review mechanisms and dates.

The school makes its accessibility plan available in the following ways:

- It is envisaged that this plan will be available via the school website and will be available through the school's internal intranet.