Accessibility Policy

Document Control Page

Revision History

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Introduction

Our school's mission statement talks of valuing the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. The school is committed to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010, including disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and age.

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 which states that all schools should have an Accessibility Plan. 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".

Definition of Disability

Disability is defined by the Equality Act (2010) as:

"*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.*"

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain

medical conditions when they have a long term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday lives.

Disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The school recognises its responsibilities under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In carrying out its functions, the school will have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between different groups.

Key Objective:
To reduce and, where possible, eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum and to enable full participation in Hatch Warren for pupils, staff, parents and visitors with a disability. Due to the multi-level nature of parts of the site, some areas present accessibility challenges. The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments and exploring practical solutions to maximise access wherever possible.

Aims

Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individuals or groups. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our stakeholders, and this of course includes those with disabilities.

- We will ensure that pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled people to benefit from the education our school provides.
- We will not treat a person with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his or her disability.
- We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage.
- We will do our best to anticipate the needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities before he or she joins the school.

Principles

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is consistent with Hatch Warren Infant School's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of our Inclusion policy. We recognise our duty under Equality Act (2010):

- not to discriminate against pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- not to treat pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities less favourably
- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage

- to publish an Accessibility Plan which increases access to education for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities

In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the Equality Act (2010).

At Hatch Warren Infant School we recognise and value parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

At Hatch Warren Infant School we provide all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Our accessibility plan covers all three main strands of the planning duty and details the changes required to our buildings and to other aspects of our school, so that we fulfil our legal requirements, and remove barriers to inclusion for all our stakeholders:

i). Improving the physical environment of school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities are able to take advantage of education and associated services.

This strand of the planning duty covers aids to improve the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes things such as steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs and furniture. Aids to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting and blinds.

Physical aids to access education also cover things such as ICT equipment, enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept key boards, switches, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor coordination and poor hand/ eye skills such as specialist pens and pencils.

At Hatch Warren Infant School we will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts whenever necessary.

ii). Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access and participate in the school's curriculum.

This strand of the planning duty is to help improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

At Hatch Warren Infant School we will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishment of the site and premises. We will also take individual needs into account when considering the deployment of staff and resources.

iii). Improving the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities.
This part of the duty covers planning to make information normally provided by the school in writing to its pupils and or parents – such as information about school events – available to pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities. This will include alternative formats such as Braille, audio tape and large print and also the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or sign language, or through a recognised symbol system or ICT. This information will be made available within a reasonable time frame and take account of the pupils' and parents' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats.

At Hatch Warren Infant School we will make ourselves aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

Linked Policies
The school's Accessibility Plan sits alongside the Equality Information and Objectives and should be read in conjunction with the Equality Policy, Behaviour, Policy, Admissions Policy, SEND Policy and Inclusion Policy.

Policy into practice

The Governing Body is responsible for the school's duty not to discriminate. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors jointly discharge the responsibility of ensuring that we meet our obligation not to discriminate.

The Headteacher will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception. All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents, governors or staff with disabilities.

Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues, so that we can work towards resolving them.

Monitoring

We have high expectations of all our pupils. We monitor a range of data to make sure that all pupils are making the best progress possible, and that no groups of pupils are underachieving.

We monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parental and pupil questionnaires.

Evaluations based on these data are then reported to the Governing Body, and an action plan will be drawn up if necessary.

Monitoring and review

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to ensure the school regularly reviews its processes and procedures. There are also dedicated Health & Safety, SEND and Safeguarding Governors to question and liaise with the named member of staff and other external agencies, to ensure that the school's procedures are in line with those of the LA.

The Headteacher implements the school's accessibility policy on a day-to-day basis, and ensures that all staff are aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them. The Headteacher reports to governors termly on matters regarding disability discrimination and accessibility.