



ST. MARY'S
ACADEMY TRUST

Queens Road Academy

Accessibility Strategy (Including Accessibility Plan)

Jan 2017

Signed *Paul Howarth* 10/1/17
(Chair of Queens Road Academy)

To be reviewed by Jan 2019

ACADEMIES' ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY - January 2017

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 and related Equality Duty 2011 reiterate the duty upon schools/Academies as laid out in the previous Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The accompanying guidance for St Mary's Academy Trust schools makes it clear that schools continue to have a duty to produce an accessibility plan.

Schools must implement accessibility plans, which are aimed at:

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

Queens Road Academy has regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them.

KEY PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

St Mary's Academy Trust will seek to ensure that schools within its jurisdiction do not disadvantage or discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

Disability: The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as "when a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". This broad description covers physical disabilities, sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and learning disabilities and also some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

The Act sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. **Long term** is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Schools: Queens Road Academy.

Discrimination: A public body (in this case, a school) must not disadvantage a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability. The interpretation of "discrimination" with in relation to disability in this accessibility strategy reflects changes specified in the Equality Act 2010.

There can no longer be justification for *direct discrimination* in any circumstances (under the previous Disability Discrimination Act, schools could justify some direct discrimination – if it was a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim).

This accessibility strategy also seeks to protect pupils against *indirect discrimination* – a school must not do something which applies to all pupils but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only.

Queens Road Academy will work closely with parents and school governors to agree reasonable adjustments, which will allow disabled pupils full access to school facilities and activities

Reasonable adjustments: In the Equality Duty 2011, the duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. For schools, this duty is summarised as follows and this accessibility strategy recognises and promotes these principles:

Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils, then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.

Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

In addition to having a duty to consider reasonable adjustments for particular individual disabled pupils, schools will also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils generally as it is likely that any school will have a disabled pupil at some point. It is important to note that the duty on schools to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory. Schools should not wait until a disabled pupil arrives before making or planning to make adjustments. This may be too late and could lead to a pupil being substantially disadvantaged, it is important therefore for schools to plan a broad range of accessibility improvements over time.

However, schools are not obliged to anticipate and make adjustments for every imaginable disability and need only consider general reasonable adjustments - e.g. being prepared to produce large font papers for pupils with a visual impairment even though there are no such pupils currently admitted to the school. Such a strategic and wider view of the school's approach to planning for disabled pupils will also link closely with its planning duties.

It will be for schools to consider the reasonableness of adjustments based on the circumstances of each case. (The Equality Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable). However, factors a school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements and whether aids should be made available from other agencies through the current Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) process under the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001. (The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the existing special educational needs (SEN) EHCP provisions).

Cost can play a major part in determining what is reasonable and it is more likely to be reasonable for a school with substantial financial resources to have to make an adjustment with a significant cost, than for a school with fewer resources.

What would be a reasonable "adjustment" is often a matter of judgement and, wherever possible, should be decided by agreement between the Trust, local authority, the school and parents/carers e.g. the right of a pupil to attend a school of their choice (within the context of BMBC's admissions procedures) should be balanced with the responsibility of the Trust to make the most efficient use of its resources.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KEY PRINCIPLES

Queens Road Academy has an accessibility plan which is regularly reviewed (see Annex A). This is the responsibility of the QRA governing body. As part of this regular review, schools will also need to have regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them.

An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school strategic and operational plans. It must be freely available to parents/carers.

Publishing, in the context of the Equality Duty, can be interpreted as making the school's accessibility plan widely and easily available, E.G. on the school's website. Hard copies are available on request and, also on request; the school is prepared to make available versions of the plan which would be accessible to parents with different communication needs (including English as a Foreign Language). Written information for disabled pupils needs to be given in formats that

take account of their specific disabilities and the views expressed by the pupils and their parents about their preferred means of communication.

Queens Road Academy, as a minimum:

- Physical access to all areas of curriculum (this may not be 100% of the school building).
- Suitable parking and entrance to the school.
- A changing facility for pupils.

QRA recognises that there is a likelihood of a continuing need for minor adaptations in schools to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Monitoring

Trust monitoring visits to school will include a question regarding the schools accessibility policy and their implementation of the Equality Duty 2011.

Publicising this Accessibility Strategy

This Accessibility Strategy will be publicly available on the Queens Road Academy website.

Please note: the Trust acknowledges that it is the intention in the Equality Act 2010 that Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils. Schools will (when provisions are implemented) be under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through Special Educational Needs (SEN) EHCP. The accompanying duty will not be introduced until a later date to allow time for planning and informed implementation). Annual review of this accessibility strategy will make the necessary adjustments when this duty is introduced.

QRA ACCESSIBILITY PLAN Jan 2017-2019

Queens Road Academy

Introduction/Context

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful.

This plan seeks to address the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and to further the aims of our Vision Statement by:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided, and
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

We recognise the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will review annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

Definition of disability

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one. A disabled person is someone who has a

Physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included.

If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoverers and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

Note: It is likely that Trust schools will at some point have disabled pupils, staff members and service users.

Associated policies and plans

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

- School vision statement
- School Strategic Plan
- Safeguarding and child protection Policy
- Equality policy
- Special educational needs policy
- SENd core offer

- Curriculum policy
- Teaching and learning policy
- Behaviour Management policy
- Building security policy

Monitoring & Review

The plan will be monitored through the Queens Road Academy Governors and St. Mary's Academy Trust and may be monitored by Ofsted during inspection processes. 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 & Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010.

The Accessibility Plan will be reported on annually in respect of progress and outcomes and provide a projected plan for the three year period ahead of the next review date.

Approved:

Date: Jan 2017

Review Date: Jan 2019

**Queens Road Academy Accessibility Plan - 2017:
Improving the Curriculum Access, Physical Access or Delivery**

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME/RESPONSIBILITY
Training for staff in the identification of and teaching children with Speech and other specific learning difficulties.	<p>All staff attend appropriate training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autistic Spectrum difficulties • ElkLan • Lego therapy • Visual impairment • Dyslexia support <p>Outreach provision from external agencies.</p> <p>SENd leader training and qualification</p>	<p>All staff are familiar with the criteria for identifying specific needs and how best to support these children in the classroom.</p> <p>SENd leader qualification</p> <p>Accurate provision maps</p> <p>Useful pupil profiles</p> <p>Pupils making appropriate progress from vulnerable groups</p>	<p>Autumn/Spring term 2016/17</p> <p>Inclusion leader, Send Governor, all teaching and specific support staff</p>
Review TA deployment	Match TA experience and skill set to pupil needs and identify gaps in provision with CPD	<p>Adult support is available during key times that individual children may need support e.g. lunchtimes, PE lessons, extracurricular activities</p> <p>CPD for staff on inclusive pedagogy</p>	<p>Reviewed annually as part of school self evaluation and as a part of performance management process</p> <p>Senior leadership team/SENdCo/TAs</p>
Meet the needs of community	Parent voice demonstrates that they know/aware of the progress of their child	<p>Provision /induction of new to school pupils well met.</p> <p>Use of learning book informs parents of early curriculum progress</p> <p>Use of NASSEA stepped assessment guidance</p>	<p>EYFS leader</p> <p>Senior leadership team</p>
Access to wider areas of school grounds	<p>Ensure DDA compliancy to areas such as the pond and school allotment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve steps visibility to playground and allotments • Wildlife area access amendment to fence and decking 	<p>Pupils with any identified need are able to move appropriately and have use of the entire school site</p> <p>PEEP's in place</p>	<p>Carillion and FM</p> <p>School senior leadership team</p>

