

Accessibility Policy

Ratified by the Governing Body – December 2017

Reference

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all types of discrimination that are unlawful. Schools as well as the Local Authority have to carry out accessibility planning for students with learning difficulties and or disabilities.

The definition of disability under the law is a wide area. A disabled person under the 2010 Act is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect upon their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

1. Our vision and aims

The Wey Valley School wants everyone within our school to feel welcome, valued and included in the school community. We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment to enable this to happen.

Our students are provided with high quality learning opportunities so that each child achieves all that they can. We want all our students to feel confident and have a positive view of themselves.

We want our students with a disability to access all elements of school life, including school clubs, activities and trips. We recognise that we may have to do things a little differently to make this happen.

We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010, by removing disadvantage faced by students with a disability and eliminating discrimination.

The Accessibility Policy and attached plans set out how, over time, a school will:

- a) increase access to the curriculum for disabled students;
- b) improve the physical environment of the school to increase access for disabled students; and
- c) make written information more accessible to disabled students by providing information in a range of different ways.

2. Other policies

Our Accessibility Plan complements and supports our:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and related SEN Information Report;
- policy for *Supporting students at school with medical conditions*; and our
- Equality Information and Equality Objectives.

It should also be read alongside the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Health & Safety Policy (including off-site safety)
- Policy relating to Behaviour
- School Improvement Plan

3. Current good practice

Identification

The Wey Valley School asks for information on any disabilities or health conditions in early communications with new parents and carers. We also carefully observe our students' progress and behaviour and will discuss any concerns with parents and carers, as necessary.

For students with Educational Health Care Plans in place and with complex needs we have an established system in place to support any transition. Where possible we are also able to visit students in their current educational setting and provide opportunities to visit the school in order to effect a successful transition into a new placement.

The school also liaises with a range of professionals including the Occupational Therapy Team, Hearing & Vision Support Service and the Mobility Training Officer to carry out an environmental audit which then identifies what specific adaptations and changes need to be undertaken to meet the needs of our students.

For students joining at the usual transition point in Yr 7 information is compiled through visits to the primary school, parental completion of admissions paperwork detailing any health care needs and a meeting with Carole Martin the Principal's P.A. at our Transition Evening

All teaching staff are aware of general medical needs through SEN Information and Health Care Plans. There is continuing professional development to ensure all staff have increased and up to date knowledge of the impact of a variety of conditions upon learning. E.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Epilepsy, Attachment, Sensory Needs, Diabetes

Curriculum

The Wey Valley School has improved access to the curriculum for disabled students through the following means:

- using multimedia activities and interactive ICT equipment (Interactive Whiteboards and iPads) to support specific curriculum areas, e.g. numeracy and literacy
- providing a differentiated curriculum, designed according to need and where necessary with specialist input, for those students that require this
- offering a Continued Professional Development (CPD) programme to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable of the impact of ASD, epilepsy and attachment disorder on learning
- organising classrooms so that they promote the participation and independence of all students
- staff INSET training regarding sensory impairments and the school environment;
- modification of worksheets and curriculum content into large font for students with a visual impairment (VI).

Physical Environment

- The Wey Valley School has already improved the physical environment of the school to increase access for disabled students by:
 - providing flat or ramped access to all school entrances;
 - dedicating 3 parking bays outside the main school entrance for students and families, and visitors with a disability;
 - providing an accessible toilet with shower and changing facilities (PE);
 - providing access to a disabled toilet in the main corridor near the school reception;
 - providing a dedicated family meeting room near the school reception;
 - adding highlighting tape on all thresholds and steps, and yellow paint to the edges of pathways for students with reduced vision;
 - ensuring that there is good lighting throughout school, making use of natural light where possible and reducing glare through the use of roller blinds in the hallway and classrooms;
 - removing and fixing of potential trip hazards and keeping all floor spaces uncluttered;
 - providing fabric blinds, curtains, carpets and rubber seals to doors to improve sound quality;
 - ensuring data projectors, plumbing and heating are regularly serviced and not too noisy wherever possible.

Information

The Wey Valley School already makes written information more accessible to disabled students through:

- modifying written information so that this is available in large print for students with a visual impairment;
- adhering to guidelines from specialists (such as the Hearing and Vision Support Services) regarding the presentation of all written information, paying attention to layout and colour;
- Ensuring that all staff have access to guidelines from Specialist Support Services in relation to the presentation of all written information
- Using social stories and picture symbols to explain school rules for students who benefit from this.

4. Implementation

Our Accessibility Plan shows how access to The Wey Valley School will be improved for disabled students (and for staff and visitors to the school) and anticipates how we will make reasonable adjustments to support them whenever possible. We will ensure that we do so within a reasonable timeframe.

Reasonable adjustments are positive actions that help students with a disability to fully participate in school life.

In doing this, we have thought about:

- how to ensure disabled students are as prepared for life as their non-disabled peers;
- how we can encourage students with a disability to take part in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and school visits;
- how we might provide auxiliary aids and services (something or someone that provides help or support) to students with a disability to support their access to the curriculum;
- adding specialist facilities to our school as necessary and improving the physical environment;
- how we can improve the delivery of written information, including making this available in various preferred formats and within a reasonable timeframe.

5. Monitoring

The Wey Valley School Accessibility Plan covers a three year period but will be reviewed regularly and updated if needed. It will be monitored through the Governors' Finance & Resources Committee.

The Governing Body will monitor The Wey Valley School's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility and Schedule 13 regarding Reasonable Adjustments) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.

The Wey Valley School's Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during Inspection processes in relation to Schedules 10 and 13 of the Equality Act 2010.

The Wey Valley School's complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

Approved Di Day (Chair of Governors)

DATE 4th December 2017

Review date *December 2020*