



ACCESSIBILITY, EQUALITY AND DISABILITY POLICY 2024



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Additional information	This policy is written with due regard to the Equality Act (2010).

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act (2010) to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the protected characteristics including: to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

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VISION STATEMENT:

Under the Equality Act 2010 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”. According to the Equality Act (2010) a person has a disability if:

- (a)** They have a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b)** The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The definition can include a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such

as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), physical disabilities, sensory disabilities, mental health illnesses and learning differences.

An impairment does not itself mean that a student is disadvantaged. It is the effect on the student's ability to carry out normal day to day activities that must be considered. The test of whether an impairment affects normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects one or more of the following: mobility, manual dexterity, physical co- ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand or the perception of risk of physical danger

LONG-TERM AND SUBSTANTIAL.

The expression "long-term" and "substantial" are defined as follows; "long-term" is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 12 months or more and "substantial" means "more than minor or trivial". The combined effect of these two terms is to include more people in the definition of disability than is commonly anticipated.

There is a significant overlap with students with special educational needs, though the definition of special educational needs does not cover all disabled children, for example; students with medical conditions, disfigurements and other impairments may count as disabled, but may not have special educational needs.

The existence of an impairment or condition does not depend on an official diagnosis. If the impairment is long- term and has a substantial adverse effect, it falls within the terms of the act whether there has been an official diagnosis or not.

It is unlawful for schools to discriminate against disabled students. A school discriminates if;
It treats a disabled student or prospective student less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability and without justification

- ✓ It fails, without justification, to take responsible steps to avoid placing disabled students at a substantial disadvantage

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan must be reviewed every three years and approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Head.

At Murray Park School we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment, underpinned by our values, where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that all children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

Our Aims are:

1. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability.
2. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment.
3. Improve the delivery of written information to pupils.

THE GENERAL DUTY

The General Duty requires schools to consider the six protected characteristics in the Introduction in all actions which they take. The key task is to consider the promotion of disability equality and making sure it is, over time, mainstreamed into all school functions.

This includes activities inside and out of the classroom as well as all other aspects of school life e.g. extended schools, school lettings, employment etc.

The general duty will build on existing responsibilities under disability legislation in relation to schools, including the duties to make reasonable adjustments and to plan strategically to increase access to schools over time. Schools can implement the general duty by actively reviewing all their policies, procedures and planned access improvements to remove barriers with a view to greater recruitment and retention of disabled staff; and greater participation of disabled students, disabled parents and disabled people in all aspects of school life, in the wider community and in the non-educational services they might provide. Schools will use the framework of the specific duties to structure their information gathering and action planning in relation to the duty. Involving disabled people and where appropriate both

disabled parents and parents of disabled children in setting the school development plans and conducting the daily running of the school is likely to be necessary for the general duty to be effectively met.

CURRENT GOOD PRACTICE:

We aim to ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers. The school then ensures that an adaptations or requirements are in place prior to the young person starting our school. If this is not possible then as soon as possible after the young person has started school. Regular contact with the school Nurse, the community paediatrician or any other health care professional that is involved with the young person is maintained at all times and a dialogue with all parties involved with the wellbeing of the young person a priority.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives.

Murray Park School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

Murray Park's Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

1. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the non-disabled peers; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits - it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
2. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding

specialist facilities as necessary - this will cover improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable time frame;

3. Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

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

1. Behaviour Policy
2. Curriculum Statement
3. Admission Policy
4. Equality Plan
5. School Prospectus
6. School Improvement Plan
7. Special Educational Needs Policy

The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the governing body. The Accessibility Plan will be monitored by the SEND Governor.

The School will work in partnership with the Local Authority in developing and implementing this Accessibility Plan.

The Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act (2010).

Approved _____

Date _____

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extra-curricular activities present particular challenges, for example: lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction difficulties, after-school clubs for pupils with physical difficulties, school trips for pupils with medical need, but the school works hard to overcome these challenges and provide all children with the same opportunities. There are no parts of the school to which disabled pupils have limited or no access to.

CURRICULUM

There are areas of the curriculum to which some disabled pupils may have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, science and technology for pupils with a visual impairment. We are aware that other issues may affect the participation of disabled pupils, for example; peer relationships, policies on the administration of medicines, the provision of personal care, the presence or lack of role models or images of disabled people, in and around school.

As a school we take proactive action to ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum and examinations, ensuring no student with a disability or Special Educational Need is at a disadvantage in any way. All screening and testing for any students requiring access arrangements in examinations is carried out at the end of Year 9 and applications are made to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

INFORMATION

Different forms of communication can be made available to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is planned, with a range of different formats available for disabled pupils, parents and staff.

ACCESS AUDIT

The main building is an old building, but improvements and adaptations have enabled it to be accessible to all. A disabled toilet is available in the main building. A ramp gives wheelchair access to our mobile building through the fire door.

The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked.

MANAGEMENT, COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The management co-ordination and implementation of disability and accessibility plan is the responsibility of the SENDs. The Site Manager and Director of Finance will provide support and guidance.

The SENDCO oversees the day-to-day provision for all students with disabilities and/or Special Educational Needs. Murray Park School will consult with experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced. The Governors and Head teacher and SENDCO will work closely with the Local Authority as required.

DATA PROTECTION & GDPR

Data will be processed in line with requirements and protections set in the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).