St Helena School Accessibility Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

St Helena School is a diverse and inclusive community that focuses on the wellbeing and progress of every student and where the members of our community are of equal worth.

We value diversity and seek to give everyone in the school an equal chance to learn. Our guiding principle is to identify and break down possible barriers to learning so that all students 'achieve their very best'.

St Helena School will be a centre of excellence in learning, where all students, including those with disabilities, are supported and challenged to fulfil high ambitions.

The school's SEND policy and local offer play a substantial role in guiding the school's developing provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities.

2. CONTEXT

The Accessibility Plan addresses the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice of September 2014. These acts place a responsibility on the Governing Body to ensure that the school is socially and academically inclusive. In particular, the Equality Act requires the school to develop a plan to show how it will develop services in the following three areas:

- *To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum.*
- *To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure disabled students are able to take advantage of education and other benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.*
- *To improve the delivery of information to disabled students, so information is as available as it is for students who are not disabled.*

3. AIM OF PLAN

All students will have access to appropriate qualifications and will develop the skills and resilience to meet the demands of work, family and community life. Students will demonstrate empathy and confidence to work with others to achieve a better future.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this plan are:

- To ensure all disabled students are fully involved in school life and are making good progress.
- To identify barriers to participation and find practical solutions to overcoming these.
- To work collaboratively with disabled students and their parents/carers to create appropriate provision, including robust EHCPs where appropriate.
- To increase the confidence, sensitivity and expertise of teachers and support staff when teaching or supporting a wide range of disabled students.
- To meet the requirements of the Equalities Act and the SEND Code of Practice in respect of disabled students.

5. DEFINITIONS

Definition of Disability (Equality Act 2010): "A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to perform normal day-to-day activities."

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND Code of Practice September 2014) - A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of the kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. This will include students with medical needs.

6. THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

This plan summarises our development priorities in the three areas specified by the Disability Act (see introduction above). The school is also committed to making reasonable adjustments for individual students to ensure all students can be involved in every aspect of school life, in partnership with their families, and that barriers to learning are removed.

TO INCREASE THE EXTENT TO WHICH DISABLED STUDENTS CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM.

Students with SEND (special educational needs or disability) are given access to the curriculum supported by the school's specialist SEND provision and in line with the needs of the individual and the wishes of their parents/carers. Every effort is made to educate students with SEND alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENDCO consults the student and parents about proposed flexible arrangements.

The school curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy, Local Offer and SEND Report outline the provision the school already has in place to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This includes:

- Identification of SEND at a very early stage through close liaison with Primary Schools, supported by individual provision maps, One Plans and the SEND register.

- Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs/disability of any student in their charge, including sharing progress reports, medical reports and student/parent feedback.

- Listening to student and parent/carer views and considering them in all aspects of school life.

- Awareness raising programmes for all students about the range of disabilities in the school, in particular creating a very supportive base for each disabled student within their tutor group.

- Regular training opportunities for staff on SEND and appropriate teaching and learning strategies.

- Increasingly specialised in-class support or guidance from trained TAs (Teaching Assistants).

- Specific specialist intervention to build skills (particularly for literacy and numeracy) in small groups and/or adapted timetables.

- Specialist advice from other professionals (e.g. speech and language therapist, school nurse, occupational therapist, hearing impaired service, physiotherapist) on how to adapt the curriculum and teaching strategies for individuals.

- Special access arrangements for internal and external exams.

- Specific target setting and monitoring to ensure all students with SEND make at least sufficient progress and accelerated progress in intervention groups.

- Ready access for parents to staff, with partnerships supported by planned structured conversations and ongoing home-school liaison.

- A structured and dedicated Year 6/7 transition programme for vulnerable students.

- Specialist advice and guidance to support Year 8/9 and post 16 transition.

- Multi-agency support coordinated by the school's Student Support team

TO IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE SCHOOL TO ENSURE DISABLED STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EDUCATION AND OTHER BENEFITS, FACILITIES OR SERVICES PROVIDED OR OFFERED BY THE SCHOOL.

The school environment already incorporates many features to ensure accessibility to students with disabilities. These include:

- A lift giving access to the Learning Resource Centre and first floor of the Science block.
- Disabled toilets in a variety of locations around the school.
- External ramps are in place to allow access to all blocks.
- The Science toilet facilities do not have a main door to negotiate on entry to the main toilet area.
- There are evacuation chairs and designated refuge points in the event of fire /fire drill. All members of the Premises Team have had moving and handling training to ensure safe use of the evacuation chair.
- A baby's changing room is accessible in the school.

In addition, teachers are given advice on how to move and arrange furniture, how to manage lighting, noise and visual stimulus, how to create visual timetables etc., so that individual student's needs are met. Similar attention is given to how students' needs can be met on school journeys and visits through One Plans and Care Plans.

TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF INFORMATION TO DISABLED STUDENTS, SO INFORMATION IS AS AVAILABLE AS IT IS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT DISABLED.

Teachers and TAs consider the needs of each SEND student and provide accessible learning resources for them. The increasing use of Interactive Whiteboards/Touchscreens and other digital technologies have diversified the ways in which information is presented to all students. Visual and audio information is now as common as written information.

In addition, the school makes the following available as appropriate:

- Differentiated resources with particular attention to reading age, plain English, images and layout.

- Laptops and other digital technologies.

- Coloured overlays for text.

- Tactile resources.

- Readers and/or scribes in exams, where appropriate