

## Sandford Hill Primary School

# Accessibility Policy and Plan



School website: [www.sandfordhill.org.uk](http://www.sandfordhill.org.uk)

Email: [office@sandfordhill.org.uk](mailto:office@sandfordhill.org.uk)

Policy written by:	M Allen/J Wildgoose
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## *Thoughtfulness And Respect*

### **School Ethos, Vision and Values**

#### **1.1 Mission Statement**

At Sandford Hill Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for:

- Children with disabilities in relation to education and associated services;
- Staff with disabilities in relation to employment rights, conditions and opportunities;
- All parents and members of the local community with disabilities in relation to additional services offered by or at our school.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel confident about disclosing their disabilities in the certain knowledge that they will receive a positive and supportive response which facilitates their full participation in the full range of activities offered by our school.

In particular, the achievements and participation of children with disabilities will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We will make reasonable adjustments in relation to teaching and learning and wider aspects of school life to make sure that the educational environment is as accessible as possible.

We will use our accessibility planning duty to reflect, as required, on meeting the needs of the school with regards to:

- access to the curriculum;
- access to information for both children and their parents; and
- access to the school buildings, its facilities and amenities for all.

We will seek to foster a positive response to disability among all members of our school community and to eliminate bullying, harassment or the less favourable treatment of people with disabilities wherever and whenever it is likely to occur.

At Sandford Hill Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in and visit our community. In making this assertion, we subscribe to the social model of disability.

#### **1.2 Background Information ~ Definition of disability.**

The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The Disability Discrimination Act of 2005 has extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

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### **The Duty**

The Disability Discrimination Act of 2005 places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard to the following when carrying out their functions as employers, as providers of education and associated services and as providers of services to the wider community. At Sandford Hill Primary we adhere to the DDA by:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA;
- Eliminating harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

This general duty is also known as the Disability Equality Duty (DED).

A specific duty under the 2005 legislation requires all schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme and an associated action plan covering a three year cycle. This is the substance of the rest of this document.

### **1.3 School Strategic Priorities**

At Sandford Hill Primary, our vision is to develop positive relationships and nurture thoughtful, respectful, aspirational, resilient and co-operative pupils who:

- Think and care about others within the school community and beyond
- Value that everyone is different
- Aim to be the best that they can be
- Work hard and are willing to learn by trying and making mistakes, in order to succeed
- Work collaboratively and with consideration for others

We strive to provide equality of opportunities for all children and are an inclusive school. The broad and balanced curriculum and the extra-curricular activities we provide help all children to have a sense of achievement which raises self-esteem and hence attitudes to their own learning.

Our school motto of "Thoughtfulness and Respect" promotes the positive attitude we should have towards each other. This ethos permeates throughout the school and can be seen in all relationships, especially children's attitudes towards someone with a disability.

The Duty enhances our Anti Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Accessibility Plan.

### **1.4 Strengths and Weaknesses**

Strengths:

- i) As stated in 1.3, we promote positive attitudes and a caring ethos.
- ii) We communicate with parents and ensure all adults involved are aware of the support needed by individual children/adults.
- iii) Appropriate resources are provided to enable all to access the curriculum.
- iv) Ramps are put in for access to the main building.

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- v) We have good communication with outside agencies e.g. signing person/physiotherapists.
- vi) We have partitioned the Foundation Stage block to reduce the noise levels and support those with speech, language and communication difficulties.
- vii) We have a stair lift installed from the ground floor to the upper floor.
- viii) Handrails are provided: from the car park leading to the school; up the rear steps to the top playground; in toilets, where required.
- ix) All external steps have yellow painted strips to aid visibility of hazard.
- x) The new classrooms are fully DDA compliant.

### Weaknesses:

- i) The building is a 2 storey building, with the hall on a middle floor and, therefore, has many stairways. A stairlift provides disability access to the middle and 1<sup>st</sup> floor, but is on a main circulation route and therefore presents a hazard due to the time taken to go between floors.
- ii) There is a disability toilet on the middle floor, accessible by stair lift, but is one of only two adult toilets for 55 staff. Two further disability toilets are now provided in the two new blocks – Block A, a separate block at the front of the school and Block B, off the rear of the hall, however, any class with a child who has a physical disability requiring access to a toilet would need to be constantly placed in one of these two blocks for the duration of their school life.
- iii) Wheelchair access into and out of the main school building is via the front reception or caretaker's entrance only.
- iv) There is no capacity to have a separate area in the foundation stage to provide a calm, safe environment for children with ASD and associated difficulties.
- v) Due to the open-plan nature of some teaching spaces this could cause an issue for some hearing impaired children.
- vi) Access from the lower KS2 playground to the upper KS2 playground is not possible for wheelchair users, due to steps and the steep gradient.

## **2.0 How we will meet the General Duty and Specific Duty.**

The production of this disability equality scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty, i.e. to produce a Disability Equality Scheme for our school.

We endeavour to provide equal access to all aspects of the curriculum where specific needs are identified; these are met by introducing appropriate systems/resources to a learning environment which will enable the pupil to reach his/her targets. When appropriate, we will positively discriminate, to involve such children in extra-curricular activities.

Disabled parking for visitors is limited and often adapted to meet individual needs due to the site constraints and split level access issues. This is under regular review, with the hope of a more permanent designated parking area close to side door access and the availability of a Disabled Toilet. Visitors are notified prior to or on arrival, where a disability is made known to the school.

To ensure children with disabilities have access to all events in and around the school day, extra support will be provided, as required.

## **2.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Accessibility Plan.**

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When reviewing the plan, the parents/carers of any disabled children on role and any relevant staff will be invited to take part in a discussion meeting. A 'signer' will be provided for profoundly deaf parents, if required, as their input will be invaluable in the production of the Action Plan. The Health and Safety Governor will monitor the actions and effectiveness of the plan, identify progress and suggest new areas for development. The Inclusion Leader will invite disabled parents or children of disabled parents to offer feedback as part of the monitoring process.

### **2.2 The Governing Body**

All governors now have a responsibility to monitor inclusion as part of their more focussed curriculum lead role. This helps to ensure that inclusion is considered as a high priority in all aspects of school life.

The Health and Safety Governor, Mr Chris Austin, has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of this policy.

### **2.3 Removing Barriers (See Accessibility Plan)**

Our school building, being on 3 levels, is not easily accessible for the physically disabled, as there are many staircases and/or slopes. There is sufficient capacity to facilitate access to a ground floor classroom, but toileting would prove an issue. Adaptations have been made to a nearby downstairs cloakroom to ensure that we are able to meet the medical and personal care needs of children who use a wheelchair.

There would also be a problem if several disabled children were in different year groups as the ground floor and the two new blocks are the only accessible classrooms on a day-to-day basis.

All children have equal access to the curriculum. The level of support staff enables movement across classes when and if the need arises. Parents are invited to support external visits and access is readily available for any extra-curricular activities. Newsletters are mailed electronically, but are available in paper form. Text messages, using a specific work mobile phone are used to ensure deaf parents have equal access to the information and signers are provided at meetings/open evenings, where requested.

### **2.4 Disability in the Curriculum, including teaching and learning**

The ethos within school promotes 'Thoughtfulness and Respect' towards each other (our school motto), based on establishing strong relationships across all stakeholders. Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) lessons promote discussions of a variety of topics including disability issues. We endeavour to promote the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum, assemblies, resources, books, stories, etc., in order to develop awareness and understanding of different people's lives and circumstances.

### **2.5 Eliminating harassment and bullying. (see Anti-bullying Policy)**

Verbal discrimination against anyone is dealt with firmly and procedures in our anti-bullying policy will be followed.

### **2.6 Reasonable Adjustments**

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Sandford Hill makes every effort to provide reasonable adjustments for children and adults with disabilities, including:

- Inclusion Team staff time being used effectively to ensure there is equality of opportunity;
- The timetable being adjusted to suit individual needs;
- Time being made available for the specific individual needs of children;
- Parents being involved in supporting their child with out of school activities or, where appropriate, school trips;
- Children with dietary requirements having a school meal, wear a badge which is recognised by all staff. Menus are provided to cater for individual needs;
- Specific resources and equipment being provided to ensure there is equal access to the curriculum, e.g. the lease of new wheelchair friendly minibuses (2019);
- Adapting areas in school to meet the individual needs of children with specific needs, e.g. nurture areas.

### **2.7 School Facility Lettings**

- As previous, disabled parking is limited and often adapted to meet individual needs due to the site constraints and split level access issues. This is under regular review, with the hope of a more permanent designated parking area close to side door access and the availability of a Disabled Toilet.
- For events such as Voting Day, an appropriate classroom is chosen for easy access by disabled persons.

### **2.8 Contractors and Procurement**

- Accessibility for disabled workers to the school building is discussed with contractors when needed.
- The disabled toilet is also pointed out to them.

### **2.9 Information, Performance and Evidence.**

#### a) Pupil Achievement

All children's achievements are tracked. Regular formative assessments help us to target particular groups/individuals and intervention strategies would be put in place to support individual learning needs. The SENCO and Inclusion Leader focus on the achievements of children on the Special Needs register which includes those children with disabilities. During parent/SENCO discussions, parents' needs are also identified.

#### b) Learning Opportunities

Our Equal Opportunities Policy ensures all children have equal access to the curriculum and extra activities are used to support the quality of their education.

#### c) Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions

We are an inclusive school and offer an appropriate provision for all. Prior to admitting any child with a disability, multi-agency meetings are held to ensure that all the child's needs can be met in advance of them starting. A plan would then be put in place and implemented to facilitate a smooth transition.

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Internal transition arrangements encourage parents to view their child's new classroom and meet their teacher. The Nursery offer home visits during the first week in September, where specific needs are discussed. There is also a phased entry into the Nursery to ensure children feel safe and secure. KS1 and KS2 children also have a phased entry so that the Inclusion Team can ensure our facilities meet those previously used.

External Agencies (e.g. Occupational Therapist) are invited to re-assess the new environment and offer guidance, where appropriate. For external transitions, the SENCO meets with the new school and arranges visits.

For Y6 pupils with a disability, the SENCO meets with the High School SENCO, the child and parents, to discuss individual need. Pre-transition day visits can be arranged if required. Transition plans for individual children are tailored to specific need with relevant schools.

### d) Social Relationships

Our school motto of "Thoughtfulness and Respect" promotes care and respect for each other. We encourage children to support each other in and out of the classroom, regardless of differences. Friendship groups are encouraged. Promoting care and respect into the wider community is also pro-actively sought through links with other organisations such as Douglas Macmillan and Marrow House (local Nursing Home for those with dementia and the elderly).

### e) Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

All disability rights of children apply equally to staff. When necessary, a phased return back to work following absence is provided, ensuring all needs are met.

### f) Training for staff

Staff attend training relevant to their role and the specific needs of the children in their care. Medical and specific learning disability training has included: anaphylaxis, epi-pen, diabetes, asthma, ASD and dyslexia.

## **3.1 Impact Assessment**

- A working group will discuss facilities / resources provided and will make recommendations for any improvements. They will also evaluate the Action Plan.
- School times could be adjusted when appropriate, to facilitate specific needs, e.g. Attendance – mornings only.

## **Accessibility Plan**

### 1a) The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

As an inclusive school, we strive to ensure that all children, parents, staff and visitors have equal access to all areas of the curriculum, the physical environment and information, regardless of physical ability/disability.

We aim to:

- Provide the best education we can for all our children, ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Provide parents and visitors with appropriate information so that individual needs can be met.

### 1b) Information from pupil data and reviewing school provision

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- A review of current and additional provisions will be carried out by relevant staff as the needs of individual children or adults are identified;
- School Support Plans and Pupil Passports are provided and any physical needs are met through the plan, ensuring equality of access to the curriculum. Risk assessments and accessibility audits are carried out annually by relevant staff, as required.
- Support staff will be identified and relevant training will be provided.
- Inclusion Team members will support children with behavioural / emotional needs.

### 1c) Consultation proposals for developing the plan.

Governors - The Health and Safety Governor will maintain the overview of the plan, review implementation and identify potential further improvements with senior staff, perhaps when touring the school. In addition, consideration of the impact within subjects will be taken by all governors with inclusion as part of the monitoring role. The full governing body will be presented with the draft plan as part of this policy for approval.

Parents - Communication with parents whose child has a physical disability will be sought to ensure the child is made to feel safe and secure. Relevant parents will be invited to comment on the proposals.



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<b>A. Access to the Curriculum including teaching and the wider curriculum of the school, e.g. after school clubs, leisure and cultural events or school visits.</b>				
	<b>Target</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Evaluation Goals achieved</b>
1.	Expand the provision for children with social and emotional needs.	1. Provide a wider range of more practical activities. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting;</li> <li>• Cooking;</li> <li>• Caring for animals;</li> <li>• Design technology</li> <li>• Sensory area</li> </ul> 2. Develop a library of child-friendly story books. 3. Continuous CPD and development of resources to support children with specific learning needs	Spring/Summer 2021 ready for Autumn term 2021	
<b>B. Access to the physical environment including physical aids to access education.</b>				
	<b>Target</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Evaluation Goals achieved</b>
1.	To ensure that all signage and instructions are in place.	Sign "Disabled Access This Way" at entrance.	Summer 2021	
2.	To ensure that all proposed future building developments exceed minimum requirements for DDA compliance.	Work closely with building professionals to take full advantage of	Jan 2021 onwards	
3.	Allocate areas to meet the needs of specific groups of children.	1. A defined quiet space for speech and language interventions. 2. To provide a larger, better equipped facility to support pupils with social and emotional needs.	Spring/Summer 2021 ready for Autumn term 2021	

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4.	Improve provision for Disabled Parking	Once building work completed, consider appropriate positioning of disabled parking bay.	Summer 2021	
5.	Provide all-weather accessible sports facilities for all children including those in wheelchairs.	Procure an all-weather astro-turf pitch with easy wheelchair access.	Summer 2021/22	
<b>C. Access to information, including planning, to make written information available to pupils and their parents, taking account of pupil and parent disabilities and accessibility issues (e.g. EAL parents).</b>				
	<b>Target</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Evaluation Goals achieved</b>
1.	To ensure information is accessible for children, parents and staff in alternative formats.	Website set up with google translate for non-English speaking parents. Consider newsletter via website for translation.	Spring 21	
2.	To ensure that parents/visitors receive information about how to access support as necessary, when they wish to access the school. e.g. arrangements for wheelchair access when attending school.	To ensure that documentation sent out to parents/visitors gives details of updates to the school handbook and school prospectus to provide initial information re "accessibility".	Summer 21	
3.	To develop a greater involvement of parents/carers who have EAL.	1. To use the EAL teaching assistant to survey parents/carers of children with EAL as to improvements that could be made to accessing school information. 2. To implement, with their support, any practicable suggestions made.	Autumn 2021  Spring 2022	