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## The Gilberd School

### Accessibility Policy and Plan

#### Introduction

It is our intention to remove, as far as we can, those barriers which make it more challenging for children and young adults with a disability to take part in the day-to-day life of our school and benefit from the educational experiences and services we provide.

We aim to ensure that our school is a welcoming place that understands and responds effectively to children and young adults with disabilities. We recognise the importance of a review and planning procedure associated with continuous development and improvement.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'*.

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Some specified medical conditions such as HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children/young people and those with SEND.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people.
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability.
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.
- Schools are allowed to treat disabled children / young people more favourably than non-disabled children / young people, and in some cases are required to do so, by making

reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with children / young people without disabilities

- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.
- The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.
- School governing bodies and proprietors must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

#### **Other relevant legislation, regulations and guidance;**

- Children & Families Act (2014)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- The Special Educational Needs & Disability Regulations (2014)
- The SEND Code of Practice (revised April 2015)
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2015)
- The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 & 3
- DfES *"Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils"*
- The Education Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003

#### **This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

- Equality Policy and Plan
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Health & Safety (including off-site safety) Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Sex and Relationships Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy and the school's SEND Information Report
- Student Code of Conduct
- Concerns and Complaints Policy

Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Responsible
<b>Equality and Inclusion</b>			
Accessibility Plan and Equality Statement becomes an annual agenda item at Governors Meetings.	Clerk to Governors to add to the list of required publication details.	Adherence to current legislation.	Clerk to Governing Body.
Ensure that equality and inclusion issues are incorporated into policy making.	Review policies with staff and Governors.	Policies reflect adherence to current legislation.	The Governing Body.
<b>Physical Environment</b>			
Ensure that all areas of school buildings and grounds (including the new builds) are accessible for all children and adults and to continue to improve the access of the physical environment for all where reasonably possible.	Health and safety Coordinator and site staff to audit accessibility of school buildings and grounds. Local Governing Body to check accessibility and then produce an Action Plan if any areas require it.	Any modifications needed will be made (if reasonable and practicable to do so) to the school building and grounds that are needed to facilitate ease of access for all.	Site Manager Health and Safety Manager Finance Manager
Ensure any proposed 'new build' project is physically accessible for everyone.	Project/Site Manager appointed will ensure compliance with building regulations regarding accessibility.	Any new construction will be fully accessible.	Project/Site Manager Health and Safety Manager Finance Manager

Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Responsible
<b>Curriculum</b>			
To deliver a broad curriculum that fosters inclusivity and reduces barriers (both physical and discriminatory) for all students but particularly those with SEND.	Regular curriculum review and diversity audit.  Ensuring that the curriculum offer meets the needs of all students regardless of SEND.	All students able to access a curriculum that meets their needs and gives the best outcomes for social mobility.	Deputy Headteacher Curriculum  SENCO  All Middle Leaders
Continue CPD for teachers and support staff on Quality First Teaching and adaptive teaching for students with SEND	Review the needs of children with specific issues, provide all relevant CPD from SENCO.  Ensure up to date and adaptive 'assess, plan, do, review' cycles as documented on One Plans.	All staff trained and confident with issues linked with accessibility and inclusivity with regards to accessing the curriculum. We recognise that this is an on-going process, and that needs and expertise will change with time and emerging policy.	Deputy Headteacher – curriculum  SENCO  Middle Leaders
A range of co-curricular school activities are planned to ensure they are open to the participation of all students irrespective of need (where this is practicably possible).	Review all out of school provision to ensure compliance with legislation.  Adapt school activities or offer alternatives so that all students have the opportunity to participate in activities appropriate to their needs.	All out of school activities will be conducted in an inclusive manner with providers that comply with current and future legislative requirements. This includes supporting our students with medical needs (see separate policy). We understand that it is not always possible for students with disabilities to engage in every activity in the same way as their able-bodied peers; adaptations should allow the broadest possible participation of students with disabilities.	Deputy Headteacher Curriculum/Pastoral  SENCO  VETS committee

Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Responsible
<b>Curriculum</b>			
Classrooms are optimally organised with appropriate additional equipment provided (where required) to promote the participation and independence of all students and adults as far as is practically possible within the constraints of the existing building.	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and specialist equipment to support the learning of individuals with disabilities.	Students with disabilities (and those without) are able to access lessons without the disruption caused by having to adapt unprepared classrooms at the beginnings of lessons to accommodate the needs of individual students.	Finance Manager Health and safety Manager Middle Leaders
Access arrangements to meet individual's needs when taking tests etc will be applied for and support provided when required.	The SENCO and Deputy Headteacher will ensure appropriate testing and ensure reports are provided in order to apply for examination access arrangements.	All pupils will have their individual needs met, and school will attempt to remove barriers to assessment access.	Deputy Headteacher Curriculum SENCO
<b>Written/other information</b>			
Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents/carers in alternative formats where requested.	Review all current school publications and school website and provide accessible formats for those who require them.	The school will be able to provide written information in accessible formats when required for individual purposes.	Finance Manager SENCO Office Manager
To continue improving communication for any hearing or visually impaired member of the school community.	To maintain and update systems to support access for these members of the community.	Pupils and parents and visitors who are hearing or visually impaired to be better able to access verbal or written information.	SENCO Health and Safety Manager Office Manager Finance Manager