



ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT AND PLAN

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Review Cycle:	Every 3 years
Author:	GCA
Committee:	Resources

Legislative background

The Equality Act 2010 states that 'schools cannot lawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation'. In order to meet this requirement in the context of disability, the Act states that all schools must have an accessibility plan. They must also ensure that they are meeting their accessibility duties under the public sector equality duty and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice 2024. An accessibility plan is listed as a statutory document by the DfE in its latest guidance on mandatory policies for schools and academy trusts, issued in September 2019 and updated on 3 August 2021.

This guidance should be read alongside KNGS policies on Equality, SEN and disabilities, Teaching learning and assessment and Behaviour.

Nature of accessibility plans

The plan must show the current accessibility of all areas of the site and how future access will be improved for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities. It should also demonstrate how far the school curriculum is available to all pupils/students irrespective of aptitude or disability. Where disabled pupils are placed at a substantial disadvantage in either respect, schools must consider whether any reasonable adjustment can be made to overcome that disadvantage. This must be done within a reasonable time frame and in ways that are determined after taking account of the pupil's disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents/carers. The DfE's statutory SEND advice 2014 states that a school's accessibility plan should reflect its intention in three areas in order to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided by the school.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

These three tenets form the overarching framework of any accessibility plan. The law requires that the plan is reported on annually and reviewed every three years. The trust board is free to delegate approval to a committee of the board, an

individual governor, or to the headteacher/principal. The current plan is included within the body of this document.

Implementation of the plan

Key starting points should be assessments of:

- The nature of the school population to whom the plan will apply.
- The nature of the school – its size, its plans and priorities, its physical structure and environment.
- The pupils/students already in school.
- The nature of the future intake.
- The level of staff awareness of equalities legislation.
- The presence of disabled pupils/students and their participation in the life of the school.
- The impact on disabled pupils'/students on the way in which the school is organised – for example, timetabling, school policies and practices around the administration of medicines, access to teaching and learning, school trips etc.

Involvement of disabled pupils/staff

The plan should be informed by:

- The views and aspirations of disabled pupils themselves.
- The views and aspirations of their families.
- The view of other people and organisations associated with disability.
- The priorities of the local authority (LA).

Because every school site and layout is different and the numbers and needs of disabled pupils can vary considerably from school to school, it is not entirely possible to produce a detailed model plan that would suit every setting – any access plan will of necessity be very specific. Instead, the policy below includes the items which should appear in any plan, followed by a series of suggested headings which can be modified, amended to suit the circumstances of any school.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN FOR KINGS NORTON GIRLS' SCHOOL & SXITH FORM

Aims of the plan

The purpose of this plan is to show how our school/ intends, over time, to continue to increase accessibility to the curriculum, the physical environment and written information, so that all pupils/students with a disability can take full advantage of their education and associated opportunities in the school community.

We define our disabled pupils as:

- Those with physical disabilities, including ambulatory, dexterity, visual and auditory difficulties as well as hidden disabilities such as diabetes and other chronic conditions.
- Those with learning, emotional, social, behavioural and mental conditions as well as hidden disabilities such as dyslexia and autism.

At Kings Norton Girls' School we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational learning environment where all students can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. As a **mainstream school we aim** to provide high-quality inclusive education and use our best endeavours to meet all pupils' needs. We believe that each and every one of our students should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

The school aspires to follow a fully accessible and inclusive curriculum and provides an environment in which all can flourish and be valued regardless of their educational, 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.

Objectives of the plan:-

- To ensure all disabled pupils/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 with disabled pupils/students and their parents or carers to create appropriate provision, including education health and care plans where relevant.
- To increase the confidence, sensitivity and expertise of staff when teaching or supporting a wide range of disabled pupils/students.
- To meet the requirements of the Equality Act and the SEND code of practice in respect of disabled pupils/students.
- To reduce or eliminate where possible the barriers to adults with a disability, be they staff, parents, carers, governors or other users, to ensure their full potential in the life of the school and enable full use of the facilities available.
- To monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
- To provide appropriate support and provision for employees with disabilities to ensure they can carry out their work without barriers.
- To undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

The Equality Act 2010

Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with our school aims and equal opportunities policy as well as our SEND policy.

The trust board has full regard to the Equality Act 2010 when carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

All those who work in the school as employees or volunteers recognise their duty under the Equality Act 2010:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in admissions or exclusions, or in the provision of education and associated services.
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably.
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.
- To publish an accessibility plan.

Key staff and governors

- The member of the senior leadership team with oversight of special educational needs and disabilities is Gemma Cartin. She has completed the Mandatory SENCO qualification.
- The lead member of staff is the SEND co-ordinator, Gemma Cartin, who is responsible for
 - The special needs register.
 - The welfare of all SEN and disabled pupils/students.

Opening a world of opportunity

Headteacher: Mrs N Raggett

- Appropriate training for staff.
- Ensuring that the accessibility plan is implemented.
- Monitoring its effectiveness in meeting disabled students' needs.
- All teaching and support staff involved in the teaching and learning of SEND pupils receive regular ongoing CPD on inclusive practices.
- A named governor (Kate Wright) is responsible for ensuring that the trust board has a termly update on SEND pupils at a full board meeting and an annual report on the improvements achieved for disabled pupils under the accessibility plan.

Our plan is based on the three main tenets of the DfE statutory advice 2014

Increased access to the curriculum

At Kings Norton Girls' School, accessibility is embedded within our whole-school self-review processes to ensure it remains central to our strategic development. Through regular evaluation of teaching practices and curriculum intent, implementation, and impact, we actively identify and address barriers to inclusion. This ensures that our curriculum is ambitious, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of all learners. This includes learning outside the classroom through activities such as after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and school visits.

We make every effort to educate students with disabilities alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible the SEND co-ordinator consults with the professionals, student and their parents/carers about proposed flexible alternative arrangements.

Areas on which we intend to concentrate in the next three years include:

- Better early identification of the needs of disabled students and staff awareness of these.
- Regular training of staff on aspects of SEN and disability in the school and developing appropriate teaching and learning strategies.
- Raise awareness for all students about the range of disabilities in the school.
- Continue to embed mechanisms to listen to views of SEND students and their parents/carers and consider them in all aspects of school life.
- Specific specialist intervention where needed for all SEND students
- Specialist advice from other professionals.
- Special access arrangements for internal/external exams.
- Learning Support Team training needs are reviewed as part of the annual appraisal process to ensure needs are met for a changing cohort.

Improved access to the physical environment of the school

The school carries out an accessibility audit every three years in advance of reviewing this policy. The audit is carried out by the SEND team and the school health and safety officer.

Teachers are given advice on how to move and arrange furniture and how to manage lighting, noise and visual stimulus, etc. We also give attention to how students' needs can be met on school journeys and visits.

Constraints – Kings Norton Girls' School has a relatively old building with some uneven floor surfaces and some steps and stairs. The school will take reasonable measures to ensure access. However financial, practical and design constraints do apply. There is a Learning Assistant who has main responsibility for ensuring the access of students with physical disabilities, any needs are discussed with the Site and Business Manager prior to implementation.

Areas on which we intend to concentrate in the next three years include:

- Decoration of the environment to highlight changes in levels across the site to include handrail and step colours
- Classroom layouts to be reviewed to ensure furniture allows for easy movement for students with disabilities
- Consider how learning environments are adapted to reduce sensory barriers and promote engagement. This includes consideration of lighting, noise levels, classroom layout, and visual stimuli, as well as the use of sensory-friendly resources and strategies.

Improved delivery of information to disabled students

Teachers and school staff consider the needs of each disabled pupil/student and provide accessible learning resources for them. We continue to monitor and review how to ensure digital resources are made accessible. The increased use of interactive whiteboards and other assistive technology have diversified the ways in which all students received information.

Areas on which we intend to concentrate in the next three years include:

- Use of reading pens raising awareness of font sizes and page layout for pupils with visual impairments through use on one page profiles
- Appropriate examination access arrangements such as reading pens, etc.
- Coloured overlays for texts.
- Developing the resources within the learning hub to ensure the availability of large font and audio books.
- Auditing signage around the school.
- Ensuring all school staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities.

Adult users

Many of these improvements will also benefit disabled adults working at or associated with the school as well as disabled family members of pupils, staff and governors. They will also enable more disabled adults to have access to the school premises through wider use.

Review

The accessibility plan has the status of a policy of the trust board and must be reviewed every three years. The views of disabled students and adults will feed into the review