

Meppershall Church of England Academy

Accessibility Policy

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Governor	TBC

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Introduction

Schools' duties around accessibility for disabled pupils

Schools and LAs need to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. These are the same duties as previously existed under the Disability Discrimination Act and have been replicated in the **Equality Act 2010**.

Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requires the governing body to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to; and
- prepare and publish a Disability Equality Scheme to show how they will meet these duties.

Accessibility Plan

This **Accessibility Plan** and the accompanying action plan forms part of the **Disability Equality Scheme** and sets out how the governing body will improve equality of opportunity for disabled people.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the DDA to cover education, so since 2002 the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils under part 4 of the DDA.

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favorably for reasons related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage including potential adjustments which may be needed in the future.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA.

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

It is a requirement that the school's **Accessibility Plan** is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is an action plan, (Appendix 1) showing how the school will address priorities identified in the plan.

This plan incorporates the school's intention to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

In drawing up the **Accessibility Plan** the school has set the following priorities:

- To provide safe access throughout the school for all school users, irrespective of their disability.
- To ensure that the teaching and learning environment and the resources used are suitable for all staff and pupils, tailoring the requirements to suit individual needs.
- To provide training to all staff regarding the needs of disabled people and how to provide assistance to enable them to enjoy the school experience as fully as possible.

At Meppershall Church of England Academy we are committed to establishing equality for all pupils, their parents, staff and other users of the school. This is reflected in our school aims, which state:

Meppershall Church of England Academy aims:

- To provide a safe, secure, stimulating and supportive atmosphere where each child is valued
- To nurture children towards positive self-worth, self-confidence as learners and to help each mature socially and emotionally
- To secure an inclusive learning environment and to support individual pupils
 - i)* with special educational needs
 - ii)* with disabilities

It is the responsibility of the whole school community to implement this scheme in a manner which promotes the inclusive ethos of our school.

According to the Act a "disabled person is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". The effect must be substantial, long term and adverse. The DDA definition of disability covers physical disabilities, sensory impairments and learning disabilities.

Meppershall Church of England Academy is committed to equal opportunities and inclusion. This strategy should be considered alongside the following school policy documents:

- Disability Equality Scheme
- Special Educational Needs
- Equal Opportunities
- Inclusion

This plan considers the following areas as identified in the introduction:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum by securing relevant staff training and ensuring appropriate classroom organisation
- Improving the physical environment of the school such as ramps and handrails as well as physical aids to access education such as specialist desks and ICT equipment if required

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

The school SEND policy ensures that staff identify, assess and arrange suitable provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. Working with the LA and Educational Psychology Service, the SENCo manages the Statutory Assessment Process, ensuring additional resources are available where appropriate.

The school Pastoral Team provides additional support for pupils and supports teachers in implementing strategies for improving pupils' behaviour and access to learning.

The school works closely with specialist services including:

- Hearing Impaired Children's service
- Visual Impairment Advisory and Support Service
- Occupational Therapists and physiotherapists
- Speech and Language Therapy

Improving access to the physical environment of the school

This element of the Planning Duty covers all areas of the physical environment such as external areas, buildings and fixtures and fittings.

The aim is to continue to enhance the environment to meet the needs of all pupils and ensure that they have access to all aspects of education offered by Meppershall Church of England Academy.

The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through Governing Body committees and reported to the Full Governing Body.

Appendix 1

Main points in our plan:

Access to the curriculum:

- The overriding principle is to provide full curricular access to all pupils who have been allocated a place at Meppershall Church of England Academy.
- The identification of barriers to participation in all areas of school life must be a priority and where necessary, adjustments should be made to the curriculum and teaching methods.
- Individual teachers are responsible for accessing the class SEN data, making appropriate use of information provided by the SENCO teacher and identifying probable areas within their class where pupils could experience difficulties.
- The Head of School should identify staff development needs to improve their ability to meet the needs of pupils and include these within the performance management systems.
- Links should be developed with agencies that can extend the expertise of staff and extend the learning experiences of pupils
- All staff should feel confident in their ability to deal appropriately with every pupil. They should be able to identify when a child is not suited to an activity, and have an alternative available.

Access to the physical environment

- Where a risk assessment has been undertaken, relating to a pupil with a disability, subject staff should implement the recommendations within their own teaching environment.

- Pupils who have difficulty accessing standard size print should have this fact identified on, or prior to admission, and this information will be given the class teacher who will become responsible providing appropriate resources for that child.
- Children working with Braille and visual equipment will be catered for through appropriate in class support, and the advice and practical support of the visual impairment team.
- Each pupil with SEN will be reviewed, with support from the SENCO, parents and other agencies where appropriate, to ensure that the pupil's needs are being met.
- The SENCO will support the class teacher in ensuring that individual requirements for enhanced scripts are met.
- Staff must ensure that the specific needs of every pupil has been met by forward planning of every lesson, and the production of differentiated material to meet identified needs.
- Consideration must be given to the text presented to pupils, considering the need for simplified versions where this is appropriate.
- The use of Interactive Whiteboards, projectors and TVs must be considered in the context of pupil's disabilities. Recognition must be given that some formats, whilst beneficial to many pupils, will not be appropriate for all. An alternative strategy should be sought where a child has difficulty accessing the material.