

West Oaks School Accessibility Plan and Assessment

Rationale for an accessible School

Vison Statement

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if: (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. West Oaks School will support pupils to overcome any barriers they encounter to ensure they can access a rich and full education.

Introduction

This Accessibility Plan is drawn up in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 which replaced all existing equality legislation such as The Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) was extended to include education by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and subsequently in 2002 the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. West Oaks School will support pupils with medical conditions in full compliance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Department for Education document ‘Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, December 2015’

West Oaks School recognises the following duties that this places upon them;

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- To plan to make reasonable adjustments to the school buildings, so that there is an increased access to education for disabled pupils and to make the school buildings more accessible for disabled persons.

The planning duties of the DDA makes three requirements of the Governing body:

1. To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
2. To improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
3. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Key Objectives

To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

Principle compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is consistent with the school's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEN policies; The school recognises its duty under the Equality Act:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of associated services
- Not to treat any pupil less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting any pupil at a substantial disadvantage
- To publish an Accessibility Plan The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Education and related activities

In order to accommodate the needs of individuals and achieve the key objective, the school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LEA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS.

Arrangements for an Accessible School

1. Providing an accessible and safe learning environment

An accessible and safe learning environment is necessary for all students. West Oaks School acknowledges the additional challenges our students encounter and with these in mind, those we encounter when making provision for the diverse range of disabilities and learning difficulties our students

Health and Safety Review 2016 Ref: IB OCT 2016/Review 2 23/01/2018 Ref: Govs/IB present. West Oaks School maintains a continual process of review to ensure accessibility is a priority within our provisions, making reasonable adjustments to premises used for teaching or other activities for our students.

The starting point is the following accessibility audit and assessment, a review of the physical site accessibility around the car parking areas, the reception and entry to the schools and any additional or external buildings. Our aim is to remove any potential barriers and put in place reasonable adjustments for these to be overcome, providing access to all appropriate resources, support and activities by our students.

2. School strategic and logistical planning and thinking through the issues

Our staff community are involved in the planning and development of an appropriate curriculum and optimum teaching environments. Class group locations and facilities required by our students are planned at all levels throughout the school year with buildings development planning around accessibility taking a priority. Areas which have recently been extensively refurbished and developed to ensure appropriate accessibility and access to specialist facilities include:

- A new and modern school build located at our Woodhouse site which takes account of all current legislation, guidance and good practice regarding accessibility with input from the full range of building design and teaching professional's

2.1 At our Boston Spa Site:

- Fitness suite
- Hygiene areas
- Tracking hoists
- New Reception area
- Specialist toilet and changing provision within teaching areas
- In-house minibuses
- Outdoor learning areas
- Outdoor recreation areas
- Ramp access to buildings
- Automatic doors around the school building
- Magnetic holding devices for door sets in circulation areas
- Specialist equipment including: tables and feeding aids to ensure all pupils can access the dining room

2.2 Considerations of different school locations, built and natural, in which pupils are taught and which must be conveyed to school staff and incorporated into any school policy and guidance information.

Health and Safety Review 2016 Ref: IB OCT 2016/Review 2 23/01/2018 Ref: Govs/IB

- Will a student have any difficulties getting to the locations or taking part in teaching and learning activities once there? How far is the journey to teaching areas and key areas of school where regular daily access is required. Is there a lot of walking/wheelchair movement involved? Is it up steps or changes to the ground level, Could some students experience fatigue.
- Would it be better to move the class/activity to a more accessible location (i.e. one with adjacent car parking, a ramp access to the building, a ground floor room, a quieter location, access to a lift, or a nearby accessible toilet/changing area)?
- Are there likely to be any health and safety implications to both students and staff, particularly in practical learning environments and activities. Is there a policy/procedure to ensure effective emergency evacuation and clear exit routes?
- Are relevant staff aware of the evacuation procedures that are in place and what their personal responsibilities are? Where there are safe refuges for wheelchair users in case of fire (Woodhouse Site) when lifts cannot be used, do staff know where they are and what to do or how to operate the communication emergency intercom system?
- Will the student need support, such as from additional staff, a sighted assistant or a sign language interpreter? Have up to date PEEPs (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans) been completed and conveyed to staff. Will this have any implications for the way in which the learning environment is managed (e.g. lighting levels, storage, Furniture layouts, seating arrangements, alarm warning systems)?
- Will a student need any specialist equipment (e.g. induction loop, audio recorder, CCTV) or adaptations to existing equipment such as installation of text-to-speech software on a PC? How will these be provided?
- Can any adjustments be made to the room to make it more accessible to people with a range of disabilities (e.g. providing extra lighting, more electrical sockets for specialist equipment users, a portable induction loop, an additional table for positioning an omni-directional microphone for a loop or radio aid system, height adjustable chairs, sufficient turning room for wheelchairs, installing a carpet to improve acoustics)?
- Can any adjustments be made to furniture and equipment used in areas of school?

3. Success Criteria

3.1 Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum and disabled staff can feel secure working within the West Oaks workforce

- All policies clearly reflect inclusive practice and procedure
Clear collaborative working approach with parents/carers and outside agencies
- School staffing, ICT, Innovation and creativity strategies evident in classroom practice
- Variety of learning styles and multisensory activities evident in planning and in the classrooms.
- Ensuring that the needs of all disabled pupils, parents and staff are represented within the school.
- All children making good progress
- To ensure that disabled parents are not discriminated against and are encouraged to engage with the school community and be involved in their child's education
- Governors fully informed about SEN provision and progress

3.2 To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of their education and associated services.

- Enabling needs to be met where possible.
- Lively and inviting environment maintained.
- Inclusive child-friendly play areas
- Continued management and reduction in the number of physical site related accidents
- Independent accessibility around the school site for pupils in wheelchairs
- Staff training and support for specialist provision e.g. Rebound, Sports...
- Development and maintenance of the access to external areas around the school sites
- Provide accessible and safe external teaching and learning areas to ensure all pupils can engage with the outside world and natural habitats

3.3 To improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils and parents

- Increase visits to the school website
- Introduction and take up of the schools cashless payment systems
- Use of podcasts to convey information to parents and eliminate issues associated with poor parental literacy skills
- Overcome language barriers and improve translation of information for parent/carers with poor understanding of the English language

Whilst it may not be possible to make all the physical teaching environment suitable for all our students and their disabilities and/or learning difficulties due to some issues being out of the schools control, or we are unable to make the environment safe or appropriate, we would consider delivering an alternative educational experience or activity at an alternative location.

West Oaks School
 Access Audit– Reception Areas and Entrance Lobbies (incorporating general access to site areas and car parks)

Name of Premises:	West Oaks School Boston Spa	Document Date:	12 th December 2015 Version 1 Reviewed January 2018
Address:	Westwood Way	Duty Holder Name:	Ian Buckland (On Behalf of A Hodkinson and Governors)
	Boston Spa, LS23 6DX	Audited by:	Ian Buckland

Description:		Main School Site	Date of Audit:	December 2015	
Ref.	Issue	Comments and Observations	Action Required	Action Completed	Completion Date
1.0	<p>a. Is there a clear view for visitors and the receptionist of people entering and exiting the school reception; particularly from the outside</p> <p>b. Can arriving people see obstructions and people exiting the building</p>	<p>The view of arriving visitors by the receptionist is generally good. There is an outbuilding attached to the school adjacent to the Reception entrance which could obscure the view of persons walking out of the school building from both the reception and the Kitchen area potentially into the path of vehicles entering and exiting the building. A clear view by the receptionist of visitors buzzing the automatic gate is an issue</p>	<p>A convex mirror should be fitted to the wall opposite the reception window so that staff can see visitors trying to enter the school</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Completed Christmas 2016</p>
2.0	<p>a. Car park and entrance lighting</p> <p>b. A dramatic change in lighting may cause distress and confusion</p>	<p>Generally, car park and entrance lighting to the externals of the building is good. High level lighting has been disconnected with low level flood lighting installed around the building perimeter and over all external building doors and ramps</p>	<p>Inspect the lighting operation routinely and ensure a balance of light is maintained around the building. Ensure the lights are on in the entrance to the reception at all times the school is occupied. Respond to Seasonal Daylight changes to times</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
3.0	<p>a. Does access into the reception area make it easy for all persons, particularly wheelchair users and persons with impaired mobility and sight to enter the building</p> <p>b. Is the pedestrian route to the reception from the gates accessible to all persons (as above)</p> <p>c. Is the route to the building separate from vehicle routes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous assessments identified the need for automatic doors. This work has been completed for the three sets of doors on three different sides of the main building including the front and rear main entrances. • The reception area is generally maintained in a neat order though is often obstructed by deliveries and empty boxes not removed to the bins • There is ramped access to the main entrance • Most of the pedestrian routes are clear. There can be issues as the 	<p>The management of pedestrian routes should continue with any new front of house staff trained and informed of the need to be aware of visitors and staff parking in a manner which could obstruct any route for pedestrians and wheelchair users.</p> <p>The obstruction from delivery items etc. should continue to be addressed</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Checked Daily</p> <p>The school has employed an additional fulltime member of the facilities support staff team to assist with portaging duties. Deliveries are distributed as quickly as they reasonably can.</p>

	<p>d. Are pedestrian routes clearly identified and separated from adjacent hard standings and vehicle routes</p>	<p>result of cars parking onto the pedestrian route running alongside the building to the reception.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A zebra crossing and yellow dropped kerbs are installed linking the far pedestrian route to the main school building • Passenger assistants are employed to assist pupils in accessing the school building safely during the morning drop off and afternoon pick up on home/school transport. • The lobby itself does have adequate space for wheelchair users and those with partial sight and/or mobility. • The signing in table is at optimum height for all users 	<p>as a management issue and the procedures for storage of such items reviewed</p> <p>The school has had 2 fire safety audits by the emergency services in 2015 and 2016, Whilst there were no major issues raised, in line with their advice the school continues to monitor and manage access and circulation routes to ensure they are maintained clear at all times and free of obstructions</p>		<p>The refurbishment and changes made to the school reception area helps with the management of this area with this responsibility being a part of the admin coordinator located in the new reception.</p> <p>This refurbishment work has made the reception clear and easily accessed and identified by visitors with the receptionist always in full view. The reception desk was lowered to ensure easy access for wheelchair users.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Lobby area a. Does the inner door meet the same criteria as the outside door?</p>	<p>Security can be an issue if the inner doors are hooked open. All school staff and auxiliary staff should be continually aware of the need to hold doors open but also close the doors after those requiring additional assistance have entered or left the building</p>	<p>This area was incorporated into the review and redesign of the Reception area in 2016 with improvements made increasing general</p>	<p>Ongoing monitoring</p>	<p>Mostly completed Summer 2016 Security of the inner reception doors leading to</p>

	b. Can the lobby allow use by wheel chair users		accessibility around this area Consider removing the inner set of main school entrance doors.		the hall altered to improve security within the reception lobby. Lower reception desk installed to allow wheelchair users equal access
5.0	Is the signage appropriate in the car park area and to indicate where the school reception can be found?	New school signage installed Jan 2011.	This should be reviewed at Easter 2017 Speed warning signage completed 2016	Some completed 2016 Main school signage - No	Speed warning signage installed to make the access to the reception safer for pedestrians and disabled drivers using the car park areas Easter 2017
6.0	Has the reception desk got an area to greet wheel chair bound visitors	The Receptionists meets and welcomes visitors personally	Following a review and refurbishment as the result, the Reception area was redesigned in 2016 to better meet the needs of the school community	Yes	Work completed Summer 2016
7.0	Is an induction loop fitted to assist visitors with hearing deficiencies	This is to be dealt with by the authority though no further communication has been received recently. We were advised this was to be dealt with soon	Awaiting the LA to advise of the planned installation	No	TBC
8.0	Is a telephone provided	Telephones are installed throughout the school. Assistance is provided where required and identified in individual PEEP data. Any person who may require additional assistance	All school staff to be aware of individuals needs when they visit the school. This should be covered in staff training sessions	Yes	Ongoing

		to function appropriately in the school is identified at an early stage			
9.0	<p>Waiting area</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is seating area firm and supportive 2. Is there space for wheelchairs 	<p>The area was redesigned in 2016 A fish tank was removed to improve space and access Seating currently under review but meets the requirements of this plan. Screen removed temporarily-Oct 2016</p>	<p>Review Easter 2017 of seating and furniture</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Completed Summer 2016</p>
10.0	<p>Is information given about how to use other parts of the building by appropriate signs and by tactile information</p>	<p>Visitors are always accompanied by staff members or, staff are close by to assist. Signage is currently being reviewed</p>	<p>Review of signage and reception procedures will be advantageous.</p>	<p>Yes but requires development</p>	<p>Emergency exit signage reviewed and completed Summer 2016 in line with Emergency services audit in 2015</p>
11.0	<p>Are surfaces suitable</p>	<p>Generally, this standard is achieved though some closer attention to this detail during the planning of school refurbishment should be maintained. All floor coverings when renewed are non-slip/slip resistant</p>	<p>Offices with laminate flooring should be considered for carpets being fitted</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>ongoing</p>
12.0	<p>Is access to all school buildings suitable</p>	<p>The school is addressing these issues as it refurbishes the schools estate and as part of planned school buildings development. Ramps are installed to outside buildings and some building entrances. These were installed and some redeveloped to provide better and compliant access to the buildings. The outside garden areas are currently being developed which includes a large investment in suitable access to the areas.</p>	<p>All access areas to and from buildings and teaching areas form an integral part of the schools building development plans. Remedial works were completed during the summer 2017 to the black Rubber path to create better and safer access with the focus being to ensure pupils, particularly those independent and in wheelchairs do not fall as the result of not following the path to its endpoint.</p>	<p>Some but must remain a continual area of review and development</p>	<p>Works completed Summer 2017</p>

			This work should also prevent damage from vehicles driving over		
13.0	Is general access into the building from the car park areas suitable	<p>Generally, the area is suitable with the general condition of the surfaces acceptable. Paths have been resurfaced and flagged areas removed though some still exist but are in good condition. Some recent building works left an area damaged and with poor accessibility. This was repaired During Spring 2017</p> <p>There are some tarmac areas that had suffered minor damage from vehicles and through age.</p>	<p>Flaws to the tarmac surfaces should be inspected regularly and as part of a caretakers weekly schedule. Significant increases to the damage or obvious trip hazards should be repaired as a matter of urgency</p>	Yes	<p>The holes in tarmac areas which created a trip hazard have been repaired during the Summer 2016</p> <p>The black rubber path area to be repaired as soon as funding becomes available. Target: Easter 2017</p>
14.0	Is access across door thresholds suitable	<p>There is a programme in place to replace doors and frames that have suffered severe deterioration as the result of weather and age. All new doors are being installed with no threshold such could impede access, these are initially on the external buildings. Main building is being included as part of the school building development plan</p>	<p>Continue to develop these areas as the building is developed and refurbished. 2 x New doors were installed to the Woodpecker Cabin in October 2017. These provide better and more secure access to this area</p>	<p>Yes Further development work to the Woodpecker Cabin to be reviewed for completion Summer 2018</p>	Ongoing
15.0	Improve physical environment of school environment	<p>The school will take account the needs of pupils, staff and visitors and any physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings</p>	<p>Continue the school development taking account of these priorities.</p>	Yes - Ongoing	Ongoing

Duty Holder Name:	Ian Buckland	Auditor Name: Signature:	Ian Buckland
Signature:	Ian Buckland	Date:	23/01/2018
Date:	23/01/2018		

Monitoring and review

This policy has been approved by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years or in the light of new guidance from the Department for Education or Local Authority.

Signed (Vice Principal):

Signed (on behalf of the governors):

Date: