Buckler's Mead Academy

Policy Document

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

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Author:	Matt Wood
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Buckler's Mead Academy
Accessibility Policy

Background Information

This Access Policy pays due regard to government law, including the Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014) Part 3 which links into the SEN Code of Practice (2014) (and to past legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995, the SEN and Disability Act 2001; and it also incorporates aspects of the Buckler's Mead Academy Development Plan.

This **Accessibility Policy** is divided into four sections:

Section 1: Access to the Curriculum - for students

Section 2: Access to Pastoral Support - includes the principles of past national initiatives, including 'Every Child Matters' (ECM) and aspects of the 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' (SEAL) - for staff, parents and students

Section 3: Site Accessibility - for staff, parents, students and the wider academy community

Section 4: Access to Information - for staff, parents, students and the wider academy community

This Access Policy details plans and initiatives, how these are monitored, reviewed / evaluated, and how these evaluations are developed and embedded into academy systems and practice.
This Access Policy is an 'umbrella' document: it encompasses existing policies and development plans, implemented and monitored by a range of teachers, the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Directors.

The Policy is reviewed each year by the senior leadership team, with individual responsibilities for specific sections of the Policy as noted; it is also reviewed by the Board of Directors.

Section 1: Access to the curriculum

This section of the Access Plan is monitored by the Deputy Headteacher, who leads the heads of department and monitors Departmental development plans. Aspects of the curriculum are also managed by the Assistant Headteachers (Head of Key Stage 3 & 4).

Students across the Key Stages have an appropriate (differentiated and personalised) curriculum to fit their needs. The following documents/policies support this aim:

- **Academy Development Plan**
- **Individual Departmental Development Plans**
- **Statement of Curriculum**
- **Policy for Assessment**
- **Gifted and Talented Statement**
- **Special Educational Needs Policy**
- **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy**

Principal features of Buckler's Mead Academy are:

- Within their teaching teams, Heads of Department regularly monitor students' progress. This is linked to a fortnightly meeting with a member of SLT. There are links with Heads of Year to determine appropriate curriculum of specific students.

- Children classified as 'Pupil Premium' are identified, and their curriculum progress is tracked and supported by Depts., Heads of Year and members of the Senior Leadership Team. Interventions at subject level are recorded and monitored at SLT meetings as well as at Department meetings. Similarly students' attendance is monitored by Form Tutors and Heads of Year meetings with a member of SLT.

- At Key Stage 3, students are sometimes taught in their mixed ability Year groups; the composition of the groups is carefully determined (from primary schools' data and can include information from parents) at the beginning of Year 7. Responsibility for monitoring Tutor Groups, curriculum development and academic demands lies with the Heads of Year as well as Heads of Department.

- Progress Reviews (teachers' reports) are reviewed by the Heads of Year, Tutors and curriculum subject leaders; a range of staff contribute to tracking and documenting students' progress, to allow for appropriate interventions, evaluation and modification, as required. At each assessment point for each year group, the Data Officer sends to Heads of Year and SLT the record sheet where every student's target is shown and progress ranked. Heads of Year then plan interventions as appropriate in conjunction with Form Tutors. All teachers are able to view the progress of their students. Whole academy tracking tables are also updated at assessment points by SLT and Heads of Dept. to identify emerging trends and take appropriate action.

- At Key Stages 3 & 4 students are taught according to ability/aptitude in Maths, English and Science. At Key Stage 4 there are high ability groups in English, Maths and Science, with broad banding in the option subjects.

- There are guided choices for Year 8 students choosing KS4 courses: discussions with students, parents, Learning Support, curriculum leaders and Heads of Year.

- At Key Stage 4 the curriculum is increasingly personalised: students choose two / three / four options at GCSE, in addition to core subjects (English, Maths, Science, IT, RE and one of either History or Geography). Students identified at working significantly above the expected ability range in Maths also study Further Maths and the most able Scientists study 3 separate Science GCSEs.

- Science study GCSE Core and Additional Science. Students in Year 10 will follow Edexcel Combined Science (the equivalent of 2 GCSEs) or separate science, (the equivalent of 3 GCSEs). In KS3, students follow a 2 year Programme of Study covering all aspects of Science. In Year 9 students are prepared for GCSE study and can also access additional teaching re-enforcing the curriculum covered in Years 7 and 8.

- The most able students are identified by prior attainment data, and by subject teachers to the more able Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, with curriculum development, enrichment and extension activities made available to them in addition to a programme of support, mentoring and intervention.

- Data from primary schools, reading and spelling tests inform differentiated mainstream classroom teaching and Learning Support interventions, together with information from parents, students and professionals.

- Learning Support interventions at Key Stage 3 are informed by reading and spelling tests for Year 7s: individual and very small group teaching in Learning Support for literacy; and reading and spelling boost interventions for specifically identified and monitored students.

- There are various Learning Support interventions at KS4 to provide a differentiated and appropriate curriculum for identified students: these include controlled assessment support in Science, 1:1 literacy and numeracy support.

- As appropriate, vocational courses can be accessed by individuals.

- Students with medical needs, who are unable to access the academy full-time, may receive tuition from the South Somerset Partnership Schools.

- Throughout KS4, and selectively for KS3 students, through whole academy data and Learning Support specialist testing, students are identified for Access Arrangements (exam concessions).

- The Inclusion Department manage sections of the curriculum for identified students (usually short-term interventions, but for a very few there can be longer-term interventions) including school-refusers, students returning to the academy after exclusion or from medical absence, or who are on part-time timetables due to documented medical reasons or long-term absence.

Section 2: Access to Pastoral support

The lead teacher monitoring this section of the Access Plan is the Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion), working with the Pastoral team, tutors Year Heads and Outside professionals, such as the Educational Psychologist (EP), Behaviour Support Service (BSS), Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), who support the academy, contribute additionally to this work.

Pastoral support enshrines the principles of Every Child Matters and aspects of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) agenda. Students across the Key Stages have access to appropriate pastoral support dependent on their age and specific needs.

The Academy's various separate policies contribute to supporting these aims:

Attendance Policy
Drugs Policy
Policy on supporting students with medical conditions
Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Special Educational Needs Policy

Principal features of Buckler's Mead Academy are:

- Three Designated Child Protection staff on site

- Looked After Children are identified and monitored (linked to county professionals and following county guidelines)

- Children classified as 'Pupil Premium' are identified and their curriculum progress is tracked by HODs and the Senior Leadership Team

- Children who act as 'Young Carers' are identified and monitored (linked to county professionals).

- Behaviour Improvement Plans, Risk Assessments and Pastoral Support Plans monitor and support students.

- The Internal Exclusion Centre (IEC) manage behaviour modification programmes for identified students (usually short-term interventions, but for a very few there can be longer-term interventions), including school-refusers; as an alternative to exclusion; students returning to academy after exclusion or from medical absence.

- County Educational Psychologists closely support the work of the academy, and of individual students, as required by their needs

- Careers and Work Experience Co-ordinator, support students from Year 8 onwards with work-related learning and planning for the future

- Developed links with primary partnership schools: early identification of individual students' needs, allowing for effective planning and support for transfer of Y6 students into Y7 (for tutor group placement, SEN initiatives, pre-transfer visits)

- Links to GPs and local NHS mental health services (CAHMS) closely informs support for specific students / work generally in supporting students

- Pastoral staff are able to give information and advice to parents on how to support their child as needed.

- SEAL activities and tutoring enables support among the pupils, across year groups, to develop without specific staff interventions

- Attendance is monitored daily and parents are contacted on the first day of absence. Heads of Year liaise with students with lower attendance and support with the provision of work and reintegration packages

- Restorative Justice meetings take place to resolve issues between students

- Exclusions are kept to a minimum – when returning from exclusion students are met and expectations re-established before returning to lessons

Section 3: Site Accessibility

Responsibility for this section of the Access Plan lies jointly with the Headteacher, Business Manager, Assistant Head (Inclusion) and the Premises Manager, with contributions from a range of professionals supporting the academy and from individuals within the academy.

It is recognised that the historic physical environment of Buckler's Mead Academy presents considerable difficulty for students with disabilities. It also needs to be acknowledged that in the past, considerable Local Authority funds were strategically awarded to two other Yeovil secondary academies for this purpose, but no funding was allocated to Buckler's Mead. Currently, this presents immense problems as substantial building enhancements would be needed to adapt the site (to make it wheelchair accessible throughout, for example). Developments of this nature are limited by the use of internal targeted funds. Within this constraint and in the hope of long term central funding, it remains important that we do our best to improve the situation.

Students, staff, parents and visitors to the academy have an equality of opportunity to access the curriculum and we aim to make all areas of the site accessible where possible. Where buildings cannot be adapted, changes will be made to the curriculum - typically this will mean re-rooming to accessible accommodation.

The following policies support these aims:

Equal Opportunities Policy
Premises Development Plan
Academy Development Plan
Fire Risk Assessments and the **Fire Safety Action Plan**
Health and Safety Policy
Lettings Policy

Principal features of Buckler's Mead Academy are:

- the annual audit of the site, using County Council's Health & Safety advisory service

- health and safety issues identified and addressed on a continuous basis by a range of people / systems within the academy - including the use of accident reporting systems, access to an on-line site maintenance portal, a Health & Safety director representative and SLT in reviewing these procedures and activities

- risk assessments are written principally for two purposes: for activities and for groups of students; and for specific students (as generic for their time in the academy, and/or for specific activities, or to take into account their specific disability)

- risk assessments identify evacuation procedures for individual students whose movements are compromised by their disability (PEEPS)

- the medical condition of students affecting health and safety and site accessibility, compiled as a separate document by the SENCO, is circulated to staff in the academy on a need to know basis

- the medical conditions of staff affecting health and safety and site accessibility are known on a need to know basis by the Headteacher and related staff

- the Inclusion Department has the responsibility for ensuring that identified SEN students access all areas of the site within the health and safety guidelines

- outside professionals support the work of the academy, and the integration of specific students within mainstream classes

- Personalised Learning Tutors, on a day-to-day basis, monitor individual students' accessibility around the site.

Section 4: Access to Information

This section of the Access Plan is monitored by the Strategic Information Manager and School Business Manager, with support from the academy's administration team. The academy liaises with the Local Authority to ensure compliance with Local Authority and government statutes. Our aim is to ensure that students, parents, staff and visitors have access to the information that they need, with due regard to confidentiality.

Purpose of this policy:
This policy supports the legislative framework for responding to requests for information under the statutory access regimes established by:

- the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
- the Data Protection Act (DPA)

- the Disability Discrimination Act
- the Equality Act (2010)
- and other legislation that provides a right of access

In addition the Academy has its own policies on Data Protection and Complaints.

Responses to requests for information

- Relevant documents are posted on, and may be downloaded from, the academy's web site or hard copies may be requested at a small charge.
- Parents/students may request copies of student record files, including paper and electronic files. A small charge will be levied for administration and photocopying charges.
- Parents/students may not be given access to records which contain information on other staff/students which would breach our Data Protection Policy and/or the Data Protection Act
- All requests for information should be made, preferably in writing, to the Headteacher.
- Any complaints should be addressed through the Academy's Complaints Procedure, available via the academy website.

Information provided by the Academy

Students have access to information by:

- the regular reporting of students' progress by written reports from teachers
- feedback from their subject teachers (verbal and written) relating to their work completed in class, including at Parents' Evenings and Academic Review Day
- reviews from enhanced monitoring through Individual Behaviour Plans, Pastoral Support Plans, and PsPs.
- the SEN review process
- representation on/by the Student Voice

Parents have access to information by:

- the regular reporting of their child's progress by written reports from teachers
- teachers' written comments in students' books / letters and emails to parents; telephone conversations
- talking to teachers and support staff at Parents' Evenings, Academic Mentoring Days and Termly Progress Reviews
- Year 6 information evening.
- Options Evening (for students selecting their KS4 courses)
- On-line tools including Connect and Show My Homework
- Wisepay – for academy trips and catering
- Tutors and Heads of Year contact with parents
- the Academy's website
- open day and evening for parents of prospective new students
- by prior appointment to visit the academy

- specific requests for information (see above)
- through appointments with teachers (SEN reviews, reviewing Individual Behaviour Plans, Personal Support Plans
- the Main Academy Prospectus
- SEN information to parents: at reviews, and with printed documentation, and from relevant professionals, external agencies supporting the work of the Academy

Visitors/external agencies/individuals have access to information (on a need-to-know basis only) by:

- the Academy's website
- contact with professionals within the academy
- by written request to the Headteacher

Accessibility of information
The Academy aims to provide information in an accessible format and will respond to individual needs and requests as they arise.

For example:

- the Academy will seek support from outside agencies to provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, audiotape or Braille for students, prospective students or parents who have difficulty with standard forms of printed information.

- the Academy will also make information for parents available in a range of different formats, should the need arise, and be aware of font size and legibility when producing written information. During parents' evenings and review meetings of children's performance in the academy, details are confirmed to parents how they can access information

- the Academy will, if the need arises, aim to provide translation or interpreter services to ensure all parents/students can access information