



SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

HEATON SCHOOL

TO BE REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 2021

Heaton School Policy Record

**School Accessibility Policy Agreed at:
Resources Committee 20/11/18**

Signed and Approved by:

Headteacher ----- (Signature)

----- (Name)

----- (Date)

Chair of Committee----- (Signature)

----- (Name)

----- (Date)

To Be Reviewed: September 2021

Designated person: J Curtis, Headteacher

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Document Purpose

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of Heaton School in relation to **Accessibility for all**. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. This policy is drawn up in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by the DFE.

Heaton School caters for pupils with: severe learning difficulties; profound and multiple learning difficulties; autism; physical and medical needs; and as a 'special school' focuses its resources to ensure equality of access for all pupils regardless of disability with individual needs assessed and resourced in order to ensure developmental progression in all areas.

Audience

This policy, having been presented to and agreed upon by the whole staff and Governing Body is distributed for the information of:

- All teaching staff
- All teaching assistants
- All support staff
- All school based staff

A copy of the policy is available in:

- The Headteacher's Office
- The School Handbook, electronic copy on the school server, paper copies in the Staff Workroom and Staffroom

This is available for:

- School governors
- External Professionals
- OFSTED
- Parents and Carers
- Visiting teachers and staff
- Other interested adults (medical, social and psychological services etc)

Definition of Disability

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (EQUALITY ACT):

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

Key Objective

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.

Principles

- Compliance with the EQUALITY ACT is consistent with the school's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEN policy;
- The school recognises its duty under the EQUALITY ACT (as amended by the SENDA)
- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services and further more to advocate for them within the Local Authority ensuring adequate provision
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage

In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002). 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 2014 framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum, including:-

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning
- assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

Achieving the Objectives

This section outlines the main activities, which the school undertakes, and is planning to undertake, to achieve the key objective outlined above.

A) Education & related activities

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, and other external professionals that can support the school to ensure equality of access and developmental achievement commensurate with their potential ability. The main focus being quality multi-disciplinary working alongside other educational professionals as well as health and social care, being an exemplar of joint working.

B) Physical environment

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities, services and fittings. Examples include: direct access from more classrooms to indoor corridors and directly to outside spaces; tracking and hoisting available in more classrooms meeting physical needs; interactive adjustable technology in more classrooms.

Improved natural light in most of the school. Improved colour scheme initiated.

C) Provision of information

Being a special school, we nurture a Total Communication Environment, supporting verbal language, signing, symbols, objects of reference, and location markers.

Accessibility Plan
Identifying Barriers to Access

Organisational

Completed

- ✓ Preparation for entry into school. (Clear Admissions Arrangements accessible on the school website or on request from the office or headteacher)
- ✓ Grouping of pupils (by Key Stage Group unless this reduces the quality of provision or support with IEP/IBP's and differentiated lesson plans in place plus individual support)
- ✓ Homework policy and practice (in place by individual developmental ability and referenced in the School Brochure)
- ✓ School discipline and sanctions (reference Behaviour Policy, also accessible on the school website or from the school office)
- ✓ Exclusion procedures (also refer to Behaviour Policy)
- ✓ School clubs and activities (full access as relevant also reference e.g. Off Site Visits Policy)
- ✓ School trips (full access with curriculum access statements and risk assessment in place)
- ✓ The school's arrangements for working with other agencies (Open School Policy, Annual reviews and 14 plus reviews, Attendance and Behaviour Management policies)

In Progress

- **Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?**

2 new school minibuses are available so that larger groups of pupils with physical disabilities can access the community

Pupil premium funding is used to ensure adequate support for all pupils to access community visits

Under discussion

NONE

Not yet addressed

NONE

Not Applicable

NONE

Attitudinal & Design & Delivery of the Curriculum

Completed

Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils? (All our training is tailored to teaching and supporting young people with disabilities. Training is needs-led and represented in school development plan. Risk Assessments also guide training)

Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using signing? (Individual developmental progression identified in pen portraits for all pupils at Heaton School e.g. Teaching strategies and resources. Individual behaviour plans where relevant also tailor support)

Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work? (As above)

Are there high expectations of all pupils? (All pupils are base-lined with individual targets set for the pupil to achieve within their zone of potential development, also reference e.g. Work Related Learning and Whole Curriculum Policy)

Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation? (reference Equal Opportunities Policy)

Access to the curriculum. (As above all lessons are differentiated, reference curriculum access statements)

School policies, e.g. anti-bullying, SEN policies, health and safety. (All in place with regular governor review)

Interaction with peers. (Part of developmental criteria as evidenced in Pupil portfolios)

In Progress

NONE

Under discussion

NONE

Not yet addressed

NONE

Not Applicable

NONE

Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils? (Resources component in scheme of work and lesson plan)

Access for PE

Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities: classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all pupils? (Single storey building with e.g. disabled toilets and special features - issues - external of the school building and holdbacks on internal doors)

Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?

Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and

well signed? (Signage established but parking needs upgrading reference also Travel Plan)

Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disabilities; including alarms with both visual and auditory components? (a comprehensive system is in place, reference Health and Safety Policy)

Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?

Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy? (Any issues dealt with through EHC)

Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit? (Automatic lighting) ✓

Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics and noisy equipment? (Low school numbers and small class sizes also individual needs met through IEP and Curriculum Access Statement)

Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately? (as a Special school all resources are provided and organised to reflect whole school need)

Access to school facilities. (Equality for opportunity approaches reference Equal Opportunity policy)

Activities to support the curriculum, e.g. drama group visiting school. (extension activities as identified in pupil planning proformas and evidenced in pupil portfolios)

School sports. (Limited 'in school' facilities. However out of school provision available and identified in school planning formats and evidenced as part of PE curriculum programme)

How the school deals with emergency procedures. (Regular documented checks and practice e.g. fire drill also Staff Handbook, Caretaker checks, Health and Safety policy, First Aid Guidelines e.t.c.)

Breaks and lunchtimes. (Whole school SEN policy with staff supported system including rotas)

The serving of school meals. (Own kitchens with provision for special dietary requirements)

Curriculum Access

Completed

Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve? (Differentiated Lesson Plans with linked IE/BP's)

Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity? (as above) ✓

Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class? (reference teaching and learning styles policy and teaching strategy component within planning proformas)

Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities? (see curriculum rolling programmes re-broad and balanced curriculum entitlement)

Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education? (Individual differentiated programmes)

Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities? (as identified in EHC for SEN and represented in lesson planning formats)

Teaching and learning.(reference Teaching and Learning policy) ✓
Classroom organisation. (Individually assessed and represented in lesson plan)

Timetabling. (reference Equal Opportunities policy and Statutory guidance) ✓
Assessment and exam arrangements. (Academic, vocational and occupational routes available)

Preparation of pupils for the next phase of education. (Work related learning policy which identifies progression regardless of ability towards end outcomes also Transition reviews and Connexions access)

In Progress

NONE

Under discussion

NONE

Not yet addressed

NONE

Not Applicable

NONE

Information Access

Completed

Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information? (Individual education plans would identify strategies and resources to meet need)

Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way, which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams? (As above)

Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats? (specialist ICT facility with 'in class' and staff room hardware available)

Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities? (professional development programme with support from ICT co-ordinator)

School announcements.(Staff pigeon holes, notice boards as part of schools information systems including morning-after school-staff and P D days)

Access to information. (School Council and through schools planned Information systems as above)

In Progress

NONE

Under discussion

NONE

Not yet addressed

NONE

Not Applicable

NONE