

Moor House School



Accessibility Policy

July 2013

Accessibility Policy

STATUTORY BASIS

The school recognises that the SEN and Disability Act 2001 makes it unlawful to:

- treat disabled children less favourably for a reason relating to disability;
- fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

PURPOSE AND DEFINITION

The purpose of this document is to set out the strategy by which we intend to increase accessibility to our facilities for all those having a 'disability'. Disability is defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 thus:

"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."

'Mental impairment' is intended to cover a wide range of mental functioning, including those known as learning difficulties. 'Physical impairment' includes those pupils with sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing but specifically excludes visual impairment corrected by the wearing of spectacles.

Students with a statement of special educational needs may require specific support but this does not automatically mean that they are disabled pupils and not all disabled pupils have special education needs.

The Act places a general duty on governors to make school premises more accessible to those defined under the Act as having a 'disability'. The aim is to ensure that no individual is prevented from accessing the services offered by an education establishment by reason of any 'disability' that they might have. The Regulations make it clear that this does **not** imply that all parts of buildings must be physically accessible. Indeed, it makes it clear that the Act does not require that physical adaptations be made to buildings to meet the needs of particular pupils. Instead, it is a requirement that the service offered by an establishment must be offered to all. The Act specifies that a student cannot be discriminated against by virtue of their 'disability'. Schools making 'reasonable adjustments' to their procedures and practices to ensure that no discrimination occurs can meet this duty. In reality, therefore, meeting the revised needs of the Act will include a variety of physical and management actions at this school.

THE PLANNING DUTY

Within this strategy, there is recognition of the need to address the three key strands to the planning duty arising from the Disability Discrimination Act.

1. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's **curriculum**.

2. Improving the **physical environment** of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by schools.
3. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils and their parents/ carers of **information** which is already provided, in writing, to pupils who are not disabled.

SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

At this school we will:

- review the ways in which our current arrangements might prevent or hinder disabled pupils from accessing education and all other aspects of school life;
- draw up short, medium and long-term priorities and devise strategies to address these priorities;
- resource accessibility plans adequately, recognising the costs of implementing the plan as legitimate expenditure to be incorporated into current and future budget commitments;
- set goals and targets so that it will be possible to assess improvements made, review the success of current plans and identify further improvements;
- consider the needs of parents and visitors with a disability;
- assess students before entry
- continue to assess students throughout their school life to ensure continued access to the curriculum

Access to the Curriculum

We have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils and a key role in planning to increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils. This covers not only teaching and learning but also the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure, sporting and cultural activities or school visits. This includes pupils with a physical disability, a learning disability and disabilities that have an impact on an individual's behaviour. It is possible that additional resources / equipment may be needed.

We will aim to identify and offer appropriate staff training to increase awareness of all disabilities issues and thereby ensure individual pupil needs are met. We do not teach a Modern Foreign Language at Moor House School.

Access to the Physical Environment

We will continue to consider what we can do to improve accessibility of the physical environment of the school within the resources available to us.

In order to meet the general planning duty to make our buildings more accessible, building and site improvements will be made in the context of improving accessibility to all, as and when we find it possible to do so. This might include:

- clear signs and appropriate lighting, handrails and safe storage;
- appropriate furniture;
- playground and classroom layouts;
- accessible toilet provision;
- when redecorating, consideration given to differentiating areas in the school by providing colour schemes and floor coverings that assist pupils with visual impairment to find their way around the building; eg contrasting colours between walls and floors, and walls and doors;
- improvements to the acoustic environment for pupils and visitors with hearing impairment e.g. sound fill systems;
- free access around the grounds where possible for those in wheelchairs.

In addition to the above general provision, specific pupils may require individually tailored adaptations. Usually these adaptations are identified during pre-admission assessment.

Access to Information

We will consider how all information normally provided in a written format, including worksheets, timetables, newsletters, information about school events, trips and extra curricular provision can be made more accessible. We will, wherever possible, ensure that information is available in alternative formats e.g. tapes, CD, large print, email.

Plan of Action

As a part of the School Improvement Plan, we will develop attitudes, procedures and resources to improve accessibility.

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