



**CHARLESWORTH SCHOOL**

*...from tiny acorns great oaks grow*

# Accessibility Plan



## Rational

On 1 October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It has consolidated this legislation and also provides some changes of which school Governing Bodies need to be aware.

It continues to be unlawful for schools to discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion/belief or sexual orientation. However, it is important to note that the previous exceptions to the discrimination provisions for schools are also all replicated in the current act -such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship and admissions to single sex schools and schools of a religious character.

**Definition of Disability:** The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as *'when a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'* Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

## Aims and Objectives

Specific Requirements of the Equality Act 2010 relating to Disability:

**Disability Discrimination:** The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act. Positive discrimination' may be practiced - this means that schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities. Provision for disabled pupils is closely connected with the regime for children with special educational needs. Schools are required to carry out and implement accessibility planning for disabled pupils and staff members.

**Reasonable Adjustments:** School Bodies, as both employers and responsible for the provision of education, are under the same duties to make 'reasonable' adjustments in relation to disability for their employees or potential employees as they are for their pupils. They must make 'reasonable' adjustments to arrangements or practices to alleviate disadvantage and must also take reasonable steps to provide any necessary auxiliary aids and services to both disabled staff and disabled pupils where these are not being supplied through Special Educational Needs statements or from other sources.

They are also under a duty to consider alterations to physical features of the school where that is 'reasonable' to avoid disadvantage caused by disability.

**Employer Responsibilities in relation to Health and Disability:** It is now unlawful for schools, as employers, to ask health-related questions of applicants before job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. This means that

schools should no longer, as a matter of course, require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire as part of the application procedure. There are potential implications in relation to establishing teachers' fitness and ability to teach (as required by the Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003). Schools need to ensure they are complying with both the Health Standards Regulations and Section 60 of the Equality Act.

Schools may decide to ask necessary health questions after job offer but should ensure that any health-related questions are targeted, necessary and relevant to the job on offer.

**Accessibility Plans:** The Act requires every school to produce an Accessibility Plan. These plans must:

- Show how the *physical environment* of a school will be altered to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of *education, benefits, facilities and services* provided
- Show how the school will increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Show how the availability of *accessible information* to disabled pupils will be improved
- Show how the school will *resource and review* the above.

## Statement of Intent

The Governing Body of Charlesworth Voluntary Controlled Primary School is committed to:

- Ensuring that all pupils and staff members are treated as individuals and that those with a disability are not treated less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- Ensuring that the requirements of the Act governing disability are implemented and having due regard to the advice on 'reasonable adjustments'

## Audit of Physical Environment

### Lower (Infant) Site, Long Lane

Although built on a hill, this building has been erected on a levelled site. The road which gives access to it is, however, constructed with a significant slope.

What is in place:

- There is a permanent ramp leading to one external door and a portable ramp is available for use at the other doors
- The areas of the building used by pupils are on one level
- There is a therapy room available
- Toilets used by pupils are low level
- Tables and chairs used by pupils are low level

What is problematic:

- There is insufficient space for a wheelchair user to easily manoeuvre around the classrooms, although with some adjustments to the furniture this could be accommodated with difficulty.

- There is no disabled toilet
- There is no private 'changing area' to use for pupils with bowel and bladder problems
- There is no ability to alter the intensity of the lighting to assist pupils with eyesight problems

### **Top (Junior) Site, Town Lane**

This building is built into the side of a hill with the front part of the building (the Hall) being 3' below the back part of the building and with a large drop on the right hand side of the building to the main playground. There is also a sloping climb up over a rough surfaced car park to the main school entrance and a steeper slope up to the entrance to the main playground from the roadway.

What is in place:

- A disabled toilet
- Yellow lines on the edges of steps and the stage
- A lift from the hall up to the stage and classroom level

What is problematic:

- There is insufficient space for a wheelchair user to easily manoeuvre around the classrooms, although with some adjustments to the furniture this could be accommodated with difficulty
- There is no ability to alter the intensity of the lighting to assist pupils with eyesight problems
- There is currently no access from the hall to the classrooms without going outside as the lift is broken and is very costly to repair
- No access to the playground without going outside the building and through the car park which has a very uneven surface or down the road and through the lower gate which is accessed via a relatively steep incline
- The lower playground is accessed via a concrete path which is on an incline too steep for wheelchair access

### **Audit of Participation in the Curriculum**

What is in place:

- Teaching Assistants are employed to specifically assist pupils where and when needed
- The interactive whiteboards have a setting to assist pupils with sight problems
- Equipment is available to enable pupils to grip pens and pencils and use rulers, scissors etc. Such specially designed equipment is also available to assist pupils who are left-handed
- Coloured acetates are available to assist pupils with sight problems to read printed material
- A Medical Care policy and a SEN Policy are in place and are regularly reviewed. Each pupil with needs falling within these policies has a tailored plan to enable them to participate as fully as possible in the set curriculum

- A medical data list is available in the front of all registers which enables all staff, both permanent and temporary, to know the medical issues relating to pupils and to have guidance on how to deal with those issue to enable them to stay fit and well and participate in school activities
- Sports equipment is adaptable for children with a disability

What is problematic:

- Access to the outside learning areas may be problematic for pupils with mobility problems due to the grass/mud surfaces and level of the ground

### **Audit of Access to Information**

What is in place:

- Each pupil has access to an ipad
- A photocopier /printer is available on both sites which can print in colour, enlarge print and images, print on coloured paper
- Pupils can print directly themselves from the ipads at the infant site
- Pupils are taught to use the interactive whiteboards at the infant site
- Large print reading books are available at the infant site
- Some staff have been taught to communicate using sign language

What is problematic:

- No voice activated computer is in situ on either site
- No laptops or keyboards available for children who have been advised to use them (currently 4 pupils in years 5/6)
- No loop system available in either site to assist pupils with hearing problems

### **Audit of Staff Recruitment**

What is in place:

Charlesworth VC Primary School purchases support from Derbyshire County Council for all Human Resource matters including the handling of the processes governing staff recruitment. The County Council's Policies and Procedures meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003, in respect of the recruitment of school staff.

**Conclusion and Accessibility Action Plan:**

The school buildings would pose some difficulties for children and staff with more severe disability problems. Although these are not insurmountable, they would require some considerable modification and in a number of cases significant expenditure.

The school has created an action plan to prioritise aspects of accessibility where reasonable adjustments may be made:-

Action	Implications/Limitations	Difficulty	Impact	Priority
Create disabled toilet on Infant Site	Significant cost as would require relocation of utility supplies (e.g., waste and water).	High	High	2
Repair the chair lift on the Junior Site	Cost implications est. £2000	Medium	High	1
Purchase laptops for keyboard access	Cost implications (approx £350 per machine plus ongoing technical support)	Low	Medium	1
Purchase 'Talk and Write' software for iPads	Cost implications (dependent on software)	Low	Medium	1
Enable iPad printing on Junior Site	Purchase of new printer	Low	Medium	1
Safe access to top site playground from building	Building work extensive Possible alternative adjustment in use of other 'small playground' areas	High	Low	3
Provision for wheelchair access to all outdoor learning spaces e.g., KS2 Wildlife Area	Building work extensive Possible alternative adjustment in use of other Infant Wildlife Area	High	Low	3
Installation of an induction loop on both sites	Significant cost implication unless can run an induction loop through existing managed WiFi	High	Medium	2

Note:

Priority rating is as follows:-

1. To be considered in the next budget (if available finances)
2. To be considered as a longer term project (2-3 years)
3. Considered only if available finances can be accessed e.g., LA grant

## Review

This Accessibility Plan will be reviewed annually by the nominated Link Governor and appropriate teaching staff member/s and presented to the Governing Body every Autumn for consideration, action and resourcing.

## References

This document should be read with reference to:

Children with Medical Needs Policy

SEN Policy

Management of Stress Policy

Asset Management Plan

Health and Safety Policy

Safeguarding Policy

# Accessibility Plan

## Charlesworth School

Date

Minute No.

Approved by *Governors*

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Reviewed by *Governors*

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