

Cleaswell Hill School

Accessibility Plan 2020 - 2024

Date adopted: February 2020

Introduction:

The purpose of this plan is to show how Cleaswell Hill School ensures and continually increases accessibility for pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

Legal Background

This Accessibility Plan is drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting of progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act.

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.

You can read more about substantial and long term effects [here](#).

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and these are also published on the school website.

Objectives

The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as any other pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equality Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;

- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

Contextual Information

The original school building was opened in 1959 and has the accessibility issues that would be expected from a building of this age. The first floor remains inaccessible to all pupils with restricted mobility, therefore the timetabling of groups must take into account any mobility needs.

The original building has been significantly extended over the last ten years.

In April 2010 a Hygiene Room, a sensory room, a 'break out' space and four classrooms were added to the existing main building. This extension enabled us to provide accessible modern classrooms for our increasing role and improved our ability to meet pupil's hygiene needs. The sensory room has allowed us to develop sensory based learning across the school and is fully incorporated into the school timetable.

The Outdoor Learning Centre opened in January 2012, this fully accessible building contains two classrooms, two disabled toilets and an office. These classrooms originally planned to enable teachers to give an outdoor slant to their lessons, are now used fulltime as classroom bases for pupils accessing the Engagement Curriculum.

New specialised rooms were added to the school in July 2013, these included two classrooms (suitable for pupils with complex needs), a therapies room, an additional hygiene room suitable for older pupils. A Clos-o-Mat (a wash and dry toilet) was also installed in this hygiene room enabling individuals a degree of independence in addressing their own hygiene needs.

A new hygiene room was constructed in summer 2015 within the original school building in order to meet the increasing hygiene needs of pupils. A Clos-o-Mat has also been installed in this room.

IT room relocation summer 2015 providing specialist IT equipment accessible to all pupils and since has been fully integrated into the timetable.

Eight new hoists installed across school between summer 2015 and Easter 2016 enabling pupils with restricted mobility to access physio, standing frames and other activities within their classroom setting.

The 'Trim Trail' was constructed in the summer term 2015, this provides a naturally constructed adventure playground, a wheelchair swing and sheltered learning area. The Trim Trail is used during lunchtimes and to enhance lessons, this has proved extremely popular with pupils.

The Sensory Garden was opened during the summer term 2016. This outdoor space is fully wheelchair accessible and has numerous multi-sensory interactive areas. This relatively new addition to our outdoor space, the garden is now integrated into pupils' learning.

Specialist Sixth form classrooms opened in April 2016. These fully accessible rooms have enabled all pupils to access a variety of specialist courses.

Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and changing rooms were completed autumn term 2016. CHS pupils were involved in the choice of surface for the MUGA, visiting another school to test the suitability of different surfaces for wheelchair use.

The school has two minibuses, one with a tail lift and an accessible school vehicle. These are used extensively across school for educational visits and activities.

Moving and Handling

At Cleaswell Hill School we adopt a Minimal Handling Policy. We believe that manual handling should be avoided unless there is no other reasonably practicable option. Where manual handling cannot be avoided Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of work will be implemented to ensure that procedures are carried out with minimal risk of injury.

All pupils with Moving and Handling needs will be assessed by the moving and handling co-ordinator on entry to the school. Risk assessments and healthcare plans are shared between school, health professionals, class teachers and parents and are monitored and reviewed regularly. Individual pupils' risk assessment will be appended to their health care plans and will be re-assessed and updated annually or as and when required.

All staff who care for children/ young people with mobility difficulties are trained in safer handling techniques annually and provided with refresher courses/ updates throughout the year.

Staff who work with pupils whose behaviour can be distressed are training in Managing Actual and Potential Aggression (MAPA) and receive annual refresher training.

Specialist Approaches

Our well-developed School curriculum is constantly evolving and directly linked to the needs of the pupils. Pupils have Engagement Profiles subject to regular review to ensure that all pupils can access their learning. Pupils at Cleaswell are grouped according to which class would best suit each individual child, usually this is also age-related, however, as a result, key stages and Phases can often appear blurred, with pupils accessing lessons in different areas of the school to enhance their learning experience. This is a constantly evolving process where an individual programme is assembled for each pupil to meet their needs, strengths and ability. Pupils are grouped according to ability in Maths and English lessons to ensure appropriate challenge and maximise progress and achievement.

There are a number of learning pathways through school and staff adapt their teaching approach accordingly. Staff use supportive interventions such as SCERTS and MAPP to set and monitor targets linked to the child's Personalised Learning Intention Map (PLIM) and EHCP long

term targets.

Staff may draw on the principles of small-steps teaching, with activities broken down into small steps in order to help children to learn and to enable progress to be shown. Strategies are also incorporated for pupils e.g. visual timetables and emotional regulation stations/necklaces/cards, to promote communication, regulation and independence.

We use a range of augmented communication systems to support the development of language and communication within our Total Communication approach. These include; Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Makaton, and Communication Aids eg. VOCA's.

How information is communicated to pupils is under constant review. Makaton is widely used across the school. Staff skills have been bolstered through regular training sessions focusing on signs that would be useful in our school setting. The whole school assembly includes a 'sign of the week' linked to our Behaviour Objective and has raised the profile of Makaton across the whole school.

Visual timetables and PECS are also used in many classrooms across the school. These are utilised for both individuals and class groups. In some classes these are used as a circle time/registration activity and show the pupils the structure of the school day, giving them the opportunity to understand expectations.

Outside Agencies

A wide number of professionals work in school each week to support our pupil's health and education, these include:

- Speech and Language Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- School Nurse
- Community Nurse
- Diabetes Nurse
- Epilepsy Nurse
- Specialist Teachers for the Hearing Impaired and the Visually Impaired
- Counselling Service (Bliss Mediation)
- T4Y (Relationships and Sex education)

In addition to the above, clinics are regularly held in School for pupils and their families and these include:

- Wheelchair clinics
- School Dentist
- Medical appointments carried out by Paediatricians and other Consultants

Current Disabilities (2020)

The primary needs of the current school population includes; Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Sensory and/or Physical, Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually. What follows is a table of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified by:

- School Leadership Team
- Schools' Equalities Coordinator from Northumberland County Council

We welcome and will consider any suggestions and practical improvements that are suggested to us by disabled service users and their families.

The refreshed action plans that follow show how the school will address the priorities identified and resource any changes that need to be implemented.

Increasing access to the curriculum for disabled pupils

Improving teaching and learning lies at the heart of the school's work. Through self-review and Continuous Professional Development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote excellent teaching and learning for all children.

Target	Strategy	Timescale and responsibility	Success criteria
The schools has introduced PLIMS (Personal Learning Intention Maps) for each child's progress identifying short term goals linked to the long term targets in their EHCP.	Ensure that assessment always outlines 'next learning steps' and that every child has specific and attainable targets that are articulated and communicated	All staff ongoing	Information sharing supports staff to create the best inclusive environment for every child. Parents understand the role they can play in sustaining development
An 'Engagement Curriculum' is being developed that is an 'irresistable invitation to learning' for every child	Ensure that the entire curriculum captures and enriches each pupil for the entire time they are learning.	All staff	Participation of all pupils in a wide range of compelling learning activities. A subtle change to the strategy of

			'now and next'.
SCERTS Model becoming embedded in school.	Children with ASD and related disabilities achieve the support that directly affects their competence in Social Communication and Emotional Regulation	School Leadership Team Teaching staff/TA's/OT/SaLT Ongoing	Improved access to prompt, specialist support for children and their families. Improvements in self-regulation support access to the curriculum Staff increasingly become stronger Transactional Supports.
Ensure that all children with medical conditions are well supported within school, so that they can access the curriculum and safely enjoy learning.	Ensure that all staff and governors are familiar with and follow the statutory guidance and the school's policy. Deploy the 2 days per week of special school nurse time. Trained staff volunteer to provide support for complex medical needs	Head Teacher Ongoing	Children's medical needs are met. Staff feel supported and confident to support teaching and learning and medical needs when they are supporting children. We hope to have our nursing provision extended to 5 days per week
Enrichment, and access to creativity and cultural opportunities are being prioritised and embedded in the curriculum	Children who may have limited access to these opportunities outside of school will access them during the school day or at satellite clubs.	All teaching staff Depending on children's individual needs and interests	Children with disabilities achieve or exceed potential and enjoy collective creative opportunities. This challenges isolation and develops creativity and access to cultural opportunities

Improving access to the physical environment of the school

Our site is extensive both inside and out. We place a great deal of value upon outdoor learning. It remains a priority to continue to improve the physical environment of the school to increase the opportunities disabled users and visitors may take advantage of the facilities we have, both indoors and outdoors. We have a wide range of equipment and resources available for day to day use. We work closely with the sensory support service and made the necessary adaptations for any children with disabilities who we attend school. We keep resource provision under constant review. The school's improvement planning process is the vehicle for considering such needs on an annual basis.

Target	Strategy	Timescale and responsibility	Success criteria
Calm environments that help children to self-regulate	We have deliberately 'quietened' the number of busy displays and sensory distractions in corridors and communal spaces in school and plan to continue to maintain this calming physical environment.	School Leadership Team	Children's movement around the school is calm, unimpeded by sensory distractions and cluttered environments.
Children and young people are able to understand the support available to them to self-regulate and help to maintain a calm, purposeful learning environment for all	A new positive behaviour support strategy has been developed and introduced. Based on attachment-aware principles, the strategy supports staff and pupils to de-escalate dysregulated behaviour in a positive context.	School Leadership Team Assistant Headteacher	Pupils are able to access learning in all parts of the school and to participate with increased independence.
Hydrotherapy is now available on site for all pupils (since September	Develop the use and community use of the pool for therapeutic		Pupils experience health benefits, physical activity and self-regulation

2019)	purposes over the next 4 years		due to the regular availability of this therapy on site
Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) development	Continue to develop and find innovative ways for children to enjoy physical activity and outdoor learning as part of the OPAL initiative	Vicki Cowx OPAL Team All staff	Physical wellbeing, self-regulation and enjoyment improve for children.

Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable timeframe. The school will continuously develop awareness of agencies and sources of materials to be able to make information more accessible as required.

Target	Strategy	Timescale and responsibility	Success criteria
Staff learn and develop resources or access assistive technology to make the curriculum more accessible according to a child's specific need. Examples include: Makaton, PECS, Braille; VOCA	The school will continuously develop skills and awareness of the standards and services which can be used. (For example, sharing audio files, using pictograms and graphics to aid understanding)	Kate Thompson (VI) Carly Duffield (HI) All staff	Staff will be aware of web based and physical resources and organisations that can provide information in different languages and formats.
Use best practice and guidance in making printed documentation accessible to children (see Appendix 1)	Ensure that all staff have access to the resources listed and incorporate and share best practice	Kate Thompson (VI) Carly Duffield (HI) All staff As required	The accessibility best practice guidance is visible in all of the printed curriculum material we share with children
Use the Guide	Give all pupils	Kate Thompson (VI)	

Dogs Custom Eyes Service to source appropriate large print tailor made reading books.	equal access to high quality reading materials	Emma Steele (English Lead) Hayley Appleby (Reading)	
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Appendix 1:

Making printed information accessible.

Resources and guidance:

[Accessible Communication Formats](#) (Government guidance)

[Producing accessible materials for print or online](#) (Abilitynet)

[Creating clear print and large print documents](#) (UK Association for Accessible Formats)

[The Sensory Trust information sheet on clear and large print](#)

[Am I making myself clear?](#) (Mencap's guidelines for accessible writing)

[Dyslexia Style Guide](#) (British Dyslexia Association)

[Custom eyes](#) Scheme which can make (at RRP) large print tailor made books which include:

- picture books
- fiction
- non-fiction
- Oxford Reading Tree
- GCSE and A Level English texts and textbooks
- revision guides for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4

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