Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility Plan details the academy's responsibilities and aims in relation to ensuring that all disabled people have an opportunity to participate equally in society.

- Minuted and adopted by Business Committee during Autumn 2021.

Reviewed: September 2021
Review date: September 2024

Accessibility Plan

Introduction:

The SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2015, and was further enhanced and modified by the Equality Act 2010 to cover education. These acts were introduced with the aim of ensuring that all disabled people have an opportunity to participate equally in society. Under the Equality Act, disability is a specific, 'Protected Characteristic'.

Responsibilities for the Academy under these acts with respect to disability are largely as follows:

- Not to treat disabled learners less favourably for a reason related to their disability

- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage

- To plan to increase access to education for disabled learners

It is a requirement that the Academy's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is an action plan showing how the Academy will address the priorities identified.

As well as our learners and staff, we must make sure that other people who visit or use Brookside Academy can use our facilities with ease. We want to provide an accessible and comfortable place for everyone who uses it.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the Academy's equality objectives, and will similarly be published on the Academy website. We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all learners, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to reinforcing our culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the Academy.

This plan proposes to increase access to education for disabled learners in three key ways:

- To increase the extent to which disabled learners can participate in the Academy curriculum

- To improve the environment of the Academy to increase the extent to which disabled learners can take advantage of education and associated services

- To improve the accessibility of all information shared between learners, staff and the wider community.

Access to this plan:

This plan will be made available upon request to any member of our Academy community. In particular we will make this plan available to any parent of a disabled child who makes an enquiry about a place at the Academy.

This plan will be shared with all Academy leaders and will inform relevant aspects of the Academy's development plan.

Definition of Disability:

- Definition of Disability under the Equality Act 2010:
- You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if 'you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' negative effect on your ability to do normal activities'.

Current Arrangements

We are committed to devising learning experiences, events and partnerships that are based around the needs of the individual learner or member of our wider Academy community. This means that our approach is flexible and our provision can be adapted to suit strengths and needs as appropriate.

Physical Access to buildings and classrooms

The physical access to Brookside Academy has improved considerably with the completion of a new building in 2009. This two story building was constructed with full regard for accessibility and includes ramped entrances/exits, wide wheel chair friendly classrooms, passages and doorways. The building also incorporates several accessible toilets and a lift.

The garden area and playground are also fully accessible with no restrictions as these are level with the main Academy building. The Elliot buildings on our site also have ramp access, and the garden area also has a wheelchair friendly track.

Disabled parking is available both at the Academy and Nursery entrances.

Evacuation Procedures

The Academy's fire and evacuation policy lays down basic procedures for the safe efficient evacuation of the Academy buildings. These procedures could be adapted to meet the specific needs of an individual. Such procedures are designed in partnership with the learner, their parent/ carer and any other professionals as necessary. This information then forms the basis of an evacuation plan, held in Academy. These are reviewed on an annual basis.

The current evacuation assembly point is the Academy playground. In the event of an evacuation, and when the lift cannot be used, evacuation equipment is available on the upper floor of the Academy building. Relevant staff are trained to evacuate a person in this way should it become necessary.

Curriculum Access

Our learners can all access a broad and balanced curriculum and our staff are supported to develop learning experiences and activities that are inclusive and tailored to the individual needs of every learner, in line with the new SEN code of practice and any health, education and care plans in place.

A variety of methods are used in the classroom and in our extended schools programme in order to help learners make good progress. These include assistive communication tools, visual resources and IT programmes, and individual, group and targeted sessions with teachers and other staff. We know that learners gain skills and abilities through practice, practical activities and structured support. Our staff are committed to raising attainment and narrowing the gap for disabled learners through innovative and engaging teaching.

Access to Written Information

We currently have a varied methodology for communicating with parents, carers and learners, these include:

- Relaying information to parents/carers in person

- Communication books completed daily

- Letters to parents/carers

- Information from our Web site

- Telephone conversations/ Emails