

Stephen Hawking School Accessibility Plan

This plan outlines what Stephen Hawking School currently has in place to ensure access to education for its pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act 2010:

1. increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum;
2. improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can take advantage of education and associated services;
3. improving information delivery to pupils with disabilities.

The governing body also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities, and will:

- monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
- ensure that employees with disabilities are supported with special provision as appropriate to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
- undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

We firmly believe that every child who joins our school community will be welcomed and valued regardless of sex, race, belief, physical disability or learning difficulty.

This accessibility plan takes account of the main types of disability encountered at Stephen Hawking School, with the caveat that each child who attends the school has specific difficulties that relate to their learning difficulty. What is written in this plan will, therefore, be adapted and individualised to meet their needs.

To achieve this aim we take steps to accommodate our pupils to their best advantage. The following lists the actions we take in order to include all pupils.

Curriculum

1. Planning is carefully differentiated so that the curriculum can be accessed by children of all ages and abilities.
2. Teaching and learning opportunities are designed to respond to individual children's learning styles.

3. Support and advice is sought from appropriate outside agencies when necessary, e.g. the sensory impairment service, speech and language therapists, the school nurse and the educational psychology service.
4. Within the total communication system used in the school, some children may require alternative and augmentative communication systems. These systems will be adapted to meet the needs of each individual child. They may include sign, touch cues, object cues and PECS.

All staff will monitor the language that they use, as children who have learning difficulties, autism and/or sensory impairments will not necessarily interpret facial expression, tone of voice nor understand jokes, sarcasm, metaphors or idioms. Staff will aim to speak in a clear, direct, consistent way and give all children time to process what has been said to them and to make a response.

Children with Sensory Needs (VI, HI & MSI)

Children with Visual Impairment (VI) and Hearing Impairment (HI) will have regular access to the peripatetic teachers for VI and HI. They will allocate their time on a needs led basis and will undertake assessments and advise school staff on the most appropriate methods of working with these children. They may also provide advice on how the learning environment and curriculum could be adapted to support these children.

Children with Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI) will have access to a qualified teacher for children with MSI. Currently there are three trained teachers working in the school and one teacher completing the training. These teachers will provide advice to other staff on the most appropriate ways to support MSI children's access to the curriculum, including management of the environment and curriculum, and may undertake functional sensory assessments.

Children with a Physical Disability

Children with a physical disability will have the curriculum adapted to meet their individual needs. In addition, they will have support via the NHS physiotherapy and occupational therapy teams. These teams will provide advice to school staff on managing each child's physical needs.

Height adjustable tables are allocated to children with specific needs.

There is careful consideration of the layout of classrooms to ensure that entry and exit routes are accessible to allow children can move around.

The Physical Environment

1. Rooms that are used by the children are all on the ground floor.
2. Classes of children are placed within the building to take account of their age:
 - Nursery children have easy access to small toilets (with appropriate changing facilities) and sinks.
 - Reception children share the nursery toilets. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have direct access to a separate outdoor play area. This is well staffed by experience full time class staff and lunchtime assistants.
 - Year 1 and 2 children have easy access to appropriate toilets and sinks. There is a shared space off the playground which is used for small group or individual learning. Both Year 1 and 2 children have direct access to the playground which is staffed by class staff and lunchtime assistants.
 - Key stage 2 (KS2) children have their own toilets with appropriately sized toilets and sinks. KS2 have their own playground space which is staffed appropriately.
 - all playgrounds have equipment that allows children to take part in the alerting part of sensory integration.
3. Furniture is appropriately sized for the age group of children within each classroom and for the needs of individual children. This is particularly important for children in wheelchairs.
4. All classrooms have two entrances/exits which can be accessed by disabled parents/carers or visitors.
5. All rooms used by the children have ceiling track hoists except the main hall and the dining room. Mobile hoists are stored in the cupboards off the main hall.
6. All rooms used by the children are wheelchair accessible.
7. The reception area is sited at the front of the building where there is a large doorway for wheelchair and pushchair access.
8. There is one disabled toilet for adults. All of the toilets used by the children are fully accessible with hoist and changing beds. The school has two mobile hoists.
9. Where a disabled member of staff is appointed all working space and meetings will be on the ground floor.
10. Routes within classrooms and around the school are kept clear with equipment tidily stored to facilitate independent or assisted mobility

11. Consideration is given to providing a positive visual and auditory environment for children with sensory impairments (e.g. reducing levels of background noise where possible, reducing reverberation, good lighting levels, reducing visual clutter)

Information

1. Information is given to all new parents/carers in the form of a face to face meeting with the class teacher. Our admissions form gives parents/carers the opportunity to give details of medical, language and cultural needs. This is supported by a strong transition programme.
2. Ensuring important information is shared with families in their own language via the Home/School Liaison Officer or an interpreter.
3. A weekly newsletter is distributed and published to give information about recent events and forthcoming dates. A screen in the foyer displays high quality photographs of recent events and activities.
3. A meeting between parents/carers and the child's class teacher takes place at the end of the school year. Progress and attainment is shared with parents/carers via a written report and Annual Review meeting at the end of the academic year. Additional meetings are arranged on request.
4. When children are absent due to long-term medical conditions the Home/School Liaison Officer liaises with the Attendance Welfare Advisor, school nursing team and parents/carers to plan and provide a support package. Information is gathered to put in place a plan to provide a smooth return to school following a period of absence.
4. Discussions with children and their parents/carers take place to plan and make preparations for their transition to secondary school.
5. Parents have access to the Parent Advice Centre and to both the local authority's and the school's Local Offers.

To be reviewed: January 2017