



Disability and Accessibility Policy

2020

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Next Review Due: 21 July 2023

Adopted by: The Strategic Board on 21 July 2020



The HEART Education Trust Documents Review Record:

Version:	Date Amended:	Amended By:
1	May 2017	Sarah Porter
1.1	22 June 2017	H Cabbage
2	16 June 2020	Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion)
2.1	21 July 2020	COO

The HEART Education Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 08286818. Registered office address: Heartsease Primary Academy, Rider Haggard Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 9UE.

We believe this policy relates to the following legislation:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- Children Act 2004 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years. Statutory Guidance for Organisations Who Work With and Support Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (DfE) and (DoH)
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions: Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools and Proprietors of Academies in England (DfE)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE)
- Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils (2012) (Equality and Human Rights Commission)
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (2014) (DfE)

We believe that we work hard to ensure that the culture and ethos of schools in the Trust are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Our schools provide pupils with the opportunity to experience understand and value diversity.

In accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) this policy and plan has been devised. It also draws on the guidance set out in "Accessing School: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils" issued by the DFES in July 2002.

We welcome children with disabilities and we value the knowledge and views of parents regarding their child's disability and how it affects their ability to carry out normal activities. This policy sets out the proposals of the HEART Education Trust to increase access to education for pupils who are disabled in the three areas required by the planning duties of the Equality Act:

- increasing the extent to which pupils who are disabled can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school so pupils who are disabled can take greater advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery of the curriculum to pupils who are disabled.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Disability Access Plan.

What defines 'reasonable adjustments'?

In determining what is reasonable the Trust will have regard to:

- The financial resources available to the school

- The costs of any particular alteration to the premises, staffing arrangements, or special equipment required
- The practicality of making reasonable adjustments
- The extent to which aids and services will be provided via an Education Health Care Plan Personal Budget or high and exceptional needs funding from Norfolk County Council, or by provision paid for outside the school's resources
- Health and Safety requirements
- The interests of other pupils

Statement of Intent

The Trust is committed to resourcing, implementing, reviewing and revising the Disability Access Policy every three years. Regular Disability Access Audits are to be undertaken as part of this process. At Trust it is our intention to:

- be sensitive to the needs of every child
- reduce barriers to learning in every area of school life
- ensure the curriculum is accessible to every student
- keep equality of opportunity at the core of our practice
- have regard to any guidance from the Department for Education as may be in force and amended from time to time

We believe disability is:

'A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This means that in general the person must have an impairment that is either physical or mental; the impairment must have adverse effects which are substantial; the substantial adverse effects must be long-term; and the long-term substantial adverse effects must be effects on normal day-to-day activities.' (Equality Act 2010)

We have a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, eliminate disability related harassment, promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage disabled people to participate in school life. We are proud of our ethos of support, collaboration and respect for one another. We strive to create a safe caring environment for all our pupils to experience success, happiness and excellence. All school users will benefit from the Trust's Disability Policy as it will allow them to take full benefit of the opportunities that our schools offer. We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, school staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aim

- To ensure that all school personnel with disabilities are treated fairly in regard to recruitment, performance management, promotion, staff development, teaching environment and access to the school premises.
- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and to have full participation in the school community for pupils, prospective pupils and our adult users with a disability.

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- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibilities for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Trustees

The Strategic Board of Trustees have delegated certain responsibilities to the Safeguarding and Inclusion Trustee and have:

- Appointed a Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion) and Trust SENCo to be responsible for special educational needs and disabilities across the Trust;
- Delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school staff and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- A duty to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and with the Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice (2002);
- A duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA) to publish an Accessibility Plan but not to:
 - discriminate against disabled pupils in our admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
 - treat disabled pupils less favourably
 - take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- The responsibility to work with parents to ensure the full needs of each individual child are met as we value parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out normal activities;
- A duty to respect the child's and parents right to confidentiality;
- The responsibility of providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum which is differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles;
- The responsibility to endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum 2000 framework which underpins the development of a more inclusive curriculum by:
 - Setting suitable learning challenges
 - Responding to pupil's diverse learning needs
 - Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual and groups of pupils
- Responsibility for ensuring that the schools comply with all equalities legislation;

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Work closely with the Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion);
- In conjunction with the Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion) and the Trust SENCo devise a new plan every three years;
- Oversee the implementation of the policy, Scheme and Plan;
- Annually review and adjust the Accessibility Action Plan;

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- In conjunction with the Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion) organise ongoing awareness raising and training for school staff in the matter of disability discrimination;
- Ensure all school staff, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- Provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring the:
 - physical environment of the school
 - provision of information
 - delivery of the curriculum by:
 - monitoring learning and teaching through observing lessons
 - monitoring planning and assessment
 - speaking with pupils, school staff, parents and strategic Members of the Board

Role of the Trust SENCo

The Trust SENCo will:

- Lead the development of this policy throughout the schools;
- Liaise with school staff to discuss what changes are needed to the physical environment of the school, to the provision of information and to the delivery of the curriculum;
- Work closely with the Headteacher and the Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion);
- Provide guidance and support to all staff;
- Provide training for all staff when the need arises;
- Undertake risk assessments when required;
- Review and monitor;

Role of the Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion)

The Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion) will:

- Work closely with the Headteachers and the Trust SENCO and hold them to account for the implementation of this policy
- Ensure that everyone connected with the schools is aware of this policy and complies with it;
- Attend and deliver training related to this policy;
- Identifying what needs to be done to improve our provision across the Trust that will be to the benefit of our disabled pupils;
- Identifying the training needs of school staff;
- Annually review this policy and the Disability Accessibility Plan for each school in Trust
- Ensure the school is meeting the needs of all pupils in line with this policy
- Quality assures the Accessibility Plan and its implementation

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- Be aware of and comply with this policy;
- Inform the school of their child's disability;
- Share their knowledge of their child's disability and how it affects the normal activities of their child;

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- Trust and individual schools' websites
- Meetings with school staff

Identifying the Needs of Pupils

Parents, carers and teachers work together to identify and provide for the needs of individual pupils, as outlined in pupil profiles, pupil support plans and pastoral support plans. This process is managed by the Trust SENCO in conjunction with the Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion) and the Headteachers of each school.

Parents or guardians of children with medical needs, disabilities or special educational needs are expected to notify them to the school at the point of registration. If these are not known at the time, the school should be notified as soon as they are recognised. Parents are requested to include details of any special circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties or other circumstances which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School.

Parents will also be asked to provide copies of any professional reports e.g. Educational Psychologist's report or professional reports from other agencies or an Education, Health Care Plan/Statement of Educational Needs (if applicable). Early notification is of great value, as it will enable the school to consider whether reasonable adjustments need to be made for a disabled child during the admissions process and what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made in the Trust school to support the child's future education should an offer of a place be made.

As part of the admissions process, staff will meet with parents to discuss whether or not a prospective pupil will be able to access the curriculum and what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made to facilitate this. If, after consultation, the school decides that is unable to adequately cater for the needs of those children with disabilities, the Trust school will be unable to offer a place and parents will be informed why an offer will not be made.

Given that the majority pupils enter our schools in the Nursery or Reception classes and stay for the whole of their primary education it is possible that during this time a pupil may become disabled or his or her special educational needs may first be identified, or become more serious. Continuing communication between parents and staff is vital and our schools will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made in order to allow a disabled child to continue at the school.

Complaints procedure

If a parent or carer has any concerns or complaints regarding the care or welfare of their child, an appointment can be made by them to speak to the Headteacher, or Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion), who if necessary can advise on formal procedures for complaint. Please refer to the Trust Complaints Policy and Procedure for further information.