

Forge Valley School Accessibility Plan

Policy development:

This policy has been developed by building on our own best practice and that of other educational networks. It has been developed in consultation with governors, parents, staff and students and is accessible through the Forge Valley website

Governor Committee: Full Governing Body

Ratified by governors: 16.4.15

Due for review: 16.4.18

Senior leader responsible: SENCO



Ratified by
Chair of Governors

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to show how Forge Valley School is able to meet the needs of pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of disability.

Definition of Disability

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day- to -day activities.

Legal Background

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. 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.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to ensure access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum (this includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services (this includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled. (This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by schools to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include

handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of the pupils` disabilities and the preferred format of pupils and parents and be made available within a reasonable timeframe.

Forge Valley School aims to treat all stakeholders, including pupils, prospective pupils, staff, governors and other members of the school community favourably and, wherever possible, takes reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage. The school aims to work closely with disabled pupils, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove or minimise any potential barriers to learning, which puts them at a disadvantage, but allows them to learn, achieve and participate fully in school life. The school is active in promoting positive attitudes to disabled people in the school and in planning to increase access to education for all disabled pupils.

As part of the school's continued communication with parents, carers and other stakeholders we continually look at ways to improve accessibility through data collection, questionnaires and parental discussions.

Contextual Information

The school is a three storey building which has disabled facilities and toilets – it is a modern building and designed to meet with current legislation. Wheelchair access is available into the main building and into all other buildings. There is disabled parking on site. All areas of the school grounds are accessible to wheelchair users, although some areas of the playing fields will require adult supervision for wheelchair users. At present we have one student using a wheelchair.

The Current Range of Disabilities within Forge Valley School

The school has pupils with a range of disabilities which include moderate and specific learning difficulties. When pupils enter school with specific disabilities, the school contacts the LA professionals for assessments, support and guidance for the school and parents.

We have a number of pupils who have asthma and/or diabetes and all staff are aware of these pupils. Medication is kept either with the pupil or centrally within the First Aid room.

We have competent First Aiders and Paediatric who hold current First Aid certificates. All medication is kept in a central safe and secure place which has easy access for First Aiders and staff members. Administration of Medicines consent forms are filled in by parents outlining the illness and amount and time of medication. All medication that is given is recorded.

Improving access to the physical environment

| <u>Targets</u> | <u>Actions</u> | <u>Timescale</u> | <u>Responsibility</u> | <u>Outcomes</u> |
|---|--|------------------|----------------------------|---|
| School is aware of the access needs of disabled pupils, staff and visitors. | Access plans for individual disabled pupils, staff and visitors are circulated to relevant people. | Ongoing | SENCO | Individual plan in place for all disabled pupils and all staff are aware of all pupils' access needs. |
| School staff are better aware of access issues. | Provide information to staff on disability and equality for all. | Ongoing | Headteacher/Governing body | Raised confidence of staff and governors in commitment to meet our access needs. |
| All building work has considered accessibility guidance. | Share accessibility plan with relative personnel. | Ongoing | SLT/Governing Body | Ongoing improvements in access to all areas when undertaking routine and maintenance works. |
| Improve signage and external access for visually impaired people. | Paint white strips on edge of all external steps. | Ongoing | Site team | Visually impaired people feel safe in the grounds. |
| Ensure that all disabled pupils can be safely evacuated in an emergency. | Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for all pupils. | Ongoing | SENCO | All disabled pupils, staff and visitors and staff working with them are safe and confident in event of fire. |
| | Develop a system to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities. | Ongoing | Headteacher/Governing Body | |
| Ensure all fire escape routes are suitable for all. | Monitor success and issues during standard fire practice and amend if necessary. | Ongoing | Fire Safety Officer | All disabled staff, pupils and visitors are able to have safe and independent evacuation in emergency situations. |

Improving access to the curriculum

| <u>Targets</u> | <u>Actions</u> | <u>Timescale</u> | <u>Responsibilities</u> | <u>Outcomes</u> |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|--|
| Increase confidence of staff in differentiating the curriculum. | Undertake audit of staff training needs on curriculum access. Plan training schedule to meet the need of the staff. | Ongoing due to staff turnover and the arrival of new pupils. | SLT/SENCO | Raised confidence of staff in strategies for differentiation and increased pupil participation. |
| Ensure TAs have access to specific training on disability issues. | Use staff audit to identify TA training needs and inform Professional Development process. | Ongoing due to staff turnover and the arrival of new pupils. | SENCO | Raised confidence of staff in strategies for differentiation and increased pupil participation. |
| Ensure all staff are aware of disabled pupils' curriculum access. | Dissemination of information via individual pupil portraits. | Ongoing | SENCO | All staff aware of individual pupils' needs. |
| Ensure all school trips/visits are accessible to all. | Develop guidance for staff on making trips accessible. | Ongoing | Headteacher/Governing Body | All pupils in school are able to access all school trips and take part in a range of activities. |
| Involve TAs in lesson planning and inclusion. | Help TAs to establish subject specific skills. Establish joint TA/Teacher planning opportunities. | Ongoing | SENCO | A team of TAs with a suite of skills to address the needs of pupils. |

Improving access to information

| <u>Targets</u> | <u>Actions</u> | <u>Timescale</u> | <u>Responsibilities</u> | <u>Outcomes</u> |
|---|---|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Review information sent to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible. | Review all letters home to check reading age/Plain English. Produce letters in alternative formats e.g. large print, Braille, other languages. | Ongoing Ongoing | Headteacher | All parents receive information in format that they can access. |
| Ensure all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats. | Distribute guidance on good practice in accessible formats. Provide guidance to staff on dyslexia and accessible information. | Ongoing | SENCO | Staff produce routine information to children in more accessible ways. |
| Inclusive discussion of access to information in all Annual Reviews. | Ask parents/carers and pupils about access to information and preferred formats in all reviews. Develop strategies in IEPs to meet needs. | Ongoing Ongoing | SENCO | Staff more aware of pupils' preferred methods of communication. |
| Pupils become more aware of their own learning styles and access needs. | Include access to information re: learning needs Encourage pupils to express their access needs and explore learning styles. | Ongoing | All Teachers | Pupils able to articulate their access needs and understand their own learning styles. |