



Accessibility Policy and Plan

March 2019 - 2022

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN

School name: Ernulf Academy

3-year period covered by the policy: March 2019 – March 2022

Policy agreed:

Date: 23 March 2019

Policy to be reviewed: January 2022

Introduction

It is our intention to remove, as far as we can, those barriers which make it hard for children and adults with a disability to take part in the day to day life of our academy and benefit from the educational experiences and services we provide.

We aim to ensure that our academy is a welcoming place that understands and responds effectively to children and adults with disabilities and we recognise the importance of a review and planning procedure associated with continuous development and improvement.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'*

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools (including academies), early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people.
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability.
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.

- Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.
- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.

The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

School governing bodies and proprietors must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

The Responsible Body

The responsible body, Ernulf Academy in liaison with Astrea Academy trust will prepare—

- an accessibility plan;
- review and enhance such plans at such times as may be prescribed.

An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period (generally 3 years),

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by the academy;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils—
 - (i) within a reasonable time,
 - (ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents,
- during the period to which the plan relates, Ernulf Academy will keep the accessibility plan under review and, if necessary, revise it;
- It is the duty of Ernulf Academy to implement its accessibility plan.

The Statutory Policies for Schools (Sept 2014) states that it is a requirement that maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools, sixth-form colleges, further education colleges and Pupil Referral Units must review their accessibility plan every three years. It also states that approval should be by the governing body however, they are free to delegate the approval right to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the head teacher.

Other relevant legislation, regulations &

guidance; Children & Families Act (2014)

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Regulations (2014)

The SEND Code of Practice (revised April 2015)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)

Disability Discrimination Order (2006)

The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 & 3

DfES *“Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils”*

Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003

Context

We are an academy, part of the Astrea Academy trust, for pupils who age from 11 years to 16 years. The school comprises of separate one storey buildings covering a relatively large site, this is a designated an Alternate Provision setting called Prospect House.

Aims of the Academy

Students who attend Ernulf Academy can be assured that they will receive the very highest quality of teaching; high levels of support and encouragement in a school with fantastic resources and facilities; a fair and equitable set of rules and guidelines to follow; and a school environment where they can feel safe, valued and where they can play a part in the school's success.

All of our staff are committed to ensuring the well-being of our students and will give their all to create an engaging and rewarding learning environment. We work hard to ensure that our curriculum is relevant and diverse enough to cater to individual interests, learning styles and all abilities.

The experiences that students encounter at Ernulf will help them to prepare for adult life and ensure they have the right skills and knowledge to make an effective contribution to society and pursue their professional and personal ambitions.

The school is committed to delivering the highest standards of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision. Inclusion is at the heart of our ethos and we work hard to identify all students who need extra or bespoke support to assist them in learning.

We have excellent facilities to support this, backed up by high levels of expertise and resource including good numbers of classroom assistants and the capacity to deliver small group teaching where needed.

Formulating our Accessibility Plan

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified in a series of planning meetings involving the following members of staff:

- Principal
- SENDCo
- Assistant Principal
- Facilities Manager.

Process

Our accessibility plan has been developed as follows:

- 1) Review of guidance for accessibility within the SEND policy has been undertaken
- 2) Access audit and review of current activities completed
- 3) Actions to eliminate barriers identified (with short-term, medium term and long term targets)
- 4) Goals and targets set which can be measured & include time frames
- 5) Consultation with school staff, governors and other bodies i.e. parents/ carers,
- 6) The Plan's contents checked

- 7) Publication of the plan (and included it in the governors' report to parents)
- 8) Implemented the plan and allocated adequate resources
- 9) Evaluated the plan every 3 years (with the accessibility plan under on-going review and revision as necessary)

In addition to this we will;

- continually review the environment of the school, in the way that we plan, prepare and deliver the curriculum and the information we provide for pupils so that we can improve the access for both individuals and groups;
- work to provide an atmosphere where all pupils feel safe and valued;
- promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with a disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.
- we will encourage all stakeholders to feel comfortable in suggesting ways to improve the systems that we operate.
- examine those parts of our active and extra-curricular activities which may have limited access for pupils with a disability and see if it is possible to provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.
- we will work with professional external providers that have specialist knowledge in this area and we will consider any areas that they identify that we may need to review.

Access to the plan

The Accessibility Plan will be made available via the Academy website and should paper copies be required these will be provided on request.

The Accessibility Plan can be made available in a range of other formats on request.

Other School Policies & Documentation

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with other Academy policies. Attached are the audits and action plans relating to the key aspects of accessibility.