



Perry Beeches III The Free School

POLICY DOCUMENT ON

Accessibility Plan

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Perry Beeches III The Free School

Accessibility Plan

Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled students, under part 4 of the DDA:

- Not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at substantial disadvantage.
- To maintain access to education for disabled students.

This Accessibility Plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of Perry Beeches The Academy Trust to increase access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by the planning duties in the former DDA and the current Equality Act (2010):

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

In addition, the former Disability Equality Duty (2006) and the current Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires all schools to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful.
- Eliminate harassment of those with a disability.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons.
- Encourage participation by disabled individuals.
- Take steps to take account of disabilities, encourage independence for our disabled students to prepare them for their post school life.

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

1A: The purpose and direction of the School's plan: vision and values

This scheme and plan should be read in conjunction with the school's other policies on Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs.

The Philosophy of Perry Beeches III The Free School is based on inclusive principles which strive to promote equality.

Equality of opportunity at Perry Beeches III The Free School is about providing equal access and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standard of achievement.

Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – students, staff, governors and parents.

- To develop all students as responsible citizens, each in their own right.
- To give each student an equal opportunity to fulfil their own potential, personally, socially and academically, within a rewarding and stimulating environment.
- To provide all students with a broad, balanced and relevant education, which will enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for lifelong learning and to adapt to a fast changing world.
- To develop an enterprising culture for our learning community.

The school's strategic aims are that:

By learning together, we want our community:

- To realise the highest standards of achievement.
- To be an inclusive school.
- To meet the challenges of the future

In addition, the statutory inclusion statement in the National Curriculum for England describes schools' responsibility to provide a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of students. It sets out three principles that are essential for teachers and schools to follow when developing an inclusive curriculum.

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to students' diverse learning needs.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

In order to achieve these aims, all members of our community must be able to access provision when they attend school. The values of respect and responsibility underpin our aims. All members of our community have a duty to respect the rights of others and to take responsibility for removing barriers to learning for disabled students.

1B: Information from student data and School audit

The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in the former Disability Discrimination Act.

The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has:

‘A physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’ Some specified medical conditions such as HIV, Multiple Sclerosis and Cancer are all considered disabilities regardless of their effect.

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as Dyslexia, Autism, Speech and Language impairments and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). As such there is a significant overlap between those considered to have a disability and those who have Special Educational Needs.

Unlawful behaviour with regard to disabled pupils

Chapter 1 (1.17 – 1.24) explains the general definitions in the Act of direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment. The rather different and more complex provisions that apply in the case of disability are set out here.

Direct Discrimination: A school must not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled – for example by having an admission bar on disabled applicants.

A change for schools in this Act is that there can no longer be justification for direct discrimination in any circumstances. Under the DDA schools could justify some direct discrimination – if was a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. What the change means is that if a school discriminates against a person purely because of his or her disability (even if they are trying to achieve a legitimate aim) then it would be unlawful discrimination as there can be no justification for their actions.

Indirect Discrimination: A school must not do something which applies to all pupils but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only – for example having a rule that all pupils must demonstrate physical fitness levels before being admitted to the school – unless they can show that it is done for a legitimate reason, and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability: A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability – for example by not allowing a disabled pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for her to get out and back. Like indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability can potentially be justified.

Harassment: A school must not harass a pupil because of their disability – for example, a teacher shouting at the pupil because the disability means that he is constantly struggling with class-work or unable to concentrate.

Disability Equality Duty – schools previously had a statutory duty which required them to take proactive steps to tackle disability discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils. Under the Equality Act, this has been replaced by the general equality duty and the new specific duties – covered in chapter 5 of this guidance.

Reasonable adjustments and when they have to be made

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. For schools the duty is summarised as follows.

- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.

1C: Views will be gathered of those consulted during the development of the plan. The school will then set the priorities following the consultation process of the plan.

2A: Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum

The SEND department will be the primary link between the school and disabled students. Their needs will be continually assessed and documented, with information disseminated to all staff via the SEN register, Individual Learning Journeys (ILJ) and a provision map. Students will have personalised support strategies which may involve removal from lessons to improve skills such as numeracy and/or literacy. They will also be supported in lessons by specialist Assistant Teachers who will have an in-depth understanding of their needs and strategies for learning. Students will be nurtured and their needs will be clearly understood. They will have the opportunity, and be encouraged, to attend break and lunchtime clubs. They will be reassured that they can approach any member of staff with a problem or a concern. However, students may not always want to discuss problems with members of staff and may need someone their own age with whom to discuss their concerns. Therefore, Senior Students will be high profile around school and will be available to meet and speak with them on a regular basis. Where appropriate, students may be allocated a 'Peer Buddy' for consistent 1:1 support and guidance. Students will feel they can participate fully in school life, being able to enjoy trips and extra-curricular activities, as well as residential visits.

Effective differentiation will be the subject of several staff training sessions, and with the support of the SENCo, Assistant Teachers and Teaching & Learning Team, all departments will be expected to effectively differentiate their lessons. The whole school use of differentiated outcomes will ensure that all students are appropriately challenged. Departments will use tools such as: resource sheets, computers and multi-media. There will be close contact between staff, students, parents and the SEND department, with all

subjects providing targets for ILJs. The targets will be regularly reviewed. Teaching Assistants and the SENCo will be able to facilitate greater awareness of student needs through staff briefings and team meetings. Building partnerships with a variety of external agencies will mean that the school can plan and adapt the curriculum to suit the requirements of all students.

The priorities for development and improvement are: continued differentiation of individual schemes of work within departments; the compilation and development of resources; and the dissemination of SEN strategies. CPD is central to this process.

The School has set the following priorities for increasing curriculum access:

- Providing whole staff training on phonics and dyslexia-friendly literacy tools, to be followed by the implementation of a multi-sensory, highly structured reading intervention.
- Staff training, followed by implementation of a structured intervention to improve numeracy skills.
- Developing banks of subject specific differentiation tools and resources. □
Specific training and development for Assistant Teachers on precision teaching.

2B: Improving the physical environment of the school

The physical / built environment of the school will cater for the needs of all students, including those who are physically disabled. Corridors are accessible, well lit and free of obstacles. Transition points during the school day will be signalled by a bell. Adult supervision will ensure safe and orderly movement. Assistant Teachers will support, where appropriate.

The school has set the following priorities for physical improvements to increase access:

- The use of additional stairwells to minimise congestion and avoid situations which may cause anxiety for SEND students.
- Training on Evacuation Chair system for Teaching Assistants.
- Manual Handling Training for Teaching Assistants.
- The purchase of specific teaching/auxiliary aids (in accordance with student need).
- The use of hand towels rather than hand dryers to avoid situations which may cause anxiety.

2C: Improving the delivery to disabled students of information that is provided in writing for students who are not disabled

- Worksheets, literature and other resources differentiated by content and presentation.

- Use of computers / laptops / multimedia.
- The school website and network will be simple and easy to access.
- Departments have pictorial clues and keywords on display.
- Visual timetables. Students are supported to transfer timetables into their passports.
- ILJs in passports with achievable and measurable termly targets. Students are given regular feedback. Parents engaged in reviews.
- Homework is set which is independently achievable. TA support available through daily homework club.

The school has set the following priorities for providing information for disabled students:

- Improve the understanding and availability of SEND-friendly formats.
- Autistic friendly communication strategies to be disseminated to staff and implemented in lessons.

3A: Management, Co-ordination and Implementation

An evaluation of the accessibility plan will take place during the Summer term 2016. The results of that evaluation will be shared with the Local Governing Body along with the annual SEND report. These documents will contain action points for the 2016-2017 Accessibility Plan.

Evidence for the evaluation will include: actions taken; resources deployed; scrutiny of school communication systems; lesson observations; and a judgement of the impact on Teaching and Learning.

Students will be given opportunities to work from a differentiated, personalised timetable and receive support from external agencies, such as Pupil and School Support (PSS) and the Communication and Autism Team (CAT). This will impact significantly on the progress students make.

The plan will be co-ordinated by the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and SENCo.

The Accessibility Plan is fully consistent with the school's SEN policy and National SEN legislation. It should also be applied consistently with the School's other policies on:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Behaviour for Learning
- Bullying
- Child Protection

- Differentiation
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Teaching and Learning
- School Improvement Plan
- Professional Development Plan
- External agencies i.e. PSS/Physiotherapy/Sensory Impairment/CAT
- School Nurse/Counsellor

Initial implementation of the plan begins with the recruitment of specialist staff, design of the built / physical environment and CPD. Students' needs will be identified at the earliest opportunity, through liaison with SENAR and Primary School Partners.

The school will work closely with the Local Authority Inclusion Team and Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENAR), and where appropriate enlist the support of the Primary Care Trust and Social Services.

3B: Publication and dissemination of the School's Plan

The School will make its accessibility plan (AP) available in the following ways:

- Available to staff via the digital shared area
- The AP will be made available in alternative formats for parents and staff on request.