



Accessibility Plan September 2019

Mission statement:

“Enjoy, learn, achieve”

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Introduction

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in The Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs Act 2014. It draws on the guidance set out in <https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/education-rights>.

Guidance states:

It's against the law for a school or other education provider to treat disabled students unfavorably. This includes:

- 'direct discrimination', eg refusing admission to a student because of disability
- 'indirect discrimination', eg only providing application forms in one format that may not be accessible
- 'discrimination arising from a disability', eg a disabled pupil is prevented from going outside at break time because it takes too long to get there
- 'harassment', eg a teacher shouts at a disabled student for not paying attention when the student's disability stops them from easily concentrating
- victimisation, eg suspending a disabled student because they've complained about harassment

An education provider has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to make sure disabled students are not discriminated against. These changes could include:

- changes to physical features, eg creating a ramp so that students can enter a classroom
- providing extra support and aids e.g specialist teachers or equipment

Definition of Disability

Disability is defined by the The Equality Act 2010 and is included in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, 2014.

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...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. 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. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the act.

Key Objective of the accessibility plan

To reduce and, where possible, eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum and to full participation in the Grove community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

Grove is housed in a grade 2 listed building dating back to 1903 and an annex built in the 1970's. The main school building has two levels with steps leading to a meeting room in the reception office, staffroom, year 4 classrooms and the dining rooms. Major building works by Birmingham City Council would be required before the building could successfully meet the needs of pupils in wheelchairs or those with severe mobility problems.

Mark Checkley, Safety Adviser, Education Safety Services visited Grove in October 2018 to assess the accessibility into the school and reported:

External areas of the school:-

All external areas of the school are suitably accessed via ramps/flat surfaces offering all users adequate provision for access around the site.

However presently, the sand pit play area is not accessible to children with potentially mobility impairment issues (although no children at the school have such a physical condition presently). As & when required, would suggest the purchase & use of a temporary ramp for such access when required.

External access to the Main School Office:-

Access to the office from outside is presently available by use of a step, located at the external door. This presently does not conform to the requirements of the Equality Act, 2010, as regards the provision of suitable access to all visitors to the school office. Also, I was informed by the school that there is a parent/visitor that does visit the office occasionally but however, cannot access the school due to their need for the use of their wheelchair. Therefore, it has been suggested that the purchase & use of a temporary ramp would assist greatly here & would negate the need for any potential changes to this entrance, as this building is Grade 11 Listed.

A temporary ramp was purchased in October 2018.

Emergency Escape Route/Fire Exit – (Year 3 corridor):-

Immediately outside of the Fire Exit double doors is a set of 3 steps leading down to the ground, which is not visible from the inside, but however, does have the potential for trips, as there is no prior warning of what is beyond the Fire Exit doors. Therefore, a suggestion is to display a sign suitably worded on or around these doors.

October 2018: signs displayed on both external doors

Use of staircases by cleaning staff when handling cleaning equipment:-

- A concern was raised by the Cleaning Supervisor of the need to remind the Cleaning staff to use the handrails whilst traversing up/down staircases whilst handling/lifting cleaning equipment, for their own safety & to be reminded that there are handrails on both sides of these staircases for convenience to all stair users.

Training completed for all cleaners on 19.10.18

Cleaners Store Room (Ground Floor):-

- During this assessment, it was observed that the above is not locked when not in use. Suggestion that this door be kept locked shut to prevent unauthorised persons/children from gaining unauthorised access.

New lock fitted. Door is kept locked shut when not in use. 29.10.18

Principles

Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with Grove's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of Grove's Special Educational Needs policy. Grove recognises its duty under the Equality Act 2010:

- not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- to publish an Accessibility Plan.

In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the Equality Act 2010.

Grove School recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

Grove School provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Activity

a) Education & related activities

Grove School will continue to seek and follow the advice of local authority services, such as specialist teacher advisers and special educational needs advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

b) Physical environment

Grove School will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishment of the site and premises.

Emergency lighting is installed in both upper and lower school and a ramp is installed to allow access to an external classroom on the upper school site.

Provision of information

Grove School will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested. Grove school will follow the advice of and recommendations made by agency professionals who work with children who have additional needs e.g adapting resources for such pupils

