Malbank School & Sixth Form College

Accessibility Policy

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1. Introduction

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum

- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

- Improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of rights, respect and cooperation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan. Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, the complaints procedure sets out the processes for raising these concerns.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a pupil with disabilities faces in comparison with a pupil without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

3. Students

Malbank School and Sixth Form College fully supports the vision of Cheshire East Children's Services namely:

- We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future.

- Inclusion is the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.

Every effort will be made to ensure that '**reasonable adjustments'** are made to accommodate disabled students and young people, while bearing in mind the interests of other students and young people. The school is required to make under the terms of SENDA 2001;

- Improvements in access to the curriculum for disabled students and young people

- Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services (e.g., extra – curricular activities); and

- Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled students and young people

- There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not students with behavioural issues may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following can be underlying reasons for poor behaviour; mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy.

- The school will take into account all these requirements when considering the inclusion and treatment of disabled students in the school.

*(**N.B**. Behaviour difficulties arising from social or domestic circumstances are not covered by the Act).*

4. Students - Education and Associated Services

The school will examine each individual case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate every individual's needs.

The school aims to fulfil the requirements of the legislation to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students and young people with disabilities, to enable them to have access as far as is reasonably practicable to the school premises, facilities, curriculum and associated services.

5. Transition from Primary School

At **Malbank School and Sixth Form College**, additional liaison time is allocated for disabled students and their families to ensure that the student's educational needs and the school's requirements are fully understood by staff at the feeder school, parents/carers, and student, and to ensure that there is a smooth transition.

6. Educational Opportunities Available to Disabled Students

Alternative provision to access to all areas of curriculum teaching will be put in place if a student is physically unable to go to class.

All students have the right to attend all trips and residential visits. This will be achieved through careful consultation with parents/carers, planning, funding and adequate manning of visits.
In all teaching and learning activities a full range of teaching and learning styles will be employed to ensure that no student is excluded from learning.

Additional careers guidance will be offered in order that the disabled student has the same opportunity to access careers advice.

Access arrangements will allow equal access to examinations, so that students can fulfil their potential.

Students will be entered for the level of examination which is appropriate for their level of ability.

7. Sensory Support for Students

The school will make provision to enable students with sensory support needs to access the full curriculum, for instance by providing documents in alternative formats, and by considering classroom seating and accommodation arrangements.

8. Parents with Disabilities

The school will meet the needs of parents and carers with disabilities wherever possible, for instance by providing documentation in alternative formats if requested.

Parents evenings are a combination of online and face to face. When in person parents' evenings take place, these will be held in **Malbank School and Sixth Form**'s Boulevard and Main Hall so that parents with disabilities can access those areas without the use of a lift. Consideration will also be given to go to one room only to learn of their child's progress in an environment with less background noise.

Parents may also request, in advance, to have a meeting with a teacher in one classroom in using the hearing loop installed.

9. School Environment

We are continuing to make reasonable adjustments to make our site as accessible as possible, whilst recognising that it is a large, multi-floored building that has a number of blocks which together comprise the fabric of the school.

There is a lift in every building to ensure that all areas of the school are accessible to students. DDA enhancements are monitored and developed to increase accessibility including:

- Continuing to include DDA contrast in our redecoration schemes
- Implement nosing of stairs where appropriate
- Ensuring there are adequate toilet facilities for disabled students
- Ensuring that blinds in classrooms are DDA compliant.

10. Discrimination in Admissions

The Governing Body ensures that disabled students, young people and adult students are not discriminated against:

- through the criteria determined for admission to the school, or
- by refusing an application from a disabled person for admission to the school, based on their disability

11. Liaison with Parents

The governors will make available to parents/carers information relating to:

- the Accessibility Plan.
- how the school helps students with disability gain access to the curriculum; what the school does to ensure fair treatment for disabled students.

Malbank School and Sixth Form College will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all students with disability through the provision of designated staff (e.g., SENDCo, appropriate Teaching Assistants, Key Stage Teams and Form Tutors).

Wherever possible, information for home will be provided in different formats if requested.

12. Training

Appropriate training for staff, students and young people to further understanding and implementation of the Equality Act and SENDA will be provided.

Staff working with students with individual needs will have access to suitable and relevant training as necessary.

Staff will be given, as relevant, advice from external agencies regarding the learning needs of individual students.

13. Reviewing /Monitoring

The action plan will be reviewed and monitored by the School Leadership Team and Governors annually.

The Equality and Diversity Policy and Single Equality Scheme will be reviewed and published on the school's website each year and will be revised every three years.

Approved by the Governing Body ……..

Next Review by the Governing Body ……..

MALBANK SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2023/2024				
Objectives	**Strategy**	**Impact / Success Criteria**	**Person Responsible**	**Timeline**
To raise awareness of policy and Action Plan	Involve all colleagues in discussing Disability Equality policy and Action Plan to ensure a good understanding of the priorities within the Action Plan	Improved staff knowledge and skills that will positively impact on all in our community	SENCO	Ongoing
Curriculum development	Continually review the deployment of Learning Support Assistants and review the role of LSAs in the classroom To continue to review curriculum options.	Able to give consistent support to students in lessons.	SENCO / SLT	Ongoing
To include SEN as part of Induction process	Train new staff on the Disability Equality policy and Action Plan to ensure shared ownership of the priorities within the Action Plan	Improved staff knowledge and skills that will positively impact on all in our community	INDUCTION CO-ORDINATORS / SBM / SENCO / HR MANAGER	January 2024

To continue to improve access to the physical environment for all, ensuring the highest levels of safety.	Carry out an annual Access Audit of school buildings and grounds and produce an action plan. To create and review access plans for individual children with disabilities. To be aware of staff, governors and parents' access needs and make any necessary adjustments to school events. Review evacuation procedure and put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for any pupil or member of staff with a disability Ensure that visitors to the site are aware of their responsibilities in the event of an evacuation Ensure all areas of school can have wheelchair access and that routes are visually checked on a regular basis	The site is accessible and fit for purpose for all individuals with a disability. There are Risk Assessment and plans in place to ensure the safety of those with a disability. Funds are allocated to support this when needed. An equality impact assessment is completed and considered when building work takes place. Create a Temporary Mobility Policy, to strengthen our current Policy.	SBM / SENCO / SITE MANAGER	Ongoing

	Ensure improved signage and access for visually impaired e.g., us of strip marking step edges.			
Provide updates to staff relating to individual students	Train all staff on the different aspects of disability and specific child's requirements where appropriate.	Improved staff knowledge and skills that will positively impact on all in our community	SENCO	Ongoing
Review all information and ensure that it is accessible to pupils, staff, parents and visitors.	Respond to requests for published information to be alternative formats when possible. Provide information and letters in clear print. Ensure that the website content is displayed in line with guidelines to support people who are visually impaired	All information can be accessed by pupils, staff, parents and visitors.	SBM	Ongoing