Accessibility Policy

Date adopted: January 2024

Background

Statutory Responsibilities

The DDA, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001, places a duty on all schools to plan to increase over time the accessibility of schools for disabled pupils and to implement their plans. Schools are required to produce accessibility plans for their individual school and LAs are under a duty to prepare accessibility strategies covering the maintained schools in their area. Accessibility plans and strategies must be in writing. The nature and content of plans will depend on the size of school and the resources available to the school.

Schools are required to plan for:

- **increasing access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum.** This covers 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 access to the physical environment of schools.** This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

- **improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils.** This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.

Definition of Disability

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

Existing systems of accessibility

At Queensbury the Mission Statement underpins the ethos and direction of the school. It guides our approach to all systems including our approach to accessibility. Therefore the curriculum provides challenging and stimulating learning experiences, with realistic yet high expectations of standards, progress and achievement for all.

Through curriculum delivery we prepare students to:

- Be successful as they can be academically
- Make appropriate decisions and choices.
- Build effective relationships.
- Prepare themselves for the challenges of independent living and change.
- Develop a positive self-image and awareness of their rights and responsibilities.
- Be active participants in their learning.
- Learn to be effective communicators.
- Enhance their social understanding and the skills of citizenship.
- Manage their own behaviour appropriately.
- Enjoy life

Access and School Policy and Procedures

We adhere to The Equality Act of 2010 throughout all our policies and practise to ensure pupils access learning and the school environment.

Access to the Curriculum

We provide a differentiated National Curriculum. We ensure all pupils can access activities that we offer and adaptations to equipment and activities are made to fulfil this aim. For students to access the curriculum lessons are highly differentiated and take account of individual learning difficulties. Priority is placed on students' participation, as independently as is possible. Adults are clear about the learning objectives of the lesson, class and individuals. Good communication is supported by the use of symbols overseen by our Speech

and Language Therapist. The Speech and Language Therapist plans interventions for students needing additional support with their social, receptive and expressive language to further their access to learning. A termly environmental audit by the therapy team supports the development of access to the curriculum within lessons.

All pupils have access to appropriate computer technology. We use adapted curriculum materials and sensory approaches for students requiring sensory approaches to behaviour management (fiddles and squeezies).

As a school we support students to develop their independence and strive to ensure that they experience full and rewarding lives. Independence training includes travel training on a 1:1 basis, life skills curriculum across all key stages and expecting high levels of independence of learning in lessons and movement across school. The behaviour management in school reinforces the individuals' responsibility for their behaviour and helps them to develop self-control of behaviour.

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers (Hearing Services) and of appropriate health and social care professionals to ensure barriers to learning are reduced and enable pupils to reach their full potential.

Access to the School Environment
The main school is accessible for all pupils, staff and visitors but requires people using wheelchairs to travel outside to get to the lower corridor. The stairs in 6th Form are a barrier for wheelchair users therefore students with mobility difficulties are taught in the ground floor classes. The school has a fully accessible disabled toilet and shower.
The outdoor environment is also accessible with an outside gym and covered seating area.

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. To this end the school has updated it's lighting to LED lighting and the extension to 6th Form is fully accessible.

A termly Health and Safety walk round supported by Governors is completed to ensure the school environment is safe and accessible for students.

Access to Information

All information issued by the school aims to be user friendly. Newsletters letters incorporate photographs. Makaton signing and symbols (Communication in Print) are used throughout the school to support the pupils' communication, reading and understanding. We encourage parents and professionals to take up the offer of having communications sent to them electronically.

The school website makes most parts of school life accessible to parents through sharing policies to curriculum coverage to examples of work done. The school website also shares the schools SEN offer as well as links to other sources of advice including Birmingham's Local Offer.

This plan should be read in conjunction with other relevant documents including: Equality Policy, SEN Policy School Evaluation and the School Development Plan.

Monitoring and review of this accessibility plan

Monitoring exercises through the year are reported on to the Governors. When writing the School Development Plan an accessibility audit will be considered when developing the priorities for the school.

This plan will be reviewed annually to link in to the school development plan cycle.

Identifying Barriers to Access: A Checklist

This list should help you identify barriers to access that exist in schools. This list is not exhaustive. It is designed to encourage a flexible approach to the further questioning of the accessibility of your school.

Section 1: How does your school deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?		
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?		
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?		
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?		
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?		
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?		
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?		
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?		
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?		
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?		
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?		
Are there high expectations of all pupils?		
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?		

Section 2: Is your school designed to meet the needs of all pupils?

Question	Yes	No
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?		
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?		
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?		
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?		
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings, including lifts with tactile buttons?		
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?		
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?		
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment?		
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?		

Section 3: How does your school deliver materials in other formats?

Question	Yes	No
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms or printed information?		
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projectors and describing diagrams?		
Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?		
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?		