



CREATING A CLIMATE FOR GREAT LEARNING,  
SUCCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

# **Accessibility Policy & Plan 2021 - 2022**

**Approved at a Full Governing Body Meeting on: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**Date of Next Review: February 2022**

**Responsible Officers: SENCo, Facilities Manager and Strategic Lead for SEND**

## ACCESS POLICY STATEMENT

Benton Park School recognises that many of its students, visitors and staff, whether disabled or otherwise, have individual needs when seeking to make use of the school and facilities. However, Benton Park School also recognises the fact that for some users, the nature of their disabilities may mean that they experience specific difficulties related to accessing education at the school, and the physical environment. As part of its ongoing commitment to Equal Opportunities and the delivery of an inclusive educational service, Benton Park School will endeavour to ensure that disabled people receive the same standards of service as everyone else.

The school aims to:

- Communicate to all staff that our policy of educational services ensures the inclusion of disabled people
- Consult with disabled students, parents / carers, staff and disability organisations
- Plan to make access improvements to enable disabled people to use its services and communicate their availability to both students and staff
- Regularly review whether its provision is accessible to all, and take appropriate action
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis
- Operate a user friendly procedure whereby disabled people can make improvement suggestions and request assistance

### **Purpose of the Plan**

The purpose of this plan is to show how Benton Park School intends, over time, to increase the accessibility of our school for disabled students.

This Accessibility Plan is compliant with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period. This Accessibility Plan ensures that we continue to improve all aspects of the physical environment of the school site, the curriculum and written information so that all students with a disability can take full advantage of the education and associated opportunities provided by Benton Park School.

The school has set the following priorities for the academic year 2020-2021, ensuring:

- Students can move safely around the school
- Students can access the full curriculum

**Covid-19 addendum** – To mitigate the risks of Covid-19 within our school community we are restricting access to specialist spaces for some year groups to enable them to continue to learn within bubbles. In these circumstances students in Years 7-9 will continue to access the full curriculum but will have limited access to specialist learning spaces. Students will still have the same access across the curriculum as their peers.

## **Definition of Disability Equality Act 2010**

“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”

“Substantial” is defined as something which is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed. “Long-term” means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

The definition is broad and includes children with a wide range of impairments, including learning disabilities, dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), diabetes or epilepsy, where the effect of the impairment on the student’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is adverse, substantial and long-term. All those with cancer or surviving cancer, HIV or Multiple Sclerosis are now included from the point of diagnosis. A significant number of students are therefore included in the definition.

## **Legal Background**

The school’s Accessibility Plan sets out the Governors’ response to the Equality Act 2010, which states that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against students because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. Close attention is paid to the implementation of the Access Plan to ensure inclusion and equality of opportunity for all students.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by the Equality Act 2010:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum, including 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 the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of their education and associated services, including improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled, including planning to make written information that is normally provided by schools to its students available to disabled students. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of the students’ disabilities and the preferred format of students and parents/carers and be made available within a reasonable timeframe.

Benton Park School aims to treat all stakeholders, including students, prospective students, staff, Governors and other members of the school community favourably and, wherever possible, take reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage. The school aims to work closely with disabled students, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove or minimise any potential barriers to learning, which puts them at a disadvantage, but allows them to learn, achieve and participate fully in school life. The school is active in promoting positive attitudes to disabled people in the school and in planning to increase access to education for all disabled students.

As part of the school’s continued communication with parents, carers and other stakeholders, we continually look at ways to improve accessibility through data collection, parent/carers and student voice surveys and verbal parental discussions.

The Accessibility Plan will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes, and provide a projected plan for the three year period ahead of the next review date. The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access, that values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to reinforcing our culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school. Benton Park School Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for students with disabilities, staff and visitors to the school in a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

### **Contextual Information**

The school is currently a multi-storey construction and there are seven disabled toilets located at various points throughout school. The school has three lifts. One in the main building, a stair lift to access technology work rooms and a lift in N block.

Wheelchair access is available into the building at certain points via a ramp or lower ground access. Access and Egress in and out of the school grounds / buildings is through the main school gate. There are two pedestrian gates and one vehicle gate, which has a video intercom link to reception. Disabled visitors who require assistance may use the intercom on the electronic gate situated down the drive or can phone ahead to ask for assistance.

Two disabled parking spaces are accessible in the visitor car park at the front of the main building next to reception. Visitors with mobility issues can access the school through reception, or with assistance from staff through the fire exit straight in to the main hall from the visitor car park. There is a ramp from the back of the main school doors for any visitor who parks on the playground.

All other buildings are accessible, including the Sixth Form ground floor which has a ramp to the side of the entrance.

Our Fire Management Plan addresses any evacuation needs of disabled visitors. For regular disabled visitors or staff, a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is carried out and updated regularly.

The new school building, due to open in September 2021, will replace most of the existing school buildings. The design and construction of this new school building and associated landscaping of the site is being carried out in line with current legislation to ensure full accessibility to the site and throughout the building is achieved for a wide range of users.

In the event of any building / improvement work to the retained block planned to be used as the school Sixth Form, due consideration will be given to the need to further improve accessible facilities for staff, students and visitors. Arrangements will be made as necessary to accommodate staff and students and provide an equitable work / learning environment.

### **The Current Range of Disabilities within School**

The range of disabilities currently experienced by our students include: physical, visual, hearing, communication, learning and medical. Because of this broad range of needs, our staff have a good understanding of the Equality Act 2010 requirements for support.

Students with disabilities can access the school site, with lifts for access to upper floors in both main buildings. In the event of lift failure, timetable adjustments would be made to accommodate any disabilities. Students have access to all lessons, including PE lessons, where reasonable adjustments are made to the curriculum in order to give them an appropriate experience of the subject. Extra-curricular activities and trips are open to all students, including overseas visits.

We have competent First Aiders who hold current First Aid certificates. All controlled medication is kept in a central safe and secure place, which has easy access for First Aiders and staff members. Administration of Medicines Consent Forms are filled in by parents/carers, outlining the illness and amount and timing of medication. All medication that is administered by staff is recorded. We have a comprehensive Medication in Schools Policy which deals with all aspects of medication, including the circumstances in which students are permitted to hold and administer their own medication with parental permission.

**Strengths and areas for improvement for the school working with disabled students**

**Strengths:**

- Staff awareness of student needs. Staff use student passports and information via SIMS to understand student needs
- There is a team of Teaching Assistants in school who can support with access to the building and curriculum
- Students have full access to the school building using lifts and ramps
- Strong relationships with external agencies, ensure students’ needs are met
- Students are involved in school life and the ethos of Benton Park

**Areas for improvement:**

- Ensure a smooth transition to the new building for all students, especially those with additional needs
- Ensure our new learning environment is suitable for all learners, for example those with dyslexia and autism
- Promote success in inclusivity through celebrating equality and diversity both in the wider curriculum and in school displays
- Access to all essential elements of school life is simple and streamlined for all students, for example – ParentPay, canteen serveries and money machines.

**Benton Park School Accessibility Plan 2021-2022**

Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe	Achieved
<b>Equality and Inclusion</b>				
To ensure that the Accessibility Plan becomes an annual agenda item at Governor Meetings to review progress to plan	Clerk to Governors to add to list for meetings	Adherence to legislation	Annually	
To improve staff awareness of disability issues	Review staff training needs. Provide training for members of the	Whole school community aware of issues	On-going	

	school community as appropriate			
To ensure that students have access to quality careers education, information, advice and guidance	1:1 Careers interviews  Access to independent advice where deemed appropriate	Students able to make an informed Post 16 choice All Post 16 options are assessed and considered for appropriateness.	Annually	

### Physical Environment

To ensure that all areas of the school buildings and grounds are accessible for all children and adults and continue to improve access to the school's physical environment for all through careful planning of the new school building and any building works to the retained block.	Implement as new building work is undertaken	Modifications will be made to the retained school building to improve access when building work is undertaken.  Priorities to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electrically opening doors;</li> <li>• Wider doorways where needed;</li> <li>• Furniture free entrances;</li> <li>• Tactile signage;</li> <li>• Handrails and grab rails;</li> <li>• Visual fire alarm devices;</li> </ul>	On-going  Review September 2021	
---	--	--	--	--

### Curriculum

To continue to train support staff to enable them to meet the needs of students with a range of SEND	SENCO to review the needs of children and provide training for TAs and other relevant staff, as needed	All key members of staff are able to enable all children to access the curriculum	On-going  Review termly	
To ensure that all children are able to access all out-of-school activities, e.g. clubs, trips, residential visits etc.	Review of school provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All providers of out-of-school education will comply with legislation to ensure that the needs of all children are met	On-going  Review September 2021	
To provide specialist equipment to promote participation in learning by all students	Assess the needs of the children in each class and provide equipment as needed eg. special pens, ear	Children will develop independent learning skills	Reviewed termly by class teachers and SENCO	

	defenders, writing slopes etc.			
To meet the needs of individuals during statutory examinations	Students will be assessed, in accordance with regular classroom practice, and additional time, use of amanuensis etc. will be applied for as needed	Barriers to learning will be reduced or removed, enabling children to achieve their full potential.	Annually	
<b>Written / Other Information</b>				
To ensure that written information is available to all students in the correct format / size, eg. visual timetables / enlarged books / coloured overlays	Written information will be provided in the most effective and appropriate format, taking into account the individual disability	Improved access to information for all	Class teachers / SENCO ongoing.  Student voice meetings to be used to monitor progress  Review September 2021	
To ensure that all parents /carers and other members of the school community can access information	Written information to be provided on our website and paper copies available if required	Written information will be provided in alternative formats as necessary	As needed  Parent voice meetings to be used to ensure compliance in this area  Review September 2021	
To ensure that parents/carers who are unable to attend school, because of a disability, are able to access parents' evenings	Staff to hold parents' evening appointments by phone or through written communication	Parents/carers are informed of their child's progress	Termly	

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Curriculum Policy, Equality information and Objectives, Health & Safety Policy (including off-site safety), Attitude to Learning Policy, School Development Plan, School Prospectus and Sixth Form Prospectus.

Equality information will be reviewed as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all Governors' meetings will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010. The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.