



Heber Primary School

Accessibility Policy and Plan

Heber Primary School aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind. Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school. Our school is committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues. This plan is reviewed every three years to take into account the changing needs of the school and its pupils. The plan is also reviewed where the school has undergone a refurbishment.

This plan is drawn up in accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 which requires schools to draw up, publish, implement and review a written plan to:

- increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils;
- improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, facilities and services provided;
- improve the accessibility and availability of information to disabled pupils and the school community.

The Equality Act defines disability as when a person has a...

'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out 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.

This plan recognises what is already in place in our school and includes future steps we will take.

Future steps have been identified as part of the process of:

- drawing up, implementing and reviewing the School Improvement Plan,
- updating the School SEND Information Report,
- regular and ongoing consideration of existing and potential barriers to learning and to access to the school and
- information sharing and ongoing engagement with parents.

The governing body also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and will:

- Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
- Provide appropriate support and provision for employees with disabilities to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
- Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

Access to the curriculum and participation in school activities

This involves increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the school curriculum and activities.

Our school does already:

- Offer a differentiated curriculum for all pupils.
- Use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum e.g. visual timetables and work stations.
- Track the academic/curriculum progress for all pupils including those with a disability.
- Set effective, appropriate targets for all pupils with additional needs.
- View mental health and well-being as core to engaged, happy and successful learners.
- Liaise with home and external professionals to ensure that where feasible, we make careful, considered and high quality provision for those who cannot attend school because of physical or mental ill health and or disabilities.
- Ask about and ensure advanced preparedness for any disability/additional needs/ health condition in early communications with new parents/carers as part of our school admission procedure.
- Liaise with previous settings/external professionals to ensure continuity and high quality of care for any new starters with disability/additional needs/health conditions.
- Provide and will continue to provide training and support for specific support staff in supporting children with specific medical needs and SEND for example children on the autistic spectrum.
- Conduct pre-visit risk checks for residential and non-residential school trips/journeys and other school visits with the provision for any pupils with a disability in mind, ensuring that these pupils can participate in the trips.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are aware of and know the specific needs of children with disabilities.
- Ensure and will continue to ensure that all staff are given ongoing support and advice in enabling every child's access to all aspects of school life as is feasible.

During 2021-24 the school plans to:

- Continue to ensure that provision for access to the curriculum is in place as above and is being continually reviewed toward best practice for children/families with disabilities.
- Regularly review and provide accordingly for the part that poor mental health and well-being of children may be impeding successful and full access to the curriculum.
- Regularly review curriculum resources to ensure that resources include more examples of people with disabilities of all ages and races. This is to improve disability awareness across the school community, help break social barriers, allow a wholesome approach to the inclusion of those with disabilities and educate our children to become better citizens.
- Provide specific training for staff in Early Years on identifying and referring children with specific SEND/additional need to identify need earlier and access appropriate assessment and support sooner.
- Review provision towards better access and good practice for those with hidden/masked disabilities such as mental health conditions and dyslexia. This will include the review of and availability of enhanced learning provision aids such as a lead Mental Health expert in place at our school and dyslexia friendly resources.

- Review the use of IT to improve/enhance access for those children with additional needs/disabilities e.g. easy to use keyboards, text to speech software, software that connects with pictures and symbols such as communicate in print.

Access to the Physical Environment

This involves improving the physical environment of the school to improve access to the building and its facilities for all members of the school community.

Our school does already:

- Provide disabled access to the ground floor with the installation of a wheelchair lift to give access to the main school entrance.
- Have flat grounds and wide doors/entrances to the school.
- Have ground level street parking that allows easy access to the school building.
- Ensure that all staircases have secure, easy to grip hand rails.
- Have internal emergency signage with escape routes clearly marked.
- Have a disabled toilet and shower fitted with a handrail and a pull emergency cord.
- Use ramps where necessary for wheelchair access.
- Arrange for parent meetings online or on the ground floor for parents/children with difficulties climbing stairs in our 3 storey Victorian building.
- Consult with various external agents such as our educational psychologist, occupational therapists, the hearing impairment team, visual impairment team, school nurse/specialist medical consultants and the autism team to conduct environmental assessments and engage in discussion to consider and provide for the specific needs of children with disabilities.
- Consider the appropriate allocation of classrooms and in class seating arrangements for children with visual and hearing impairments.
- Have a sensory space for children with conditions such as Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) who require a calm environment away from the classroom.
- Have a quiet garden area for children with conditions such as ASC who may have difficulties with the playground environment.
- Have ground floor access to computing equipment, via the new Computing Suite.

During 2021-24 our school plans to:

- Continue to ensure that provision for environmental access as above is in place and is being continually reviewed toward best practice for children/families with disabilities.
- Investigate and make provision for impact of layout, environment and lighting around the school both within classrooms and in communal areas, on children with ASC or other additional needs.
- Investigate and make provision for impact of carpeting, acoustics and quality/volume of sound in classrooms/hall to help better access for hearing impaired children.
- Explore how to further improve the movement of children through the school in ways that are safe and ease congestion such that all pupils can safely navigate the school regardless of any disability.
- Explore more ways to support transition of children, particularly those with ASC, from one context to the next; for example, from the classroom to the art room or inside to outside.
- Review and improve, where necessary, signage and visuals for people with disabilities.
- Where subjects are a challenge environmentally for physically impaired pupils (for example PE), continue to seek expert advice for identified individual needs.

Access to Information

This involves improving the delivery of information to any member of the school community who has a disability.

Our school does already:

- Liaise with the Southwark Hearing Impairment team and Visual Impairment Team to receive support and training for relevant staff in adapting work/resources for hearing impaired/visually impaired pupils.
- Ensure that signage for exits etc. is suitable for non-readers, is clear and well placed using non written symbols (such as running man) where feasible to clarify meaning.
- Provide information to parents and carers about organizations and groups which work with and support the families of children with disabilities.
- Work hard to understand the needs of pupils and ensure information is available in relevant formats such as large print, pictorial/symbolic representations or online.

During 2021-24 our school plans to:

- Continue to ensure that provision for access to information as above is in place and is being continually reviewed toward best practice for children/families with disabilities.
- Review the sound system in use for assemblies, presentations to parents and children's performances.
- Ensure parents and families are aware of and feel empowered to ask for information/newsletters in alternative formats e.g. according to need.
- Explore and use the services available in the Southwark local offer to support increased comprehension and access of information e.g. the use of translators where necessary.
- Consult with parents, staff and pupils on the accessibility of information on the school website and amend as appropriate.

Access to the Curriculum 2021-24				
Area	Current Barrier	Objective	Actions	Time-Scale
Mental Health and Well-being	Children's poor mental health can be masked and present as for example poor behavioural choices. Staff need to be equipped to recognize and support children to increase/improve their access to the curriculum and get the help that they need including external referrals if necessary/appropriate.	To ensure that all staff have the relevant training to identify and support children with poor mental health so that they can suitably adapt the curriculum and their approach to meet the needs of their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to invest in the upskilling and professional expertise of the Mental Health Lead at Heber – Lyndsey Jefford. Implement ongoing program of CPD with built in regular reviews to ensure whole school staff skills and growing confidence supporting children with poor mental health Continue to embed the RULER method across the school for more widespread buy-in from all children and staff. Encourage, and specifically teach awareness of emotions and regulation of emotions through targeted interventions where this is a specific barrier to good mental health for some children. 	Termly review and ongoing. Mental Health Lead Action Plan
Inclusive Resources	It is not clear to what extent resources used and information shared (such as English texts/books shared in class) reflect the disabilities of children/families at our school as positive role models	To increase awareness of disabilities including hidden disabilities across the school to create better understanding and recognition of barriers, better social cohesion and reduce discrimination/unfair treatment towards those with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly review and scrutiny of educational resources and material with the explicit target of increasing awareness and understanding of disability across the school. Due consideration to this objective when purchasing resources and planning curriculum delivery. Use dyslexia/autism friendly layout of information on worksheets, whiteboards etc. for example on pastel backgrounds, with linear and chunked information that can be easily visually tracked on the page. Incorporate this aspect of inclusion into PSHE lessons, assemblies and messages shared via newsletters home to create an ongoing culture of awareness and inclusion of disability. Explore disability awareness with a positive focus on conquering barriers, developing resilience, being proud of uniqueness and being positive role models. Continue to treat any incidences of bullying/unfair treatment on the basis of disability differences as serious and unacceptable at Heber. Collaborative and whole school approach towards reducing discrimination and supporting social integration through enabling children with and without disabilities to grow up with and thrive alongside each other. 	Bi-annual review

Access to the Physical Environment 2021-24				
Identification of SEND and disability	styles/understanding of needs and attachment concerns can sometimes mask significant other SEND/disability needs in the Early Years	staff have the relevant training to identify and support children with SEND/disabilities including hidden disabilities so that they can suitably adapt the curriculum and their approach to meet the needs of their children.	identifying and referring children with specific SEND/additional need to identify need earlier and access appropriate assessment and support sooner. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely and earlier conversations with parents and consent for necessary referrals to external agencies. Timely access to SENDIF funding where necessary. SENCO observation, support and monitoring of needs in EY. SENCO observation, support and monitoring of needs of new starters in any year group to determine any SEND/additional need that needs support and might have been missed in previous settings. 	EY Co Action Plan SENCO Action plan
Hidden disabilities	Adjustment and adaptations in classrooms and across the school do not always address underlying needs especially where there is no known diagnosis and or the need is masked/hidden.	To review and improve provision towards better access and good practice for those with hidden/masked disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train and educate staff on how hidden disabilities such as autism can present so that they feel equipped to engage in deeper conversations with home about concerns. Make reasonable adjustments to accommodate needs at school. Provide readily available resources for children to access discreetly and available to all so as to avoid embarrassment/stigma e.g. coloured overlays and spell checkers for children with dyslexia, SENCO and Mental Health Lead to support next steps if referrals/professional help is needed. Ensure clear structure and predictability of the day through visual timetables to alleviate anxiety for children who struggle with change/transition. Foster and encourage open conversations during PSHE and class circle times about barriers and difficulties that children/people with hidden disabilities face. 	Termly review with Next Steps Register and progress meetings.
Use of IT	IT hardware and software is not always appropriate or accessible for pupils with a disability e.g. visually impaired	To ensure that all pupils have access to appropriate equipment and software for their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and observe needs during IT lessons but equally in classrooms to ascertain what would best suit pupil need for maximum access to the curriculum. Explore and invest in inclusive IT equipment where appropriate such as easy to use keyboards, text to speech software, software that connects with pictures and symbols such as communicate in print. 	Termly review and subject coordinators action plans.

Access to Information 2021-24				
Corridors and communal areas	Aspects of the environment affect their ability to learn/transition	Address those barriers to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess classrooms for effective layout and quality of sound/light and works towards improving access. Explore ways to reduce echo and background noise in the classroom. Consider needs and match with seating arrangements, proximity to the whiteboard and other supportive resources. 	2022
Safe movement around the school.	Children with disabilities can find moving around the school and negotiating small playgrounds, busy and overwhelming.	To identify and put into place any reasonable adjustments necessary to support children with additional needs to feel safe and calm when moving around the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish, embed and reinforce clear rules for movement around the school that are upheld across the school so that children are clear on expectations. Practice transitions with just child and adult, to the art room, music room, playground hall etc. for children who need this so that they do not have to manage the sensory overload of everyone being there and can develop confidence in understanding expectations. Plan movement across the school carefully considering timing of exits and entrances at the start of the day and at play/lunchtimes so as to ease congestion. Make reasonable adjustments for children with disabilities for movement around the school, for example an earlier start at lunchtime for children who struggle with a busy hall or who have eating difficulties. Review signage across the school environment so as to support access to all. 	Termly Review

School hall	The sound/lighting in the hall means that some children and parents may be unable to see what is being said in assemblies and on presentations	To enable all members of the school community to see the whiteboard clearly in assemblies, presentations and school performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review of the sound/lighting in the school hall. – Consider appropriate seating arrangements for children with specific needs for example hearing impaired and which ear hears best closer to the speaker. 	Provision to be made in budget for 2021-22
Communication with parents	Some parents are not able to access the information sent out by school. Not all parents appear to be able to access information on the school website.	To ensure that information the school provides is available to all parents. To identify what the barriers are and seek to remove them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure all letters from school are written in plain English and are printed in Arial font 12. – Adaptations of information through for example translation or larger font etc. should be provided on request and parents should be regularly reminded that this is available. – Newsletters will be published on the website – Access and use of Southwark local offer to enhance and supplement school information sharing e.g. use for translators and other support services to welcome in new starters. – Consult with parents, staff and pupils on the accessibility of information on the school website and amend as appropriate. 	Immediate and ongoing review

The plan is available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request. 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 process for raising these concerns.

Approval and Review Record

Policy Approved by Governors on (date).....9/11/21.....

Signed by Chair of Governing Body/Committee:.....J. Greenwood.....

(date).....2/12/21

Due for Annual Review by Governors (date)Autumn 2024.....