

'Individual Growth, Individual People'

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School Accessibility Plan

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SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity”.

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Direct discrimination

A school must not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled.

Indirect discrimination

A school must not do something which applies to all pupils but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only unless they can show that it is done for a legitimate reason, and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability

A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

Harassment

A school must not harass a pupil because of their disability

Reasonable Adjustments

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. The duty (for schools) is summarised as follows:

- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.
- Schools are not subject to the requirement of reasonable adjustment duty concerned with making alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties. Failure to make a reasonable adjustment cannot be justified. Schools will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable. The reasonable adjustments duties will complement the accessibility planning duties and the existing SEND provisions which are part of education legislation

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education’s guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan must be reviewed every three years and approved by the Governing Body. The School Improvement Plan addresses priorities identified and timings for actions are set.

INTRODUCTION

Newark Orchard School makes provision for students who need a teaching and learning environment that is different from mainstream schooling in order for them to progress towards a fulfilling lifestyle that is as independent as possible.

Newark Orchard School consists of a two-storey building catering for the needs of pupils between the ages of 3 – 18 years. The school specialises in addressing the needs of students with profound and multiple learning needs, severe learning needs, moderate learning needs, autism and social, emotional and mental health needs. Newark Orchard School has a very good reputation for behaviour management and being innovative in its vision.

Newark Orchard School is a source of support and encouragement for parents and carers. The school encourages partnership in learning and the communication between student, parent and school is seen as paramount in the success of a child's achievements. We also believe in progressing successful partnerships with any agency actively involved with a child.

Newark Orchard School encourages and supports continual and on-going professional development for all staff engaged in the teaching and learning of the pupils who attend the school. Staff are given opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in special educational needs and disabilities.

Newark Orchard School originally opened in April 1996 – it had a new build which was completed September 2020. It has an ethos of evolving by adopting best practices in special education and by pioneering new approaches and methods. The work is never seen as completed. Newark Orchard School over the years has striven to effect change in the curriculum, environment and organisation and constantly analyses the changes made in order to best meet the needs of the students it serves.

OUR COMMITMENT

Our mission statement is 'Individual Growth – Individual People'. We are committed to the principle that all students have the right to the widest range of learning opportunities possible.

We will recognise and develop each individual's potential to the full and value and celebrate the contribution that they make to everyday life and society. We will strive for excellence in all we do.

OUR AIMS

- To work continually towards providing all students at Newark Orchard with the highest quality and standard of education possible.
- To work closely with parents/carers and maintain an open dialogue to ensure that parents/carers are fully involved with all aspects relating their child's education;
- To realise the full potential of each student in academic, social, moral, spiritual and personal development.

- All outcomes from the School Improvement Plan address the identified needs of every child in the school.
- The curriculum we follow is accessible to all.
- The environment is conducive to learning and appropriate resources are made available.
- Every person will be encouraged to develop, make progress and will be afforded equality of opportunity.
- We will work in partnership with governors, parents and carers, local schools and all agencies that support students with special educational needs.

We have set the following priorities regarding accessibility, in the light of official guidance and after consultation with a wide range of stakeholders:

1. Increasing the extent to which the diverse range of students at Newark Orchard School can access the curriculum by understanding need and providing appropriate learning opportunities
 2. To continue to use specialist areas to enhance learning opportunities
 3. To continue to ensure that all pupils have access to off-site visits
 4. To provide information in appropriate formats for all users of the school

The school recognises that teaching approaches must reflect the learning styles of individual students.

The school believes that students are most likely to realise their potential when they experience a personalised educational programme that targets key priorities for them as individuals. We believe that personalised education in a special school involves organising the curriculum so as to enable each age group of students to have full access to a range of opportunities at a level appropriate to them.

The school believes in differentiating learning objectives and outcomes, teaching strategies and approaches within every lesson to maximise involvement and learning for each student.

Maintaining the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which students can take advantage of learning opportunities.