



Accessibility Policy and Plan

This policy is reviewed every 3 years

Issue No	Author/Owner	Date Written	Approved by School Committee on	Comments
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This policy has been reviewed and adoption approved by the School Committee.

Signed Date:

This policy has been reviewed and adoption approved by the Headteacher.

Signed Date:

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Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the School Committee has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

1. not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
2. to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
3. to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Proprietor/School Committee of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- b) improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information, which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

Stowmarket High School Context

Stowmarket High School is a mixed comprehensive school with 839 on roll pupils. The school comprises of two buildings covering a large site, of two or three storey construction. It is the vision of the school to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treated with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity. They should develop values which prepare them for and help them to develop an appreciation of life in modern Britain. The school aims to reduce and remove barriers to learning in every area of the life of the school and is committed to delivering equal opportunities, and best provision for all pupils.

Definition of Disability: "A person suffers 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." Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties.

The School's Aims

- embraces a partnership between the school and home
- every individual has a right to be part of a community where each member is valued and respected for their own worth irrespective of race, colour, creed or ability
- children will be helped to appreciate that they are members of the wider community in its richness and diversity
- curriculum provides a setting in which all children have an equal opportunity to grow in understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values.

The Stowmarket High School Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Emergency Plan
- Equality Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- School Improvement Plan
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Curriculum

The reasonable adjustments needed for each pupil are assessed at transition, on admission and through data analysis, Annual Review of pupils with statement or EHCP and via an Individual Risk Assessment Plan.

Stowmarket High School recognises that key elements in a successful planned and accessible approach are likely to be:

- a focus on medium term planning, at the level of schemes of work;
- a focus on differentiation and accessibility of lessons;
- a clear assessment of the data of the full range of pupils;
- high expectations;
- appropriate deployment of learning support;
- appropriate pupil grouping and use of peer support.

As such, Stowmarket High School reviews the use of SENCo time, Learning Support resources, the training needs of subject staff, deployment of Learning Support Assistants and Interns, how schemes of work, including assemblies and the tutor programme, develop awareness of disability through the curriculum and access to specialist support, on a regular basis.

Disabled pupils need access to the full curriculum of lessons taught in the school, but also to activities of the school day and beyond the school day, for example:

- recreation;
- movement around the school;
- special events: sports days, visits by speakers etc.;
- extra-curricular activities: breakfast clubs, after-school clubs;
- school trips require an assessment of pupil needs and accessible transport is available from Suffolk CC.

Stowmarket High School is committed to ensuring that this takes place and reviews outcomes for disabled pupils, including:

- a detailed analysis of outcome data: learning progress checks and end of Key Stage outcomes;
- merit achievements on Go4Schools
- achievements in extra-curricular activities

Physical Environment

The physical environment of the school has a differential impact on access for different groups of disabled pupils. Different aspects of the physical environment need to be considered in relation to different groups of pupils.

The SENCO undertakes an assessment of accessibility needs based on Year 6 statement information – around May/June in year prior to pupil joining the school.

Stowmarket High School complies with DDA access requirements:

- First and second floor areas are accessible by lift
- Disabled toilets are provided in the main teaching block
- A fully equipped changing and toilet facility enables personal care for wheelchair users
- Teaching Assistants are trained in Manual Handling techniques and this is refreshed annually
- Accessibility of extra-curricular provisions e.g. the LRC is located near the disabled lift.

All site accessibility work will be assessed annually on the basis of need of intake and progression by pupils through the school.

Aspects of school environment to be considered against accessibility criteria when renovation work is undertaken, to include:

- improvements to lighting, signage, the acoustic environment, floor coverings;
- improvements to toilets, washing and changing facilities;
- changes to the layout of the playground and other common areas;
- the provision of ramps and lifts and improvements to doorways;
- the provision of particular furniture and equipment to improve access.

Delivery of Information

Information for disabled pupils provided in writing for pupils and parents who are not disabled might include:

- handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, information about school events, letters home, Parent mail

Improving the delivery of information might include making information available:

- in large print, in simplified language, electronically, using a symbol system or pictorial system on different coloured paper.

Identifying the appropriate format must take account of:

- pupils' impairments: access to information may be improved for particular groups of pupils by particular approaches, for example: pupils with learning difficulties may be able to access information more easily where it is provided in simplified language; pupils with language and communication difficulties may be able to access information more easily where it is provided in picture/symbol systems;
- preferences expressed by pupils or their parents.

Key action points

- To continue to review the accessibility of the school site for visually impaired pupils
- To continue to review the accessibility of the school site for hearing impaired pupils
- Continue to develop training for Learning Support Assistants and teachers in specific learning difficulties e.g. autism, ADHD and visual impairment
- Continue to adapt the curriculum to enhance the inclusive ethos.
- A report will be made to the School Committee annually.

We are working within a national framework for educational inclusion provided by:

- Inclusive School (DfES 0774/2001)
- SEN & Disability Act 2001
- The SEN Code of Practice 2014
- The Disability Discrimination Act (amended for school 2001)
- Code of Practice for Schools (Disability Rights Commission)

To be reviewed May/June 2022 and annually to 2024

Access Audit

An initial access audit was carried out by the SENCo (R Mitchell) and S Giddings of the Suffolk County Council Sensory and Communication Centre. This will be added to and amended in July 2021 with aid from A Howes, Site Manager:

Access Report Ref.	Item	Activity	Timescale	Cost
1.	Stairs – the stairs within the building should have the first and last steps clearly marked. This is a standard policy in most schools as it acts as a warning. Both tread and rise should be marked with a contrasting colour. Those with depth perception issues could find it difficult to discern steps/drops or undulations.	Mark first and last stair in each staircase clearly with a contrasting colour.		
2.	The open nature of the 2nd and 3rd floors with clear glass making the lower floors clearly visible could cause some discomfort to some people. Having a line along the edge under the glass panel may make it more acceptable and comfortable for those with conditions such as vertigo or a fear of heights.	Mark the edge of the balcony on the 1 st and 2 nd floor clearly with a contrasting colour.		
3.	Signage within the 'yellow' area of the school is hard to read at a glance and may be difficult for those with visual impairment to read and understand due to lack of contrast between white text and yellow background.			

Action Plan A – Improving Physical Access

Ref	Question	Recommendations	Time Scale	Priority	Cost	Date Completed	Responsibility	
							PFT	School
1	Corridor	Keep corridors clear from obstructions.	Immediate	High	None	Ongoing		

Action Plan B – Improving Curriculum Access

Ref	Question	Recommendations	Time Scale	Priority	Cost	Date Completed	Responsibility	
							PFT	School
1	Differentiation in Teaching	SLT and SENCo to monitor quality of differentiation and provision for SEND pupils.	Ongoing	High	None			
2	Interventions	SENCo to audit current interventions and their success/impact on progress. Provision mapping to be used across all year groups.	Summer Term 2021/Autumn Term 2022	High	Resourcing costs of identified areas to develop			
3	Classrooms are organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	SLT and SENCo to carry out an audit of resources /QFT to ensure that lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils in the class.	Ongoing	High	Possible resource implications where gaps are identified			
4	Staff training in differentiation, the graduated approach and SEND issues.	SENCo to deliver staff training to teaching staff.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable			
5	Staff training in supporting pupils with SEND – focus on key areas of need within the school: Dyslexia, SLCN, SPLD, ASD, Dyspraxia	SENCo to deliver training where possible. Identify gaps in knowledge and seek external advice if necessary	Autumn Term 2022	High	None			

Action Plan C – Improving the Delivery of Written Information

Ref	Question	Recommendations	Time Scale	Priority	Cost	Date Completed	Responsibility	
							PFT	School
1	Availability of written material in alternative formats when specifically requested	The school will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats.	Ongoing		Not applicable			
2	Review documentation on website to check accessibility for parents with English as an Additional Language	The school will review formats publicised on school website – particularly for new parents to the school, in order to ensure accessibility for parents with English as an additional language.	Ongoing		Not applicable			

Planning Template

1. <u>Planning Templates 1-3 Starting points</u>
<u>1A: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values</u>
<u>1B: Information from pupil data and school audit</u>
1C: Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

2. The main priorities in the school's plan

2A: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

2B: Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

2C: Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled:

3: Making it happen

3A: Management, coordination and implementation

- The planning process -
- Coordination -
- Other policies and plans -
- Implementation

3B: Getting hold of the school's plan

The school might consider:

- how it makes the plan available;
- whether the plan is available on the school website;
- making the plan available in different formats;
- ensuring the plan is readable. The school may need to consider: jargon/acronyms; typeface/font size; how easy it is to find your way around.