Orchard Lea Federation

Accessibility Plan

Plan agreed: May 2023

Date for renewal: May 2026

Plan Review: Annually

Lead members of staff: Head of schools, Executive Headteacher and SENDcos.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body 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.

Since 2010, the DDA was replaced by the Equality Act and under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have, 'A physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.' Schools are required to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010. Schools must implement accessibility plans which are aimed at increasing access to education for disabled pupils in the following areas:

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 availability and delivery of information to disabled pupils.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually.

Our Federation Vision:

Orchard Lea Federation is committed to providing an environment which values and includes all children, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. This if further supported through our federation vision:

- To create a Federation family that provides an excellent education for children from Year R to Year 6.
- To be forward thinking and innovative within the community we serve, so all children leave our care as well-rounded individuals able to achieve success and are well prepared for life in our modern world.
- Every child, without exception, will leave the Federation with values, skills, qualities and aptitudes that enable them to thrive in the future.

- Our Federation will be the school of choice and begin to be recognised at local, regional and national level as an example of excellence.

This is underpinned by our four core values of inspire, aspire, collaborate and care.

Accessibility

We are a mainstream Infant and Junior School. The majority of our pupils are white British. Our percentage of pupils with SEN and needing support to access a full curriculum is slightly above the national average.

Currently we do not have any pupils in a wheelchair but we do have provision for wheelchair users at the junior school but less so in the infant school.

At the Infant School, there is access to the building for a wheelchair but there are no such facilities as an accessible toilet.

At the Junior School, we have an accessible toilet: there is a handrail either side of the toilet and a changing table. In this toilet, the washbasin is at a low level and there is an emergency cord in the toilet which can be pulled from floor level. Our Junior School is on two levels with the whole of the lower level accessible to wheelchair users. Pupils would be able to access the facilities in school such as the library shelves, the serving counter in the hall and the tables. Fire doors are accessed through push handles which are accessible in most of the rooms.

Our joint car park has a marked disabled space for a member of the community to park in. Kerbs are dropped or have a ramp.

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum across the Federation which is differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of all pupils. Provision for pupils with additional needs is overseen by our SENDcos. Pupils with additional needs all have personalised documents which outline the support they will receive in school. As required, we provide specific resources for our pupils. For example, we may provide larger print or coloured paper to help with visual impairments or wobble cushions and resistance bands for those with sensory needs. Any necessary adjustments are noted on personalised documents which are reviewed and adapted at least termly. Adjustments are made to enable pupils to access the wider curriculum. For example, when planning a trip, we visit the site in advance and prepare the child in advance through a photo story or exploration of the website.

We take advice and support from outside agencies where appropriate and plan for individual needs. We work with parents to ensure that their child has the best possible support which will begin with a meeting with the SENDco. Training for staff is on-going and we will invest in training as we need too. Staff have been trained in first aid and other medical issues such as epilepsy where needed. Some staff are Team Teach trained and know how to de-escalate a situation and handle children in a positive and safe way.

The priorities for this Accessibility Plan for our Federation were identified through an audit undertaken by the Executive Headteacher, Head of School and the SENDcos. The priorities were discussed and agreed with the Governing Body. This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school.

Please note that at the time this policy was agreed, both schools are in the process of being re designed and re built. This will have an impact on this plan and adaptations to this plan will need to be made as the building projects progress.

1. The main priorities for the Federation plan

1a: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- Ensure that all staff receive training on strategies to support pupils with autistic behaviour tendencies and that this training is implemented and evaluated.
- We will work with specialist advisors to support these pupils further.
- Continue to raise awareness of difference and enable pupils to discuss and explore/ask questions. For example, pupils with disabilities to talk about themselves, what they need and why.
- Continue to promote difference and diversity throughout the school curriculum. For example, assemblies and use of visitors.

1b: Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which all members of the school community can take advantage of education and associated services:

- To fit corridor doors with door stop retainers so that doors have be kept open for wheelchair users but will close in the event of a fire.
- Reduce classroom environment stimulus for neurodiverse pupils in order to reduce over stimulation. For example, considering the classroom environments and provision of quiet spaces.

1c: Improving the delivery to disabled members of our community of information that is provided in writing for those who are not disabled:

- To provide laminated maps in the reception area to ensure that visitors relying on visual clues can navigate their way around the school.
- To ensure that parents' needs are met when they are on site or meeting with us. We will ensure that when we have face to face parents' evenings alternatives are offered to parents with hearing difficulties. We will consider the careful placement of parents in performances and ensure that seating is appropriate.
- Ensure that members of the school community can be provided with school information in an appropriate format. For example, simple language or audio. We will look to invest in telephones with an induction loop to support parents with hearing difficulties.
- Ensure that pupils can receive information in other forms such as signs, symbols, audio and larger print if needed.

2: Making it happen

2a: Management, coordination and implementation

The Executive Headteacher will meet with the SENDco and Site Manager to oversee the implementation of this plan. The Executive Headteacher and Site Manager will work with the Finance Officer to cost any changes and ensure good value for money. The Site Manager will source any contractors needed and be responsible for ensuring safe work is carried out.

The SENDco will ensure that prior to a new pupil starting our school, provision has been discussed with parents and the relevant outside agencies. Any adaptations/training will be co-ordinated in response as the need arises. Provision, training and the implementation of this will be co-ordinated by the SENDco.

Time scale and priorities.

- Ensure that all staff receive training on supporting pupils showing autistic tendencies by the end of Autumn 2023.
- Throughout 2023- 2024, ensure that as our new curriculum is embedded, we promote a culture that is cohesive, safe and inclusive.
- By the end of the academic year 2023-24, we can demonstrate how we have adapted our environments to reduce the stimulus for neurodiverse pupils.
- By the end of the academic year 2023-24, we can demonstrate how we have provided accessible information to all members of our community.
- As the new builds progress, ensure that we work with families to support our pupils through this process so that the needs of all are met.

Monitoring our plan

We will be constantly evaluating and adapting our curriculum and environment to meet the needs of all our pupils. As a result, objectives may change as we adapt to any new pupils entering our school. The objectives written above will be evaluated annually and progress will be reported back to the Governing Body by the Executive Headteacher.

Getting hold of the school's plan

This plan will be found on the school's website and a copy will be in the school office for visitors to access. We will ensure that if needed, this plan can be provided in alternative forms such as audio or in larger print.

Further Information

Should you wish to discuss any areas on the plan or if you would like a tour of the school to decide if the school meets your needs then please contact the school office and we will be happy to meet with you. We are always seeking to improve our provision and if you would like to discuss any concerns please contact the office to make an appointment to meet with the SENDco or Executive Headteacher in the first instance.

Links

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

- SEND policy
- Equalities Objectives