



# Accessibility Plan 2016-2019

## Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful.

Schools and Local Authorities have to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. The duties are the same as those in the previous Disability Discrimination legislation and have been replicated in the new Act.

The Spires College's accessibility plans are aimed at:

- ▲ Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- ▲ Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided, and
- ▲ Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

We recognise the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will regularly review them.

Our school's previous access plans were incorporated into a Disability Equality Scheme/Single Equality Scheme and build on those foundations.

## Notes

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one. A disabled person is someone who has a

"Physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included.

If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoverers and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

## **Vision and values**

The school values all students and staff and wishes to ensure that its practices are fully inclusive. No student or member of staff should be disadvantaged by reason of disability.

The school will in all cases make reasonable adjustments to accommodate staff and students with disabilities.

## **Determining Priorities**

In order to inform planning, the school will analyse information about

- ▲ The nature of the school population for whom the school is planning
- ▲ The nature of the school, including a consideration of the impact of the school's existing plans and priorities
- ▲ The needs of Pupils already in school and moving through it
- ▲ The nature of the future intake (advance information from feeder primary schools)

The school regularly reviews the schools strengths and weaknesses in working with disabled pupils, including:

- ▲ The level of staff awareness of Equalities legislation
- ▲ The presence of disabled pupils and their participation in the life of the school, for example, patterns of attendance and exclusions, areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils have limited or no access, the participation of disabled pupils in after school clubs and school visits, parts of the school to which disabled pupils have no or limited access.
- ▲ The impact on disabled pupils of the way the school is organised, for example, school policies and practices around the administration of medicines, time-tabling, anti bullying policy, school trips and teaching and learning.
- ▲ The physical environment of the school
- ▲ The curriculum
- ▲ The ways in which information is currently provided for disabled pupils
- ▲ Outcomes for disabled pupils

## **Involving disabled people**

The plan should be informed by:

- ▲ The views and aspirations of disabled pupils themselves
- ▲ The views and aspirations of the families of disabled pupils
- ▲ The views and aspirations of other disabled people or voluntary organisations
- ▲ The priorities of the local authority

## **The plans**

Planning improvements covers the following areas:

- ▲ The physical environment
- ▲ Access to education, benefits, facilities and services (the whole life of the school) and
- ▲ Access to information usually provided in written form

## **Information Gathering**

The Spires College holds extensive information on all pupils attending the school. Information on pupils with disabilities will be gathered:

- ▲ Through the transition process when pupils join The Spires College in Year 7. The SENDCO and the Head of Year 7 will visit all pupils in their primary schools and the Primary School will send information to The Spires College at the point of transfer. The Spires College holds a Year 6 Parents' Evening where pupils meet their child's tutor. There is an Additional Induction Day for pupils with disabilities and bespoke extended transition activities available.
- ▲ Parents Evenings, Mentoring Days and Parent Partnership Evenings allow information to be shared between the School and the families of pupils with disabilities.
- ▲ Class teachers and other staff will share information relating to their observation and assessment of pupils with the SENDCO on an informal basis and at fixed review points, i.e. Annual Reviews.
- ▲ Pupils with disabilities who have statements of special educational needs will have a statutory review every year. The Local Authority, parents/cares and associated external professionals will be invited to this review, chaired by a member of staff at The Spires College, and will review the provision for pupils with disabilities to determine whether it allows the needs of the child to be met.
- ▲ Pupils with disabilities whose needs are (currently) met under SEN Support Plus will have their needs assessed and where appropriate will have a Learning Passport. This will be shared with parents and other professionals who will contribute to its formulation.
- ▲ The SENDCO will carry out a regular 'pupil voice' activity where a focus group of pupils with additional needs and/or disabilities will have the opportunity to express their views on all aspects of school.

## **Physical environment**

The Spires College currently consists of three premises – the main school, Crofton and the Football Stand undercroft.

The main school was constructed in 2001 and is equipped with lift access to both upper levels. Emergency evacuation procedures are in place and equipment is provided with suitable training to ensure that wheelchair users and others with disabilities can be evacuated safely. Contingency plans are in place if the lift breaks down at any point in the day.

There is level access to the Football Stand undercroft, which is a single storey building. There is stepped access to the emergency fire exit and ramps for a wheelchair user has been provided.

Crofton is not accessible to wheelchair users but will no longer be used after the 2016/17 school year.

All three premises are equipped with disabled toilet facilities. In 2013 the school added a toilet room with changing facilities and a dedicated medical/ feeding room.

Arrangements are made for pupils with disabilities to be dropped off close to the school entrance which offers level access. Parking is not permitted in these drop off areas and school staff ensure that they are available when needed.

The school does not have powered doors that would permit unaccompanied access around the school which means that wheelchair users are provided with helpers to navigate around the school. The school has a very large number of fire doors within corridors and it is not practical to fit opening and closing mechanisms.

The school provides specialist furniture (e.g. desks and chairs) so that students can access the curriculum.

The school canteen and dining area, whilst accessible to wheelchair users, does not have any special arrangements for serving food to wheelchair users or special dining tables.

The school has a special unit for Hearing Impaired students and maintains a supply of relevant equipment.

The school's external areas are accessible. The top playground has ramped access.

## **Access to the curriculum**

All areas of the curriculum should be available to pupils regardless of their disability. Where an activity cannot be made accessible or would be inappropriate then an alternative activity should be made available. Cross country running may be inappropriate for an individual wheelchair user but an alternative physical activity such as table tennis or swimming. The school has purchased a Nintendo Wii, which enables pupils to engage in virtual sports. Pupils with dyspraxia or who have difficulty expressing the written word are able to access work on laptops or tablets. Planning to improve access to the curriculum will include identifying reasonable adjustments to offer an equality of opportunity.

Pupils with Hearing Impairments can utilise the School's FM system which links to their hearing aids. Staff regularly receive training updates on working with pupils with hearing difficulties. There are some areas of the school where pupils with a hearing impairment can struggle to access lessons because of a poor acoustic. These areas include, the Assembly Hall and the new MFL, PSHE, Childcare and Public Services classrooms

Depending on the impairments of your disabled pupils, planning specific staff training will improve access to the curriculum. Training is available from a number of sources. The SENDCO provides regular training updates for staff relating to the needs of individual pupils with disabilities.

Purchasing specialist equipment increases access to the curriculum for disabled pupils. The school will always consider the purchase of books with large print, writing slopes and pencil grips, or adjustable desks and chairs.

The changing rooms at the school playing field (Quinta) features a changing room for users with a disability, but there needs to be a review of the site access arrangements and a review of other barriers to inclusion in activities on the field.

The participation of disabled pupils is included as part of the school's lesson observation procedures.

Pupils with disabilities are included in school visits. Inaccessible venues are not chosen if the group has a pupil who cannot access the venue, instead an alternative venue is used. The school does experience difficulty in transporting pupils with disabilities with their peers. It is often necessary to use specialist vehicles.

### **Access to written information**

The school has a system of navigation signs that needs to be updated and also reviewed to see if this is the most effective navigation tool.

Staff have received recent training by the SENDCO and designated Educational Psychologist regarding Dyslexia on developing formats on power-point presentations and worksheets, which are accessible to pupils with Dyslexia and Mears Irlene Syndrome.

The school has a Higher Level Teaching Assistant who has recently received training from the British Dyslexia Association on supporting pupils with Mears Irlene Syndrome or other visual disturbances relating to reading. The use of coloured overlays and paper is available.

The School will take steps to make reasonable adjustments to allow pupils and parents/carers with visual needs to access school letters or other communications.

When required the school will conduct an IT or learning accessibility assessment in conjunction with the Visual Impairment or ICT outreach services.

<b>Adopted:</b>	February 2017	<b>Review Due:</b>	January 2019
Reviewed: Amended:			

## Action Plan 2016-19

### Information Gathering

Action	Resources Required	Expected Outcomes	Timeframe	Lead
Survey Parents/Carers of pupils with disabilities and additional needs by group to gain parental perception of access issues at The Spires College.	Parent Questionnaire to be created and sent to parents/carers.	School understanding of concerns of parents and carers improved.	March 2017	KLK
Pupil voice to be undertaken regularly with focus group of pupils with accessibility needs.	Pupil and staff time.	Pupils afforded the opportunity to articulate their views and concerns regarding accessing the school and curriculum.	First to be completed by May 2017	KLK
Annual Reviews used to identify patterns or recurring issues affecting accessibility of pupils.	Staff time.		July 2017	KLK

### Physical Environment

Action	Resources Required	Expected Outcomes	Timeframe	Lead
Mobility Advisor WESC to conduct an Environmental Audit	Staff time plus further resources as identified.	Ensure all students with a visual disability are able to navigate the school site safely.	February 2017	JDN/KL K
Provide powered door mechanism to the inner door in Reception.	Capital cost and revenue lifecycle costs via a PFI Contract Variation	Easier access for visitors to building.	July 2017	JDN
Assess every teaching space for acoustic compatibility with FM system.	Funding for technical study	'Deadspots' for hearing impaired pupils identified.	July 2017	JDN/F UL
Investigate improvements to canteen arrangements	No resources needed to undertake investigation	Potential improvements identified	By July 2017	JDN

### Access to the Curriculum

Action	Resources Required	Expected Outcomes	Timeframe	Lead
Wheelchair access study to Quinta Playing Fields.	Initial study.	Recommendations made regarding how Quinta could be made wheelchair friendly and plans made for transport.	December 2017	JDN/KL K
Curriculum Review to ensure that all learning pathways are fully accessible to all learners.	Staff Time.	New curriculum design is made with the needs of all Learners in mind.	Dec 2017	RDN/K LK

### Access to Written Information

Action	Resources Required	Expected Outcomes	Timeframe	Lead
Review and update all signage in school.	New signage as required.	All pupils able to navigate the school.	July 2017	JDN