

# Elm Court School

## Accessibility Plan



**3-year period covered by the plan: 2020 - 2023**

Plan agreed: September 2020

Plan Review: September 2023

Lead member of staff: Joanna Tarrant – Headteacher

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education which has now been replaced by The Equality Act 2010. The Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under the Equality Act:

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 Governing Body of Elm Court School to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act:

- 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.

### **The School's Context**

We are a special school for pupils aged 9-19 years with learning difficulties with associated social and communication needs. Many young people in Elm Court also have Autism. The school was refurbished under BSF and therefore compliant with legislation. IT comprises of three buildings mostly of one or two storey construction. Each building has automatic doors for pupils' entrance with ramp access at the main entrance. Each building is equipped with a lift has a lift.

School is committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our students whatever their needs or abilities. Not all

students with disabilities have special educational needs and not all students with SEN meet the definition for disability. This Accessibility Plan covers all of these students.

This Single Equality Scheme explains and responds to our statutory duties to promote equality in all areas identified as protected characteristics in the Equality Act (2010).

If a student qualifies for admission to the school by reason of their special educational needs, the school undertakes to facilitate their education at the school. All students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and are encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school to the best of their abilities.

The Accessibility Plan shares objectives with the Elm Court School Equality Policy and Elm Court School Special Educational Needs and Disability Report and should be read in conjunction with these two documents.

This Accessibility Plan exists to ensure that we fulfil our vision of wide-ranging opportunities for all where “every learner matters”.

We aim to:

- Ensure that the needs of our students needs are met
- Ensure that our students are able to join in with all the activities of the school
- To ensure that all learners make the best possible progress
- To ensure that parents are informed of child's progress and that there is effective communication between parents and school

The specific areas covered by the accessibility plan that need to be included are: -

**Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.**

Governors should identify action in the school access plan to enhance teaching and learning opportunities for all those in the school community with disabilities.

These may include:

- Consideration of whole-school ways of increasing participation in activities such as after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities, as well as out-of-school visits, particularly for difficult-to-include pupil groups, such as those with physical or behavioural challenges.
- How threats to participation have been analysed using risk assessment proforma and action taken to reduce those identified risks.
- Identifying how classroom support arrangements, such as deployment of teaching assistants, provision of ICT, contribute to, and enhance learning opportunities.

- Deciding how the implementation of specific strategies such as flexible or shared timetabling, nurture groups, counselling provision, access to therapy, first day absence response, have enhanced attendance and participation
- Consideration of how classroom/group organisation has been targeted to ensure that all pupils achieved increased levels of school success.
- Description of action to increase curriculum choice and/or flexibility has enhanced the access to appropriate qualifications/attainments.
- Consideration of the school response to pupils through the application of the SEN Code of Practice has improved pupil attainment and how effective communication regarding specific pupil needs has been achieved and is monitored.
- Consideration of how liaison, increased communication and relationships with external agencies has supported and enhanced pupils' access to the curriculum and how this is monitored and improvements targeted.
- Identifying how staff training needs in order to effectively meet the diverse abilities and disabilities of all pupils, including prospective pupils who may require manual handling, signing, personal hygiene support etc, has been identified and supported.
- Identifying pupil peer support mechanisms and the ways that the school has ensured pupils have a voice in decisions that affect them.
- Taking action to ensure that disabled members of the school community are seen in a positive light through publications promoting disability and providing positive role models of adults with disabilities to encourage success and achievement
- Ensuring that action has been undertaken to ensure that parents and carers see themselves as partners in their children's education and are increasingly willing to actively support their children's education.
- Enhancing the positive culture and ethos of the school by undertaking quality marks or other additional intervention to improve the schools ability to include those with disabilities.

**Improving the physical environment of the school to increase accessibility for members of the school community with disabilities.**

The Governing Body will want to consider and record reflection upon all areas of the physical environment such as:

- Changes to improve access to doors, stairs, toilet, changing facilities, and consideration of the impact of signs, colour schemes, lighting, heating etc.
- Changes outside of the school building e.g. provision of disabled parking etc.
- Management and organisation issues such as maintenance of lights, fire alarms appropriate to those with hearing impairments etc.
- Increased access to and maintenance of, auxiliary aids, ICT apparatus such as computer hardware/software.
- Improvement to the acoustic environment that might include installation of soundfields/hearing loop systems.

- Improvements of storage implications for wheelchairs and other mobility devises.

### **Access to information**

Schools are expected to increase access to information to those with disabilities. The Governors may wish to decide how this is to be achieved by:

- Informing readers that school published material is available in a selection of formats e.g. Braille, Makaton, audio tapes and identifying how they can access this provision if requested.
- Considering how to increase information accessibility for those who have English as an additional language or other communication impairments, at school meetings etc.
- Identifying how they have considered the readability of information including that provided by the school website, and how it is monitored to ensure accessibility to a wide range of diverse needs and abilities.
- Identifying how textbooks and other pupil information are selected and provided to meet a diversity of pupil need.
- Ensuring the monitoring of effectiveness of adult support to enhance the opportunities for pupils/parents who have difficulties in accessing information.

### **Monitoring the success of the plan:**

Governors will be required to comment on the accessibility plan and identify any revisions as necessary.

Evaluation that may be useful to judge success may include:

- Success in meeting identified targets.
- Changes in physical accessibility of school buildings
- Questionnaires, responses from stakeholders e.g. parents, pupils and staff, indicate increased confidence in the schools ability to promote access to educational opportunities for pupils with disabilities.
- Improved levels of confidence in staff in reducing the obstacles to success for pupils with additional needs.
- Recorded evidence that increased numbers of pupils with disabilities are actively participating in all areas of the school
- Recorded evidence that fewer pupils are being excluded from school opportunities as their needs are being more effectively addressed through the application of strategies and procedures.
- Increased levels of achievement for pupils with disabilities.
- Pupil responses; verbally, pictorially and written that indicate that they feel themselves to be included.
- Ofsted inspections identify higher levels of educational inclusion.

## Elm Court School Accessibility Plan 2016-2019

	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Goals achieved</b>
<b>Physical Access</b>	Audit of accessibility of school buildings and grounds by SLT and Governors. Suggest actions and implement as budget allows.	<p>Ensure access to lift for students with mobility difficulties</p> <p>Accessible parking bays provided by main entrance</p> <p>Signage to be provided along approach route to reception</p> <p>Further signage for other main blocks of building</p> <p>Consider including tactile/Braille signage on doors</p>	Site accessible	Ongoing plan	Yes
<b>Emergency Access</b>	All students and adults to be able to evacuate the building safely in an emergency	Fire escape plan to be reviewed and updated as required and at least annually.	Plan rewritten.	Reviewed annually	Yes

<b>Curriculum Access</b>	All students have access to a broad, balanced and <b>differentiated</b> curriculum.	To be reviewed at least annually.	All students have access to broad range of accredited courses	July 2017	Yes
	All students have a differentiated curriculum that meets their individual needs.	Following the SEN Policy- SEN students have an IEP/EHC Plan that details students needs (and how to differentiate) with personalised curriculums where appropriate.	Lesson observations reports teaching matched to individual needs. The number of satisfactory and good or better	Ongoing	Yes
	Students' access to the curriculum is increased because they attend school more regularly.	See attendance actions in SDP.	Attendance is improving year on year.	Reviewed annually	
	Students' access to the curriculum is increased because there is a reduction in exclusions, individual student needs are met, suitable educational provision is	Follow SEN Policy, interventions, therapeutic input  Reflection room/time out room in place for red flag students. See SDP.	We are an inclusive school	Reviewed annually	

	Students' access to the curriculum is increased through personalisation and differentiation	All staff are aware of different learning styles and plan and deliver for this in the classroom.	This is monitored through regular observations of lessons both formal and informal.	Ongoing	
	Ensure that disabled students can participate in extra curricular activities and trips and visits	Audit of extra curricular provision.		Reviewed annually	
<b>Access to information</b>	Availability of written material in alternative formats	The school makes itself aware of the services available through the LEA/external agencies for converting written information into	The school can provide written information in alternative formats.	Ongoing	
	The written information provided to parents/carers is accessible and read.	Current information and invitations sent to all parents is reviewed to judge the language, style, format, and accessibility.	Information is read. Parents/carers feel that school is an approachable supportive	Reviewed annually	
	Written communication to parents/carers includes the opportunity to raise access issues with school in advance e.g. at parent evenings	School ensures all Parents /carers can access school site	Parents/carers feel that school is an approachable supportive and accessible institution.	Reviewed annually	

<b>Equality and Inclusion</b>	To ensure that the Accessibility Plan becomes an annual agenda item at FGB Meetings.	Clerk to Governors to add to list for FGB meetings	Adherence to legislation.	Reviewed annually	
	To improve staff awareness of disability issues	Review staff training needs. Provide training for members of the school community as appropriate.	Whole-school community aware of issues.	On-going	
	To ensure that all policies consider the implications of disability access.	Consider during review of policies.	Policies reflect current legislation.	On-going	
	The pursuit to continually challenge discrimination and harassment.	As listed in Single Equality Scheme, SEND Policy, Behaviour Policy  Monitor implementation of PSHE programme	We are an inclusive school	On-going	