

Blackburn with Darwen L.A.

St. Thomas's Centre

Accessibility Plan

Statement of Intent

Schools and LAs need to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. These are the same duties as previously existed under the Disability Discrimination Act and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

This Accessibility Plan and the accompanying action plan forms part of the Disability Equality Scheme and sets out how the Management Committee will improve equality of opportunity for disabled people.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the DDA to cover education, so since 2002 the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils under the equality duty

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for reasons related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage including potential adjustments which may be needed in the future.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.
- The duty 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.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Management Committee of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the Equality Act 2010:-

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school 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.

It is a requirement that the school's Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is an action plan, showing how the school will address priorities identified in the plan.

This plan incorporates the school's intention to increase access to education for disabled pupils. In drawing up the Accessibility Plan the school has set the following priorities:

- To provide safe access throughout the school(s) for all school users, irrespective of their disability.
- To ensure that the teaching and learning environment and the resources used are suitable for all staff and pupils, tailoring the requirements to suit individual needs.
- To improve the delivery of information to all school users irrespective of their disability.

School Context

St Thomas's Centre provides education for pupils who are out of school. This is on two sites our Darwen Campus which caters for primary and Key Stage 3 pupils and our Blackburn site which caters for Key Stage 4 pupils there is also provision at the hospital school which caters for both primary and secondary age pupil.

All the pupils referred to St Thomas's Centre have additional needs either temporary or permanently which cannot be met within their mainstream / special school.

School Aims

St Thomas's Centre works with pupils who are experiencing difficulties. We believe that all our pupils are entitled to the best education we can give them and to this end we employ highly dedicated, experienced and qualified staff. St Thomas's Centre will aim to meet the needs of all our pupils by providing a range of educational opportunities in a safe, caring and open environment. It is our expectation that all pupils succeed no exceptions, no excuses.

Audit and Evaluation

The school will undertake a yearly audit using the attached guidance. The plans will be reviewed and amended formally during SLT half-termly meeting or as the need arises.

Audit tool:

Section 1: Buildings

Questions	Yes	No
Does the size and layout of areas: including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms allow access for all pupils?	√ *	
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?	√ *	
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well designed?	√ *	
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components,	√	
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?		√
Could any of the décor be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?		√
Could any signage be considered confusing or inadequate?		√
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?	√	
Do areas of storage prevent disabled pupils from accessing aids and equipment?		√
Are steps made to prevent the exclusion of people with disabilities that affect their hearing and vision from arranged events? e.g. considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment and presentation of material.	√	
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	√	

Section 2: Curriculum

Questions	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?	√	
Do you make the best use of teaching assistants?	√	
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?	√	
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	√	
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	√	
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?		√
Are there a variety of activities, including discussion, oral presentation, writing, drawing, problem solving, use of library, audio-visual materials, practical tasks and information technology?	√	
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?	√	
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	√	
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example, some forms of exercise in physical education?	√	
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	√	
Are school trips, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	√	
Do staff, governors and pupils receive training and education in disability equality issues?	√ *	
Is everyone made to feel welcome?	√	

Are there high expectations of all pupils?	√	
Are pupils equally valued?	√	
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	√	

Section 3: Communication

Questions	Yes	No
Do you provide information in large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	√	
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities which affect their vision, e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	√	
Do you have the facilities to produce written information in a variety of font sizes?	√	
Do you make use of RNIB guidelines on producing written information in accessible formats?		√
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	√	
Are the 'responsible body' aware of their duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act	√	
Do school general plans take account of the duty to make reasonable adjustments?	√	
Does the school have an adequate internal complaints procedure?	√	

ASPECT: Physical Environment	OVERALL TARGET: To improve the overall access to the physical environment for pupils in order to improve attainment and standards.	LEAD PERSON: Amanda Leaver
Area of development	Action to be taken	Timeframe
Does the size and layout of areas: including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms allow access for all pupils?	Any pupils requiring specialist access will be accommodated at our Blackburn Campus	As required
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?	Any pupils requiring specialist access will be accommodated at our Blackburn Campus	As required
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well designed?	Darwen Campus meets this criterion, for visitors to the Blackburn Campus this is managed by the school.	As required
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?	To be planned into the 2018/2019 budget	Sept 18

Procedures for monitoring outcomes / impact	Critical Partner: Management Committee, LA Fire Officer
LA audit, half-termly SLT Safeguarding meetings, weekly premises meetings, learning walks	

ASPECT: Curriculum	OVERALL TARGET: To improve the overall access to the curriculum for pupils in order to improve attainment and standards.	LEAD PERSON: PATRICIA WALKER
Area of development	Action to be taken	Timeframe
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	Pupils currently do not take part in music and drama. The school is liaising with Blackburn Music Service to offer an enhancement to the primary curriculum. Liaison with other primary schools to assess curriculum delivery in drama.	Sept 2017 Sept 2018
Do staff, governors and pupils receive training and education in disability equality issues?	St Thomas's Centre is a school with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs. Full training is given to stakeholder on mental health, behaviour intervention strategies, special educational needs and safeguarding. The school will also receive DDA training as part of its on-going training.	Sept 2017

Procedures for monitoring outcomes / impact	Critical Partner: Management Committee, SIP, NLE
Daily Provision meetings, Weekly Faculty meetings, half-termly SLT Teaching and Learning meetings, lesson observations, SIO visits, NLE visits	

ASPECT: Communication	OVERALL TARGET: To improve the overall access of communication to all stakeholders.	LEAD PERSON: Janet Donnelly
Area of development	Action to be taken	Timeframe
Do you make use of RNIB guidelines on producing written information in accessible formats?	The school will also receive RNIB training as part of its on-going training.	Sept 2017

Procedures for monitoring outcomes / impact	Critical Partner: Management Committee, LA fire Officer
LA audit, half-termly SLT Safeguarding meetings, weekly premises meetings, learning walks	

Approving Body & Date

Signed on behalf of Management Committee Chair and Head Teacher: *D. Thomson* (Vice Chair)

Date: December 2016

Reviewed: December 2017