



# Bearnes Academy

## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2020 -2023



Bearnes academy is dedicated to reducing barriers to learning at all levels and seeks to ensure that our setting is conducive to all students being challenged to achieve their very best so that they consider their time at the school as their own 'learning journey'. We are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children.

We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

### **PURPOSE OF PLAN**

This plan shows how we intend, over time, to increase the accessibility of our school for disabled pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors:

- **Increasing access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability**

This includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.

- **Improving access to the physical environment**

This includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education for disabled students.

- **Improving the delivery of information to pupils**

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents'/carers' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable timeframe. This also includes making provision for alternative means of communication in class as directed by the needs of individuals.

### **DEFINITION OF DISABILITY**

A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **BACKGROUND AND AUDIT**

### **Curriculum**

We are aware that there are areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils may have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, science and technology for pupils with a visual impairment, humanities for pupils with learning difficulties. Other issues affect the participation of disabled pupils, for example: bullying, peer relationships, policies on the administration of medicines, the provision of personal care, the presence or lack of role models or images of disabled people, in effect, all the school's policies and procedures, written and unwritten.

### **Physical Environment**

A Voluntary School was first established on our site circa 1788. The original building comprises what is now our Reception area, Year 5/6 classroom, Year 1/2 classroom and our foundation unit. This is all on a single level with relatively good access. A gentle ramp leads from this section of the building to newer extensions (built in the 70's/80's). The more modern areas comprise a new purpose built Year 3/4 classroom, community hall, toilets and part of the preschool area and staffroom. All of these areas have level access with the exception of a step between the preschool and Reception Class area.

There are two internal steps leading from the school office to the main entrance. These would be a barrier to wheelchair users or the visually impaired although alternate access is available.

Access to our Year 1/2 classroom could also create a potential barrier to a physically disabled pupil, especially if a wheelchair is used. In order to gain access to the classroom there is one external step from the side gate into the building. Although this is the normal route into the classroom a second entrance is available which includes a ramp.

All routes to playgrounds are either flat or have ramped access. Broken double doors leading from the corridor near the hall to the rear playground have been replaced during the construction of the new Year 3/4 classroom and a ramp has been built for access to the playground.

A single step between the Reception and Preschool areas and another between the preschool area and the outdoor area for the foundation unit, could potentially prove barriers to wheelchair users and the visually impaired. Alternative access arrangements could be made if required in order to overcome these barriers.

Two toilet units in the preschool area have good access. There are no current facilities such as changing tables to facilitate the intimate care of disabled students.

All students, including disabled pupils are encouraged and supported to participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extra-curricular activities present particular challenges, for example, having staff with appropriate medical training on site for after school activities where an individual has specific, complex medical needs or a disability. The school will always make provision for this to happen wherever possible.

The school has limited staff parking to the rear of the building. Access is kept clear at this point at all times for emergency access. There is potential for students with physical disabilities to access the site at this point if it were required.

There are a number of barriers to inclusion of physically disabled children, particularly in wheelchairs. As a school, we would need to respond to needs if and when they arise but an audit of limitations shows:

- Steps between front door and school office – although alternative route possible
- Width of door ways would cause issues for a wheelchair user
- No dedicated disabled parking bay
- Only one disabled toilet which is at the back of the school hall
- Step to EYFS outdoor area
- Steps between EYFS classroom and EYFS/Preschool art area – alternative route available

### **Information**

Different forms of communication are made available to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is planned, with a range of different formats available for disabled pupils, parents and staff.

We ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers. Often parents approach the school having heard about how other disabled children have been provided for within our setting. For parents and carers of children already at the school, we collect information on disability as part of our annual parent data collection form.

### **Current Range of known disabilities**

The school has children with a range of disabilities to include moderate and specific learning disabilities and visual impairment. We engage external professionals in a timely manner where additional advice/support on successful integration is required.

We have asked parents/carers and staff to advise us of any disabilities and no further disabilities have been identified.

## Overall

We do not at present have any children with a disability that we are not currently managing within our normal curriculum and physical layout. Steps are always taken, when making building alterations to the school to consider the impact on those with a disability. We are aware that we need to continually review and make changes as and when specific issues are identified.

## INCREASING ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM FOR PUPILS WITH A DISABILITY

Improving teaching and learning lies at the heart of the school's work. Through self-review and Continuous Professional Development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote excellent teaching and learning for all children. We aim to meet every child's needs within mixed ability, inclusive classes. It is a core value of the school that all children are enabled to participate fully in the broader life of the school. Consequently, all children have always been permitted to attend age relevant after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and educational visits. The only exception would occur if a child had breached school rules when deprivation of club attendance may be used as a suitable short term sanction and to ensure the safety of others.

Our key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

We have proved ourselves to be an inclusive school for children with a variety of specific SEND needs. We have admitted children from out of area, including children with substantial SEMH needs as a managed move and provided them with particular support to enable them to engage and succeed in our setting.

Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Increase confidence of all staff in differentiating the curriculum and a focus on QFT (Quality First Teaching)	Be aware of staff training needs on curriculum access Assign CPD for dyslexia, differentiation and recording methods	On-going and as required	SENCO	Raised staff confidence in strategies for differentiation and increased pupil participation
Ensure all staff (teaching and non teaching) have specific training on disability issues	Be aware of staff training needs Staff access appropriate CPD Identify training needs at regular meetings Review the needs of children with specific issues, provide all relevant training.	Ongoing and as required	Academy Head SENCO	Raised confidence of support staff
Ensure all staff (teaching	Set up a system of Individual Access Plan's for		SENCO	All staff are aware of individual's

& non teaching) are aware of disabled children's curriculum access	disabled children when appropriate Share information with all agencies involved with each child			needs
Ensure all staff are aware of disabled children's curriculum access	Set up a system of individual access plans for disabled pupils when required Information sharing with all agencies involved with child	As required	SENCO	All staff aware of individuals needs
Use ICT software to support learning	Make sure software is purchased and installed where needed	As required	Academy Head	Wider use of SEN resources in classrooms
All school visits and trips need to be accessible to all pupils – additional risk assessments made	Ensure venues and means of transport are vetted for suitability Develop guidance on making trips accessible	Ongoing	SENCO	All pupils are able to access all school trips and take part in a range of activities
Review PE curriculum to ensure PE accessible to all	Gather information on accessible PE and disability sports	As required	PE co-ordinator	All to have access to PE and be able to excel
Review curriculum areas and planning to include disability issues	Include specific reference to disability equality in all curriculum reviews		SENCO & Academy Head	Gradual introduction of disability issues into all curriculum areas
Ensure disabled children can take part equally in lunchtime and after school activities	Discuss with Out of school Club staff, and people running other clubs after school. Support would have to be available – especially after school	As required	SENCO	Disabled children feel able to participate equally in out of school activities
Access arrangements to meet individual's needs when taking tests etc will be applied for and Support provided whenrequired	SENCO will ensure appropriate testing and reports are provided in order to apply for access arrangements	As required	SENCO	All pupils will have their individual needs met, and any barriers to achieving their full potential will be removed

## IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE SCHOOL

Bearnes Academy is continuing to grow and develop. The Foundation unit is very popular and is now the main feeder for the school.

Provision, in exceptional cases, will be negotiated when a pupil's specific needs are known.

We have a range of equipment and resources available for day to day use. We keep resource provision under constant review. The schools Improvement planning process is the vehicle for considering such needs on an annual basis.

Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
To be aware of the access needs of disabled children, staff, governors and parents, carers	To create access plans for individual disabled children as part of the plan process upon entry.  Through questions, discussions and parent/pupil surveys find out the needs of others	As required  Annual	SENCO / Class teacher  Academy Head	EHCP and provision maps are in place for disabled pupils and all staff aware of pupil's needs.  SENCO and the AH meet with parents of SEND children prior to their arrival at school (particularly to the foundation unit) to discussion the provision required.  All staff, governors, parents/carers are confident that their needs are met. Monitor to ensure any new needs arising are met.
Layout of school	Consider needs of disabled pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors when considering any redesign including construction.	As required	Academy Head	Re-designed buildings are usable by all
Ensure that all areas of school building and grounds are accessible for all children and adults and continue to improve the access of the physical environment for all	SEN staff to audit accessibility of school buildings and grounds	As required	Academy Head Senior Administrator	Any modifications needed will be made to the school building and grounds that are needed to facilitate ease of access for all.
Maintain safe access for visually impaired people	Yellow paint on step edges is required.	Ongoing checks	Academy Head	Visually impaired people feel safe in school grounds.

	<p>Check exterior lighting is working on a regular basis</p> <p>Provide 1-1 support for visually impaired students where they are very young or have multiple SEND needs.</p>		<p>Academy Head</p> <p>Academy Head</p>	
Ensure all disabled people can be safely evacuated	<p>Ensure there is a personal emergency evacuation plan for all disabled pupils.</p> <p>Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in evacuation by being aware of the SENCO passport information</p>		<p>Academy Head</p> <p>Academy Head to remind staff</p>	All disabled pupils and staff working with them are safe in the event of a fire. There is constant supervision for disabled children who would need help in the event of an evacuation. Disabled people in wheelchairs can be evacuated quickly and easily
Provide hearing loops in classrooms to support pupils with a hearing impairment	Take advice from LEIS on appropriate equipment if this becomes necessary	As required	Academy Head	All children have access to the curriculum
All fire escape routes are suitable for all	<p>Ensure staff are aware of need to keep fire exits clear</p> <p>Ensure Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are in place for any individual who needs one</p>	<p>Daily</p> <p>As required</p>	<p>Academy Head</p> <p>Academy Head and SENCO</p>	All disabled personnel and pupils have safe independent exits from school with appropriate plan of actions
Ensure access to IT equipment is appropriate	Including in relation to those with a visual or hearing impairment	As required	SENCO	Hardware and software available to meet the needs of children as appropriate
Ensure any proposed 'new build' projects are physically accessible for everyone	Project manager appointed will ensure compliance with building regulations regarding accessibility	As required	CEO Business Manager Academy Head	Any new construction will be fully accessible
Fire alarm	Currently only auditory			

## IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF WRITTEN INFORMATION TO PUPILS

This will include planning to make written information, that is normally provided by the school to its pupils, available to disabled pupils. Examples might include handouts, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.

In planning to make written information available to disabled pupils we again need to establish the current level of need and be able to respond to changes in the range of need. The school will need to identify agencies and sources of such materials to be able to make the provision when required. The schools ICT infrastructure will enable us to access a range of materials supportive to need.

<b>Targets</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
Inclusive discussion of access to information in all parent/teacher annual meetings	Ask parents about preferred formats for accessing information	Annually	SENCO / Academy Head	Staff more aware of preferred methods of communication, and parents feel included.
Review information to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible	Provide information and letters in clear print in "simple" English School office will support and help parents to access information and complete school forms Ensure website and all document accessible via the school website can be accessed by the visually impaired	During induction On-going Current	Administrators	All parents receive information in a form that they can access
Ensure all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats	Guidance to staff on dyslexia and accessible information	On-going	SENCO	Staff produce their own information
Annual review information to be as accessible as possible	Use child friendly review formats, ensure the right staff are in place to help express the genuine voice of the child.	On-going	SENCO	Staff respond to pupils' preferred method of communications

We are aware that the need for reasonable adjustments may arise at any time. These will be reviewed as and when the need is identified. We will consult with experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.