

The Rise School Accessibility Policy (September 2023)

Introduction, Legislation and guidance

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education benefits, facilities and services provided.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Our school aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, the complaints procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

Under the Equality Act 2010, protection from unlawful discrimination is provided to the following nine Protected Characteristics:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation.

The Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations (such as private clubs).

It is unlawful for a school or other education provider to treat a disabled student unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination;
- Indirect discrimination;
- Discrimination arising from a disability;
- Harassment.

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Direct discrimination

An education provider must not treat a disabled student less favourably simply because of their disability. For instance, they can't refuse admission to disabled applicants because they are disabled.

Indirect discrimination

An education provider must not do something for all students which would have a negative effect on disabled students, unless they have a genuine reason. For example, only providing course application forms in one format, which may not be accessible for disabled people.

Discrimination arising from a disability

An education provider must not discriminate against a student because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

For example, they can't stop a disabled pupil going outside at break time because it takes them too long to get there.

Harassment

Education providers must not harass students because of their disability. For example, a teacher must not shout at a disabled pupil if the disability means that they are unable to concentrate.

Victimisation

It is unlawful to victimise a child for anything done in relation to the Act by their parent or sibling/s.

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Making adjustments

Education providers must also make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that disabled students aren't discriminated against. Making reasonable adjustments could include:

- Changes to practices or procedures;
- Changes to physical features;
- Changes to how learners are assessed;
- Providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment).

Positive Action

Positive Action provisions allow schools to target measures designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim. For example, holding an SRE intervention group specifically reaching boys and addressing male adolescence.

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Auxiliary aids

The Act extends the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. Following consultation on implementation and approach, the duty came into force on 1 September 2012.

The Act makes it unlawful for the body responsible for the school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions;
- In the way it provides education for pupils;
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or;
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Related Policies

- Risk Assessment Policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Special Educational Needs (SEND) Policy
- Admissions Charging and Remissions Policy
- Adult at Risk Safeguarding Policy
- Child Protection Policy and Procedure
- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Exclusions Policy

The Plan

This plan aims to ensure that:

- Disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- The physical environment of the school enables disabled pupils and other stakeholders to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- Accessible information is available to disabled pupils and other stakeholders.

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

Starting points

The purpose and direction of the school's plan:

Our vision at The Rise School is to create a vibrant learning community and be an exemplar school of best practice for children with autism and social communication needs by enabling our pupils to access a broad age-related curriculum.

We aim to achieve this vision by creating an environment where:

- Pupils and adults are happy to come to school every day and are proud of what they achieve;
- Parents and carers are confident that their children are safe, happy, making good progress and that their voices are heard;
- All pupils are given the support and challenges they need to learn and succeed in the world beyond school – their quality of life is key;
- All staff create consistently positive learning experiences that engage and challenge all our autistic pupils.

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The Accessibility plan will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes and provide a projected plan for the four year period ahead of the next review date. This plan reflects new statutory requirements for the setting of equality objectives.

The Accessibility plan is structured to complement and support the school's equality objectives. We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access and that values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to reinforcing our culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school. The Rise School's Accessibility plan will show how access is to be improved for students with disabilities, staff and visitors to the school in a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

The Accessibility plan will contain relevant and timely actions to ensure access to the curriculum for all students, ensuring that students with a disability are as equally prepared for life as students who do not have a disability. (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of duties under the Equalities Act 2010). This covers teaching, learning and the wider curriculum of the school, such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these students in accessing the curriculum.

Curriculum

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsible	Success Criteria
Ensure all class based staff have access to training on disability issues	Audit staff to identify training needs and inform the CPD process	October (annually)	AHT	Increased confidence of staff in strategies of differentiation
Ensure all staff are aware of each pupils needs	Set up an information sharing system for all staff Display information relating to specific needs in the staffroom	Ongoing	AHT	All staff aware of individual pupils access needs and specific medical needs
Ensure all staff are able to use the SEN software and resources	Make list of available resources so that staff are aware and ensure that all staff are able to use them (offer training where needed)	Beginning of each academic year	AHT	Resources are used effectively in lessons across the school
Review the curriculum annually to ensure that it is accessible to the current cohort.	Include a reference to disability equality in all curriculum reviews	Annually	AHT/ Subject leaders	Curriculum accessed fully by all students

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Access to the Physical Environment

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsible	Success Criteria
Ensure that the school is aware of access needs of children, staff & parents/ carers Include questions in the confidential pupil information questionnaire about pupil and parent/ carer access needs – ensure they are met	Individual access plans for all children where necessary Undertake confidential survey of staff and governors to ascertain access needs and make sure they are met.	Autumn term	SBM HoS	Access plans in place and awareness of pupils needs among staff. All stakeholders are able to access the site and all activities.
Ensure that all pupils can be evacuated safely	Ensure that PEEPs are in place where necessary and that staff are aware of their responsibilities	September annually	SBM	All children are evacuated safely in fire drills.
Ensure access and escape routes are suitable for all.	During planning of temporary and permanent buildings ensure that the needs of disabled people are met.	Ongoing	Site Manager/SBM (on a day to day basis) Head of Property/IT (for building works)	All common facilities are located on the ground floor, ramp access where necessary, good signage for the visually impaired etc...

Access to Information

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsible	Success Criteria
Review information to parents and carers to ensure that it is accessible	Consult as to what information is needed on Pupil Information questionnaire on entry. Review all letters to make sure they are written in plain English Produce Newsletter in large print if needed	Ongoing	HoS	All parents receive information in a format that is accessible

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Inclusive discussion of access to information in all annual reviews	Consult with parents/ carers and children about access to information and preferred formats in all reviews. Develop strategies to meet needs	Ongoing	AHT	Staff more aware of pupils' preferred methods of communication

This document will be reviewed every 2 years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

It will be approved by the Rise School's Governing Body on a bi-annual basis.

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