



Accessibility Plan

September 2023 – July 2026

Date of Next Review: September 2025

Person Responsible: Miss Tina Partridge

1. Introduction

This Accessibility Policy and Plan are drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010.

School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

Old Park School is committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, families, and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

Our Accessibility Plan is drawn up to cover a three-year period.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school complies with the general equality duty and the new specific duties. The equality duty now includes all those with protected characteristics, which makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

This plan sets out how the Governing Board of Old Park School intends to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

The context of the school and current position

Old Park School is a large community special school that caters for up to 154 pupils aged 4-19 with severe and profound learning difficulties.

All pupils have an Education, Health Care Plan. There is a wide diversity of need.

All pupils have complex communication needs and many pupils come from families where English is not their first language. A number of pupils are described as a 'Child Looked After'. Pupil's standards of attainment are well below national expectations for pupils of their age.

Pupil's at Old Park School are generally operating within a cognition level of 0-60 months. The social and economic backgrounds of our pupils are mixed as pupils are drawn from across the borough of Dudley and neighboring authorities. Many travel on local authority transport to and from the school.

Old Park School was identified as requiring a new building (Ofsted 2004) as the then current outdated accommodation was deemed unsatisfactory. Funding was secured for a new school, (October 2005) and the new build was completed and ready for us to occupy in November 2011. The school is fully accessible. Ensuring that the needs of all pupils have been met was a priority in the design.

At Old Park our vision, mission and values are driven by four key areas: the unique learner, positive relationships, engaging environments, learning and development. These are at the centre of our school ethos and the principles of each are shared by all members of our school community. They are underpinned by our culture of safeguarding. Each area is used to develop the provision we provide now, tomorrow and in the future.

The Unique Learner

Placing the young person at the centre of all that we do.

We value individuality and inclusion.

At Old Park we strive to:

- Offer personalised provision that utilises the young person's EHCP to tailor our approach, addressing barriers to learning
- Provide a total communication environment that encourages and values the voice of the individual, their choices and contributions

Positive Relationships

Working collaboratively towards the same goal.

We value trust and teamwork.

At Old Park we strive to:

- Foster a sense of belonging for our young people and their family
- Develop and maintain strong partnerships with our school colleagues and those from other agencies including health and social care

Engaging Environments

Utilising our school environment and the community around us.

We value responsibility and respect.

At Old Park we strive to:

- Offer opportunities for practical learning, using the local environment to develop and apply skills
- Teach a sense of responsibility and accountability in caring for the world around us

Learning and Development

Fostering a sense of independence, high aspirations and achievement.

We value engagement and encouragement

At Old Park we strive to:

- Deliver outstanding teaching and learning, celebrating each achievement and encouraging young people to reach their potential

-Prepare our young people for each transition into adult life, developing confidence, independence and resilience

Our Motto is: 'Towards Independence'.

The School Development Plan (SDP) has been developed by the Senior Leadership team and covers key headline projects over a period of three years. The plan takes account of external and internal factors impacting on the progress and achievement of all pupils in the school and is monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher, Governors and Senior Leadership Team. Families, pupils and stakeholders are also regularly consulted about their views of the school and how we can improve.

2.Current Facilities and Resources

The school is currently arranged in phases as we strive to make each area of the school age appropriate so that pupils enjoy a different experience as they progress through the school. Each phase is led by one of our Assistant Headteacher's and each class has a rationale that clarifies pupils, organisation, curriculum and ways of working.

The facilities in school are greatly enhanced as the school is purpose built to meet the needs of pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. The school team and pupils were actively involved with the architects to ensure pupils learning and priority needs were met within the building. As well as visiting many new builds the design has followed 'Building Bulletin 77 and 91: Designing for disabled children and children with special educational needs'. This non-statutory design guidance on accommodation for children with SEN and disabilities for special schools included: 'inclusive design principles', guidance on individual spaces and technical guidance on building construction, environmental services, furniture, equipment and ICT.

Although as the school population has grown, some of the original specialist rooms have been converted into classrooms.

Key features of the build include:

- Recommended building bulletin learning spaces and classroom sizes
- Hoist tracking throughout the school ensuring inclusive learning environments
- Fully equipped care rooms in each phase of the school.
- Physiotherapy, medical and family room.
- Upstairs training rooms
- Wide corridors for easy access
- Classrooms designed to meet particular learning needs
- Accessible specialist areas- ICT, Food Technology, Sensory, Soft Play, Music.
- Accessible kitchen area is available in a Post 16 Classroom.
- There is a library and swimming pool with multi- sensory light and sound.
- Building materials, fixtures and fittings that ensure full accessibility.
- Lighting and paint schemes, carpeting and finishes to support pupils differing needs
- Fully accessible outside learning environments with inclusive play equipment and accessibility to all outside spaces.
- Signage throughout the school that provides a Total Communication environment.

4. Curriculum

All pupils have an Education Health Care Plan. In addition, pupils also have a Personal Provision Plan (PPP) which details the small step targets towards their end of key stage EHCP outcomes. This is evaluated and updated termly (at-half term).

An individualised approach to pupil development is implemented which ensures that all teaching is appropriately adapted and that pupils are achieving standards, which reflect their potential and personal best. Equal opportunities practice within the school aims to avoid discrimination against any pupil or parent/carer on the grounds of gender, race, religion, ability or disability, and to promote positive attitudes.

All pupils, regardless of the level of disability, have a right of access to all facilities and resources in school. Classroom activities and educational visits are planned so that they are relevant to all pupils within the group. A range of residential activities are offered, so that every pupil has access to residential experiences capable of meeting their needs, on a number of occasions during their school career.

Effective data analysis showing that all pupils, regardless of their learning difficulties and disabilities, gender or background, make equally good progress. The school has devised its own assessment tool enabling the school to demonstrate the good and often outstanding progress pupils make through whole school, group and individual analysis. Intervention strategies are in place for pupils who make less than expected progress. Ongoing work and development is taking place to refine this process, incorporating recent research into the use of Engagement profiles.

5. Staffing

The governors are responsible for ensuring that the school is staffed sufficiently and effectively. There is an induction policy in place, which ensures that staff are fully informed of school policy and practice. There is a professional development plan, which ensures that all staff receive relevant and appropriate training. It is the governors' aim to maintain a balanced variety of expertise within the school.

Staff are trained to meet the individual medical needs of pupils and the school has a nursing team who work closely with families to provide care, guidance and support. In addition, the school funds a Family Support Lead who leads on family involvement and Early Help. The FSL also acts as one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Teachers from the service for hearing and visually impaired pupils offer advice and regular monitoring of pupils. The NHS speech and language therapy service provide an assessment, monitoring and advisory role in relation to pupils' communication development, and any specific difficulties that arise. School also commission an independent Speech Therapist to work actively with pupils, staff and families. School receives support from both NHS occupational therapy and an independent service which provides support to the school, particularly in the area of sensory regulation. Physiotherapists visit school regularly to offer advice on physiotherapy programmes and to monitor the on-going appropriateness of aids used by pupils.

6. Inclusion and Community Links

Inclusion opportunities are set up for pupils as appropriate. All pupils access community facilities to enhance curriculum delivery. All community visits are carefully planned to ensure that curriculum objectives are being met for each pupil and that no pupil is excluded from a visit due to their disability.

Pupils are very proud of and committed to their school community. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities that contribute to improvements in the school and the wider community.

Activities in the wider community include:

- Works experience in the local community
- Residential experiences
- Working with peers from other settings on joint projects

Links are developed with local colleges and post 19 providers during the time that pupils are in the 14 to 19 phase of the school, prior to them leaving at 19 years.

Professional artists provide music / drama / art / dance workshops that are accessed by pupils, on a regular basis.

This policy was approved by members of the Governing body on -

Appendix 1 Accessibility Key Objectives

Key objectives should be read in conjunction with the School Development Plan and individual area action plans where appropriate.

To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school.

- To ensure that all new classroom-based staff receive appropriate curriculum based CPD within the first three terms of joining the school, ensuring they can best meet the needs of the pupil population they support. (Link to SDP 4.1)

To improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

- To evaluate and plan for developments of the outdoor playground spaces based upon current use and access, ensuring that the equipment and resources best meets the needs of our diverse population. (Link to SDP 1.2)
- To review how displays are used within school, ensuring that information is displayed in an accessible way, supports teaching, learning and celebration and does not hinder or prove to be a distraction for certain cohorts of pupils. (Link to SDP 1.2)

To improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school accessible to pupils and parents/carers. Examples might include newsletters, handouts, or information about school events.

- To ensure that all staff are both competent and confident in using a variety of communication strategies to support non-verbal pupils, through enhanced Speech and Language therapy provision within school. (Link to SDP 1.4)
- To upgrade the current symbol package software used within school, ensuring that it has the flexibility to support pupils using high-tech devices. (Link to SDP 1.4)

Linked Policies

This Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies, e.g.

- Staff development plan
- SEN policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Curriculum policies
- Self-Evaluation Form