



Accessibility Plan and Audit

Ponteland High School

2020-2024

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1. Aims

The aims of this Accessibility Plan are to ensure that Ponteland High School continues to work towards improving the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors to the school.

The Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions to:

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

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

Ponteland High School is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals; able bodied or disabled. We are committed to improving access to the physical environment, to the curriculum and to the provision of information in order to ensure access for all. 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. We work closely with the sensory support service to ensure that we are informed of any difficulties that students with VI or HI have in accessing the school site or curriculum.

Our school's complaints procedure sets out the process for raising any concerns relating to accessibility in school.

We have considered the views of a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including students, parents/carers, staff and governors of the school.

2. Legislation and guidance

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law. It simplifies the law and it extends protection from discrimination in some areas that were not previously covered. Schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment or sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that all children can access their facilities and services. The term 'reasonable' is not explicitly defined in the Act, which leaves it up to the discretion of the school to determine this. Some (but not all) of the factors that may influence a decision are:

- Financial resources of the school
- Cost of the aid or service
- Effectiveness of the aid
- Effect on other pupils
- Health and safety requirements
- Provisions already made by the SEN Framework

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 he or she has a physical or

mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her 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 students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

3. School aspects

All schools must also publish at least one specific and measurable equality objective. This or these must represent the equality challenges a school recognises a need to tackle. These objectives are set to cover each 4-year reporting cycle of the duty. The current cycle began on 1 April 2020 and objectives should last to April 2024. A school should report annually on progress towards meeting the objectives.

Current good practice

As part of transition procedures, we work with parents and feeder schools to clarify disability or health conditions. Where these are identified follow up meetings take place between parents/students and our SENDCo. Data is constantly reviewed with parents/carers of pupils on roll to ensure our records are accurate and amended promptly if required.

Enrichment

All pupils are given the opportunity to participate in a range of curricular and extracurricular activities where appropriate. Some aspects of extra-curricular activities may present particular challenges, for example:

- after-school clubs for pupils with physical impairments or use bus transport
- school trips for pupils with medical needs and/or low income

However, adjustments are made to allow participation where practicable.

Physical Environment

We moved into state-of-the-art facility in November 2020 with all of the benefits of a modern school building. It is a 3-storey building within a combined complex including a primary school and public leisure centre.

The site and building are easily accessed by car, bus or walking. There is substantial car parking on site with a number of dedicated disabled bays close to the building entrance. Disabled and wheelchair access to the building is excellent with a number of ground floor access points and no stairs to navigate. All entry points have double doors for ease of access. Within the building disabled students have the use of lifts to access the first and second floors. We have dedicated accessible toilets on every floor; each student toilet area is open plan and has at least one cubicle that can accommodate a wheelchair.

The main reception area is secure. It benefits from access to an interview room for parents/staff to meet and an accessible toilet. It has a low reception hatch, which is fully accessible to wheelchair users.

All faculty areas are accessible for all students to enable full access to the curriculum. Clear signage

is in place in corridors and at stair cases. Room numbering is clearly displayed on doors and vision panels, and easy to follow, i.e. G for Ground floor, F for First floor and S for second floor. The library area is located on the first floor. It is an open plan design with multiple entry/access points. Book cases are located around the perimeter of the library with all shelving at wheelchair accessible height.

There is a personal evacuation plan in place for individuals requiring them in the event of a fire/for drill.

Curriculum

Reasonable adjustments can be made to allow access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability. This includes adjustable work areas in science and technology classrooms, which are located on the ground floor. In addition, we will look at utilising other support mechanisms such as access to IT, adaptations to delivery and access to assessment aids such as a reader/scribe. The level of adjustments required to support access to the curriculum will be discussed with parents, student and pastoral/SEND teams supporting the student.

Information

The majority of information is directed home via email, therefore it may be necessary that different forms of communication are made available to enable all SEND pupils and their parents/carers access the information in a format appropriate to them. This will be discussed with all parties involved.

4. Action plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 so that the protected characteristics of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation are not barriers to participation and achievement. We also acknowledge that whilst financial disadvantage is not a legally protected characteristic, it is an aspect that can place limitations on participation and achievement.

Protected characteristic	Aim	Current position (benchmark)	Objectives	Actions to be taken/timescales	Person responsible	Evidence of success
		<i>Include established practice and practice under development</i>				
SEX	Ensure equal access to opportunities for both boys and girls Increase awareness of equality rights linked to sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Females: 50.9% Males: 49.1% 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the curriculum and extracurricular programme are available to all Ensure that SRE policy is fit for purpose Ensure that Assembly and PSHE programme consider equality duties and inform students about protected characteristics Ensure our pastoral system is supportive of all students Ensure the Staff Code of Conduct is updated and shared with staff at the start of each academic year 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all curriculum and extracurricular activities are available to all students and not limited to a single sex Develop and consult on a Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) policy (Dec 2020) Refine SRE policy in light of consultation responses, if required (Jan 2021) Implement SRE policy (Jan 2021) Review SRE policy and amend as appropriate (July 2021 and annually thereafter) Develop and continually review assembly programme to address issues related to sex, sexual orientation, religion/belief and race (ongoing) Review, update and distribute the Staff Code of Conduct (annually) 	KMC/JBA SMC SMC SMC SMC KMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Males and females equally represented in a range of subjects and activities Positive student engagement in SRE lessons Positive feedback from staff/students following RSE sessions No evidence of sexist, racist, homophobic, and/or anti-religion/belief behaviours within school, i.e. no 'on tow' or exclusions
RELIGION OR BELIEF	Ensure equal access to opportunities for all students regardless of religion or belief Increase awareness of equality rights linked to religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christian is our most common group: 51.8% No religion at 34.5% is next Remaining religious beliefs include Hindu, Muslim, Roman Catholic and Sikh 				
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Ensure equal access to opportunities for all students regardless of sexual orientation Increase awareness of equality rights linked to sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very small number of transgender students, i.e. 1 Very small number of children who identify as non-binary, i.e. 1 				
RACE	Ensure equal access to opportunities for all students regardless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 97.87% of our students are White British 				

	of race. Increase awareness of equality rights linked to race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.44% of our students are EAL 				
DISABILITY	Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability	<p>Our school offers a differentiated curriculum for all students</p> <p>We use resources tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum.</p> <p>Curriculum progress is tracked for all students, including those with a disability</p> <p>Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students with additional needs</p> <p>The curriculum is reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all students</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all students with a disability can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Access the full curriculum Fully participate in all aspects of school life Ensure the school is vigilant in reviewing access and participation responding to issues promptly 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff training to ensure quality first teaching to address individual needs in the classroom (ongoing) Bespoke training from external experts where applicable, i.e. sensory team, physio (as required) Clear working arrangements for CSAs in classrooms to enhance student learning (ongoing) Further adaptations to the PE curriculum to meet the needs of all students (July 2021) Ensure IT provision supports learning, identifying where gaps exist (July 2021) Review of extracurricular participation identifying any barriers Student voice feedback sought on classroom and extracurricular experiences (termly) 	LRO LRO LRO/SMC PDU MWA JBA LRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled students are fully engaged in school and participate in all curriculum areas Disabled students have access to extracurricular activities of their choosing The school is responsive to the outcomes of self-evaluation and student voice feedback to adapt provision promptly
	Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	<p>The new school building has been built to accommodate the needs of all students including those with disabilities. This includes consideration given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking and access points Wide corridors Lift access to all floors 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the systems and arrangements in place are working as planned Reinforce key message to staff, students and parents Quiet spaces in the Base available to identified students, where required, at break and lunch time 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out H&S checks to ensure that current systems and arrangements are in place and working (half termly) Personal evacuation plans for identified vulnerable students (annually) Book rooms in Base as required (termly) Student voice feedback sought on any site-related issues 	DJA LRO LRO LRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled students can easily navigate the school site The school is responsive to the outcomes of self-evaluation and student voice feedback to adapt provision promptly

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science and DT classrooms on floor level • Adjustable work areas in science and DT classrooms • Clear signage throughout the building • Outside areas are easily accessible and are flat • Multiple accessibility toilets on every floor and changing facilities • One-way system for movement and staircases 		(termly)							
	Improve the delivery of information to students with a disability	<p>Our school uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal signage • Resources Electronic Format • Google Classroom • Large print resources • Braille • Pictorial or symbolic representations • British Sign Language • Sound Transmitters • Large signage 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure students with Dyslexia are able to access learning resources and school information 2. Ensure students that need to have access to visual timetables and information have them 3. Ensure all learning resources, where possible, can be made available to students via Google Classroom 4. Develop the use of Mote to provide verbal feedback with online work 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase access/ training to text to speech reading software for identified students who experience Dyslexia (ongoing) 2. Ensure students have electronic copies of assessments and exams (ongoing) 3. Purchase InPrint 3 to create a bank of visual resources for students/ teachers to use (July 2021) 4. Continue to develop the scope and use of Google Classroom within school (ongoing) 5. Purchase a multi-year licence for Mote and develop its use in school (May 2021 and ongoing) 6. Design a new school website that is easier to navigate and access information (April 2021) 	LRO	LRO	LRO	KMC	KMC	KMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students have access to key information in an easy to use format • All students will be able to confidently use online tools to help access electronic learning resources and review them in their own time • Staff will increasingly make use of high-quality individualised verbal feedback using Mote

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Map <p>Consistent signage design and repeated patterns</p>				
FINANCIAL DISADVANTAGE	Ensure equal access to opportunities for all students reducing or eliminating financial disadvantage as a barrier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 12% of our students qualify for Pupil Premium funding 	Please refer to our Pupil Premium report outlining our use of this funding			

Key documents

[SRE policy](#)

SRE curriculum [overview](#) and [detail](#)

Assembly rota/programme

5. Monitoring arrangements

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

It will be approved by the Ponteland High School Academy Committee.

6. Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Risk assessment policy
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs and disability policy
- Supporting students with medical conditions policy

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit

Item	Issue	Green	Amber	Red	Action Plan	Cost
1	Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?				The occupational therapists for each individual student with a disability, have approved our furniture and equipment as suitable	
2	Are pathways and routes logical and well signed?					
3	Do you have emergency and evacuation procedures for specific students with a disability?				Yes, we have personal evacuation procedures in place for all vulnerable students with a disability currently at the school and have been updated for the new school	
4	Is appropriate furniture and equipment provided to meet the needs of individual students?				Yes – laptops are provided where necessary, as well as height adjusting furniture I science and technology classrooms	
5	Do furniture layouts allow easy movement for students with disabilities?				Seating plans are used to ensure that students with disabilities are seated appropriately.	
6	Are quiet rooms/ calming rooms available to children who need this facility?				Yes; The Base	
7	Are car park spaces reserved for disabled people near the main entrance?				Yes. There are multiple accessible parking bays located close to the main reception and student access	

8	Are there barriers to easy movement around the site and to the main entrance?				No	
9	Are steps needed for access to the main entrance?	Not applicable			No	
10	Do all those steps have a contrasting colour edging?	Not applicable			Yes	
11	If there are steps, is a ramp provide to access the main entrance?	Not applicable			Yes	
12	Is there a continuous handrail on each ramp and stair flight and landing to the main entrance?				Yes	
13	Is it possible for a wheelchair user to get through the principal door unaided?				Yes	
14	If no is an alternative wheelchair accessible entrance provided?	Not applicable				
15	If there is a lobby at the principal entrance, is it possible for a wheelchair user to negotiate the doors?				Yes	
16	Do all internal doors allow a wheelchair user to get through unaided?				No, the majority of doors require assistance to open however there is electronic door access to the main building for students	
17	Do all corridors have a clear unobstructed width of 1.2m?				Yes	
18	Does each block have a wheelchair accessible toilet?				Yes	
19	Does the relevant block have accessible changing rooms/shower facilities?				We have one in the SSC accessible bathroom	

20	If the block is on more than one level, do the internal steps/ stairs have contrast colour edgings?				Yes	
21	Is there a continuous handrail on each internal stair flight and landing?				Yes	
22	Do the blocks have a lift that can be used by wheelchair users?				Yes	
23	Do you have any sort of mechanical means provided to move between floors? If, yes please state.				A lift.	
24	Is it possible for a wheelchair user to use all the fire exits from areas to which they have access?					
25	Are non-visual guides used to assist people to use the buildings?				No, this is something that we do not currently have the need for	
26	Could any of the décor be confusing or disorientating for students with disabilities?				No	
27	Is a hearing induction loop available (either fixed or portable) in the school?				We have hearing loops and sound field systems in some areas of the school. Identified students are timetabled to classrooms with these facilities.	
28	Do emergency alarm systems cater for those with hearing impairment? (e.g. flashing light)				For the majority of students audible warning systems are fine. For HI students there is no flashing light fitted to the school's alarm system, however, there are clear electronic signs for students to follow. These students would also have a Personal Evacuation Plan	