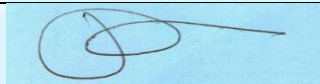


# Forest Way School

## Accessibility Policy

Name: GAIL SEATON

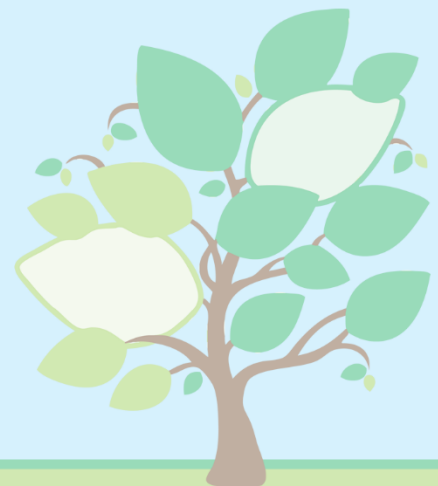
Signature:



Title: HEAD

Date: SEPTEMBER 2020

Next Review Date: AUGUST 2023



Statutory

Non-Statutory

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## **Accessibility Policy**

### **1. Aims**

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.

### **Core Values**

*'Thrive at Forest Way*

*Where young people are at the heart of everything!'*

We will provide the HIGHEST QUALITY education where young people are ENABLED to:

- ACHIEVE their potential
- Be as INDEPENDENT as they can be, in readiness for life beyond school
- Have the highest level of COMMUNICATION possible
- Be SAFE and HAPPY

*Our highly COMMITTED, PROFESSIONAL staff will work TOGETHER to:*

- Provide an EXCITING, ENGAGING and ever evolving curriculum that meets the INDIVIDUAL and HOLISTIC needs of all our young people
- Work COLLABORATIVELY with families and other professionals

- Create a WELCOMING and RESPECTFUL environment
- Recognise ABILITIES not disabilities
- PRAISE and REWARD
- NURTURE and SUPPORT
- Be REFLECTIVE and always strive for further IMPROVEMENT
- Be OUTWARD FACING, LEARN from and SUPPORT colleagues in other schools

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.

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

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents, staff and trustees of the school

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

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 January 2015](#), '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.

## **3. Current Good Practice**

### **Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum**

Below is a list of ways that access to the curriculum is increased for disabled pupils. This includes pupils who may require a wheelchair, have a hearing impairment (HI) and those with visual impairments (VI) plus their SEN needs.

- Our school offers a highly differentiated curriculum for all pupils, this includes a sensory curriculum for those pupils with more complex needs and work experience. Curriculum Leaders monitor and evaluate their areas

of responsibility effectively to ensure equality of access for all pupils and pupil outcomes are the highest possible.

- Highly trained LSAs/TAs support in classes and during off-site trips and activities. Disabled pupils are supported in class and during off-site trips through one-to-one support or in small groups from LSAs/STAs. LSAs/STAs provide one-to-one, pair or small group support with classwork, differentiation/assessment of tasks, encouraging participation, independence, supporting organisation and management of individual needs.
- In additional ELSA trained staff work closely with students identified as requiring extra support.
- We offer a 'Total Communication' environment.
- The school has a qualified PE specialist who leads this curriculum area. We include differentiated tasks so that all pupils have access to high quality PE. Students with physical needs have access to more frequent swimming lessons to support these needs. Participation in extracurricular clubs and out of schools sporting activities are organised to enable accurate matching of pupils needs to the activity. Gifted and talented pupils are supported through a route that includes national level athletics competitions.
- Access to laptop computers and iPads. This provision is especially helpful for dyspraxia and dyslexic pupils. Some VI pupils have access to their own laptops through the specialist teaching service. Staff use technology to enhance pupils learning experience.
- Use of interactive whiteboards. This greatly increases visual stimulus accessibility and allows background colours to be changed to suit students' requirements.
- Differentiation. Class work and homework tasks are achievable tasks set for disabled pupils. Staff use enlarged material/VAK resources to support VI and other pupils who learn well using these methods. Different learning styles are encouraged and are met through the delivery of 'differentiated', 'personalised' and 'inclusive' lessons in all subject areas. Practical activities such as Forest Schools are integral to the curriculum.
- Staff training. Staff are trained from external agencies or in-house to support disabled pupils during school or off-site trips. Training from appropriate agencies may be necessary for staff to develop further knowledge in the availability of specialist resources. We aim to ensure all staff are familiar with technology and practices to assist pupils with disabilities. In addition to this staff will be given access to update their skills and knowledge in supporting pupils with Autism, VI, HI and medical needs.
- External agency support. External agencies support disabled students through in school meetings with pupils and the relevant member of staff. External agency reports are summarized and circulated to staff in order for staff to implement professional recommendations from outside agencies e.g. seating arrangements use of specialist equipment, targets etc. External agencies which may be involved with students are Visual Impairment Team (VI), Hearing Impairment Team (HI), Occupational Therapy (OT), Educational Psychology (EP), Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Autism Outreach (AO) and Social Care, CAMHS, a designated staff member and the Diana Nurse team.

- Individual Timetables. An individualised timetable may be necessary for some students with disabilities or SEN. This would be arranged by Senior Management. A broad and balanced curriculum is offered to enable the pupil access to as many different specialisms as possible. This is usually an interim measure to support a pupil back into their class or a transition process preparing to move to another specialist provision.
- Pupils with medical needs are supported by staff to ensure that they can access the curriculum, this does include home schooling where appropriate.
- PPG/LAC/PPG+/Catch-up premium. Pupil's expenditure is based on a detailed improvement plan that is monitored and evaluated regularly. The funding is used to directly enhance the pupil's provision, as well as enrichment activities. All information regarding this can be found on our website. Again, we will use this information to benefit all pupils in the school as required.
- Financial contributions. At no time will any pupil not be included in any activity based on the absence of voluntary contribution. Where possible the school will fund opportunities to ensure that all pupils are included. All parent/carers are encouraged to speak to the Headteacher if they are in need of support. Where possible we will guide and assist or direct to the relevant sources to support them.
- Trips and visits. Teachers are required to risk assess every off-site activity to ensure that all pupils are included in these opportunities. If a risk is too high for individual pupils, staff will communicate this with parent/carers and offer a suitable alternative activity. Our main priority is to keep a child safe whilst they are in our care.
- Short term physical needs. At times pupils may need additional support due to operations or broken limbs etc. Where possible the school will link with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure that a pupil can access the full site or if needed can access a suitable location whilst they require the use of mobility aids. If required staff will organise work to be sent home if needed. Again, every individual case will need to be discussed with the SLT to ensure that the issue has been risk assessed and that we have medical support for training/access purposes.
- Transition process. At Forest Way, we welcome pupils to access our provision at convenient dates. This enables us to complete vital information to ensure that a child settles quickly into school. Home visits can be included in this process as this enables us to build relationships with all adults involved in a pupil's life. This process enables us to plan efficiently and develop areas to ensure all pupils can access our environment.

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of wider professionals to ensure barriers to learning are reduced and enable pupils to reach their full potential whilst accessing the school's facilities. Forest Way School strives to be an inclusive school for all enabling equal opportunities across our curriculum.

**Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided**

Forest Way School is an Area Special School constructed in 2008 and open to pupils in January 2009. At the time of its construction and as a new special school providing education opportunities for pupils with a wide range of disabilities ranging from moderate to multiple and profound learning difficulties, it would have been fully compliant with all necessary accessibility current at that time. In 2013, The Croft was purchased by the school and converted from residential to educational use with full access provided to all pupils in terms of increasing opportunities for life and independence skills. Each year and on each pupil's admission great care is taken to ensure that the school facilities are accessible to all. Forest Lodge, a new purpose built modular two classroom unit opened in August 2019, which is fully accessible to all pupils. Construction is underway for another new building for a specialist autism provision for 8 to 10 pupils whose main area of need is communication and interaction, which will open in August 2020.

### **Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils**

All information issued by the school aims to be user friendly. We have a 'Total Communication' environment, which includes the use of pictures, symbols and images that are used throughout the school to support the pupils' communication, reading and understanding. We encourage parents and professionals to take up the offer of having communications sent to them electronically. Parents can also access information about their child's progress using photos on the Tapestry system, for which they have their own log in.

For a child with visual impairment and hearing impairment we receive support from Leicestershire Specialist Teaching Service at the LA in modifying printed materials into a format to meet the needs of individual children and for parents who might also have a visual impairment. Staff have had access to different training opportunities to maximize the learning environment for the pupils for example Postural Management training from the NHS Physiotherapists, Eating and Drinking Training and VI training. We make good use of social stories, symbols, visual timetables and now and next strips to support pupils.

All staff attend weekly Makaton training sessions and are trained in other areas of communication to meet the needs of all pupils, such as PECs, AAC devices, communication books and Eye Gaze equipment. This ensures that the teaching and learning for all pupils is at the correct level and also provides an element of challenge. Parent Makaton courses have been run for the previous 2 years by our 'in house' Makaton trainer, these continue to be very popular and well received by Parent/Carers.

Our Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy recognises that all behaviour is a form of communication so we use behaviour data to ensure we make the curriculum as accessible as possible based on the pupil's unique needs. We work with CAMHS and NHS Speech and Language Therapists. We also commission our own Speech and Language Therapist who works with students

The school will make itself aware of local services for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested. Forest Way has a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is also the Single Point of Contact (SPOC), in addition there are 7 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who deal with any concerns around a child and work closely with social care as and when needed. We communicate with other agencies including the Diana Nurses.

'Data will be processed in line with the requirements and protections set out in the General Data Protection Regulation'

### **3. Action plan**

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Objectives</b> <i>State short, medium and long-term objectives</i>	<b>Actions to be taken</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Date to complete actions by</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	<p><u>Long Term</u></p> <p>To ensure that the curriculum continues to meet the changing needs of all the pupils at Forest Way outcomes, including the Communication &amp; Interaction Unit – The Den</p> <p><u>Medium/Short Term</u></p> <p>SIP ensures that strategic priorities drive the curriculum development and outcomes are monitored, evaluated and development points identified and acted upon.</p>	<p>Curriculum development remains high profile and is a strategic school priority</p> <p>All staff trained to a high level.</p> <p>For all staff to undertake performance management, targets linked to strategic priorities and CPD linked. Blue Sky in use.</p> <p>Comprehensive Induction of new staff including NQTs</p>	GS/LT	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>By July 2021</p>	<p>Pupil outcomes remain high</p> <p>Admissions</p>



Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	<p><u>Long Term</u></p> <p>To ensure that the environment is accessible to all of our pupils.</p> <p><u>Medium Short Term</u></p> <p>To ensure that wheelchair users are enabled to move from main school to the Croft and Forest Lodge as independently as possible.</p>	<p>Needs of all new pupils fully assessed to ensure smooth transition and accessibility is equitable.</p> <p>Transition coordinated fully and is effective.</p> <p>Close working with SENA regarding intake</p>	GS/LT/BM	Ongoing	<p>Equality of access for all.</p> <p>Pupil outcomes remain high</p>
Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability	<p><u>Ongoing</u></p> <p>To ensure that the 'Total Communication' environment supports the needs of all pupils in enabling access to information.</p>	<p>High quality training for all staff</p> <p>Communication Mentors in each class</p> <p>High priority given to communication as part of SIP</p>	GS/LT	Ongoing	All pupils have communication needs met and are enabled

#### **4. Monitoring arrangements**

This document will be reviewed every **3** years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

It will be approved by the Board of Trustees