



Accessibility Policy

Introduction

This Accessibility Plan is compliant with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Committee Members are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which 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 line with the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to reinforcing our culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school. We will challenge negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and are committed to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion, reflecting the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility).

Rationale

This plan outlines the proposals of the Management Committee to increase access to education for students with disabilities in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act 2010.

1. Increasing the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum;
2. Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which students with disabilities can take advantage of education and associated services;
3. Improving information delivery to students with disabilities.

The Management Committee also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and will:

- Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities
- Ensure that employees with disabilities are supported with special provision to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
- Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

The plan will be resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised in consultation with the:

- Parents of students
- Employees
- Members of the Management Committee
- External partners

Definition of Equality Act 2010

- “A person has a disability 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 carry out normal day to day activities” Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments and also hidden impairments. In the DDA ‘substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’. ‘Long-term’ means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months.
- The definition is broad and includes children with a wide range of impairments, including learning disabilities, dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), diabetes or epilepsy, where the effect of the impairment on the student’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is adverse, substantial and long-term.



Objectives

- to continue to improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, facilities and services provided, and to improve the availability of accessible information to any disabled person;
- to challenge negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to develop a culture of awareness, respect, tolerance and inclusion;
- improve the availability of accessible written information;
- to ensure that all students have equal access to a balanced and differentiated curriculum;
- to provide access to the curriculum for disabled pupils without disadvantaging the education of other students in the school;
- to ensure that all disabled students have access to outstanding pastoral care
- to ensure disabled students can participate fully in extra-curricular activities, clubs, school trips and all other opportunities afforded to them.

Normal day-to-day activity

The measure of whether the impairment affects normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects one or more of the following: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; perception of risk of physical danger.

Accessibility for disabled students and the school curriculum

- Monitoring those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled pupils to access; where necessary, re-rooming to more easily accessible classrooms.
- Investigating what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled pupils;
- Exploring alternative provision and collaboration that will assist disabled students to learn, including liaison with the Local Authority.

Accessibility - The current physical environment of the school

- The approach to the main school reception is fully accessible to disabled staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
- A disabled access toilet exists in the main part of the school
- There are also designated parking spaces in close proximity to the main school entrance.
- Parents have the opportunity to request access arrangements for Parents 'Evening and other events held in school.
- Small group lessons take place in various intervention small spaces throughout the school.
- Break Out and Time Out spaces are available for vulnerable students and those with additional needs, at break and lunchtime.
- Safe areas all around school.
- Physical environment that is safe and welcoming.
- Ground floor site enables complete accessibility for all pupils, staff and visitors.
- Clear visual signage.

Larches High School will continue to take account of the needs of students and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.



Curriculum

The curriculum at Larches High School will be adapted as necessary to ensure that students with a disability are as equally prepared for life as those who able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning in all lessons, the wider curriculum such as participation in enrichment activities, sports, activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist pupils in accessing the curriculum. The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of Local Authority services, such as specialist advisers and health professionals.

At Larches High School we have:

- Ensured close liaison with our referring partners to gather relevant information for students during the admissions process.
- Liaised with external agencies regarding individual students (physical, oral, sensory and auditory, behaviour).
- Used Teaching Assistants effectively both in and outside of the classroom.
- Developed and implemented Pupil Support Plans through the sharing of information and strategies with staff.
- Adapted teaching methods and styles to facilitate access for all students –
Throughout KS4, and selectively for KS3 students, used whole school data and SEND specialist testing, students to identify students for Access Arrangements (exam concessions).
- An outstanding pastoral system, which supports, encourages and caters for all students.
- Tailored intervention packages for pupils whose holistic and special educational needs have been assessed using a variety of assessment models.
- Assessed the KS4 curriculum and made changes so that it includes a broader range of courses, including BTECs, and Functional Skills and a broad vocational menu.
- Provided high quality CPD for specific SEN issues for TAs and all Teaching Staff.
- Used new software such as IDL to provide specific/targeted support.
- Use of lap tops and iPads as appropriate.
- Identified children classified as 'Pupil Premium', and their curriculum progress is tracked and supported by all teaching staff and members of the Senior Leadership Team. Interventions at subject level are recorded and monitored. Similarly students' attendance is monitored by attendance officer and pupil support manager.
- At Key Stage 4 ensured the curriculum is increasingly personalised: students all follow English, Maths and Science GCSE courses with PE, PSHE /Careers. The pupils can then choose from a range of in-school academic options or off-site vocational packages.
- Ensured that Pastoral support enshrines the principles of Every Child Matters. All students across the Key Stages have access to appropriate pastoral support dependent on their age and specific needs.

Communication

- Produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired pupils;
- Investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- Investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site.

The school will monitor ways to improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities and make full use of local services for providing information in alternative formats (e.g. Braille or audio) when required or requested.

Priorities moving forward:

- To review the building, outside spaces, drives, grounds and site annually;
- To address any concerns arising from the annual site inspection;
- Maximize access to all parts of the building and grounds;
- Increased use of Teachers to parents and email to improve home-school communication



Summary

The Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information. Whole school training will recognize the need to continue raising awareness for staff and the Management Committee on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010. The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, Strategies and documents:

1. Equality Policy
2. Health & Safety Policy
3. Special Educational Needs Policy/Special Educational Needs Information Report
4. Behaviour for Learning Policy
5. School Development and Improvement Plan

The Accessibility Plan is an 'umbrella' document: it encompasses existing policies and development plans, implemented and monitored by a range of teachers, the senior leadership team and Members of the Management Committee.

The Plan is reviewed each year by the senior leadership team, with individual responsibilities for specific sections of the Policy as noted; it is also reviewed by the Management Committee.

The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through the Committee Members Standards and Effectiveness Committee and will be published on the school website.

The Accessibility Plan may be reviewed by Ofsted during inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Purpose of this policy:

This policy supports the legislative framework for responding to requests for information under the statutory access regimes established by:

- the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
- the Data Protection Act (DPA)
- the Disability Discrimination Act
- the Equality Act (2010)
- and other legislation that provides a right of access

In addition the School has its own policies on Data Protection and Complaints.