

Accessibility Plan 2023-2026

INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However, the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

It should be noted that this definition is not just regarding physical difficulties but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition, there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as:

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Contenance
- 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

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The Federation has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;

- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage the pupil faces in comparison to his non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment cannot be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

With regard to what may be 'reasonable', the Code of Practice will include factors that should be taken into account. It will be for the Federation to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) provisions, under which local authorities have to provide auxiliary aids and services where an EHCP details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have an EHCP (or the plan does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the Federation.

As in the previous legislation the Federation is not under a duty to make alterations to the physical environment.

AIMS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Schools are required to have an Accessibility Plan detailing how they will improve access to the physical environment, increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils, and how they will improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. The Federation of St Martin's & Seabrook School is committed to equal opportunities for all members of the Federation's community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum;
- increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the Federation's schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Furthermore, under our equality duties, wherever possible, the Federation intends to make reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of its schools to enable any disabled person (pupil, parent/carer, employees or visitor) to access facilities and services and improve the availability of accessible information to any disabled person.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To make all reasonable adjustments to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the Federation's community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- To make all reasonable adjustments to provide an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents 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.
- To provide all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles, endorsing the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - ❖ setting suitable learning challenges;
 - ❖ responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs;
 - ❖ overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

St Martin's CEP School

- Maximum pupil numbers of 210
- Approximately 17% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals
- Approximately 14% of pupils receive SEN support
- Buildings are a mix of one and two storeys with a number of steps and stairs.

Seabrook CEP School

- Maximum pupil numbers of 105
- Approximately 11% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals
- Approximately 11% of pupils receive SEN support
- Buildings are a mix of one storey building with a number of steps and stairs.

SCOPE OF THE PLAN

1. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- a) to investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled pupils to access can be improved;
- b) to further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled pupils;
- c) to investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled pupils to learn.

The Federation plans to increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the schools such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and off-site visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. The Federation will continue to seek and follow the advice of Local Authority (LA) services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trust.

All staff who work with disabled pupils will receive appropriate and timely training. They will be guided by the Inclusion Lead and outside agencies (where involved).

2. Improving the physical environment of the schools to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

- a) in consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the sites;
- b) improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas;
- c) investigate ways of making the sites more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

The Federation will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of its sites and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is required regardless of whether the Federation has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

Physical aids to access education are provided where it is deemed they would benefit a pupil; funding is secured through the LA (where this qualifies) and the schools' SEND budget allocations.

3. Improving the delivery of information that is provided for pupils who are disabled

The Federation will strive to:

- a) produce all its literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired pupils;
- b) investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- c) investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the schools' sites.

The Federation plans to improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the schools and the schools' events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The Federation will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested. The Executive Headteacher and Inclusion Lead (SENCo) will monitor where this may be necessary.

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONTROL

The Executive Headteacher with the Finance Monitoring Team will review the financial implications of the Federation's Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process.

The Federation will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

MONITORING OF THE PLAN

Monitoring will take place as part of the annual cycle of governor monitoring activities and will be reported to the full Governing Board at least once a year.

ACTION PLAN

1. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum									
Success Criteria – Improvement Indicators				Evaluation – Who, How and When					
The Federation community is aware of issues relating to Access. Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities. ICT equipment being used in lessons effectively to support the learning of pupils with disabilities.				<u>WHO</u>	<u>HOW</u>	<u>WHEN</u>			
				Key Actions	Lead Person	Resources Allocated	Financial Implications	Timeline	Monitoring
Training for Awareness Raising of Disability Issues: (a) Provide training for staff, governors, pupils and parents. (b) Discuss perception of issues with staff.				EHT Inclusion Lead (SENCos)	nil	Costed as part of staff training budget	Part of annual training programme.	Governing Board to receive reports from EHT	Governing Board to undertake an annual evaluation.
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils by: review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in each classroom.				Classroom based teachers	nil	nil	Part of preparation before the start of school.	Heads of Schools (HoS)	EHT

The Federation of St Martin's & Seabrook CEP Schools

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Reviewed: March 2025

Review Date: March 2026

When preparing for activities off site, staff make preliminary visit, where practical, and assess access.	Lead member of staff	Possible release for staff to visit venue	Costed as part of supply budget	Prior to each activity	EHT to check risk assessments and activity overviews.	Governing Board to undertake an annual evaluation.
When establishing a club, adults are to take into consideration the needs of all pupils and produce written criteria for admission which are to be approved by the EHT and then shared with prospective members, parents/carers,	All adults running clubs	nil	nil	Part of preparation	EHT to approve criteria and scrutinise membership.	Governing Board to undertake an annual evaluation.
When admitting children with additional or extra needs, advice and training will be sought regarding how to meet their needs.	Inclusion Lead (SENCo)	Visits to current setting, meeting with professional colleagues.	Supply cover. Specialist equipment.	On-going	EHT to check that support has been identified and implemented.	Governing Board to undertake an annual evaluation.
Make best use of technology to assist access to the curriculum.	Inclusion Lead (SENCo)		Part of ICT budget	On-going	EHT	Governing Board to undertake an annual evaluation.

2. Improving the physical environment of the schools to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services						
Success Criteria – Improvement Indicators				Evaluation – Who, How and When		
The Federation can demonstrate improvements in the environment of the schools that enable disabled pupils to have greater access to the learning environment and feel safe and secure.				<u>WHO</u>	<u>HOW</u>	<u>WHEN</u>
Key Actions	Lead Person	Resources Allocated	Financial Implications	Timeline	Monitoring	Evaluation
During Health and Safety visits HoS to make a note of obstructions and to arrange for removal.	HoS	Termly reviews	nil	Termly ongoing	EHT to receive regular reports.	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT.
Regular reviews of fire and emergency evacuation procedures for those with additional needs. (PEEPS)	EHT	nil	nil	Annually	Health & Safety monitoring governors to check that procedures are in place.	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT to include any alterations to evacuation routes.
Improve the visual environment for pupils with visual impairments including: appropriate colour schemes that create contrasting door frames, skirting boards, carpeting and walls	EHT	EHT to arrange for specialist advice	Part of on-going building maintenance plan	Annually	Health & Safety monitoring governors to report on work undertaken.	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT.
Ensure that the signs and symbols to support children and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing are appropriate and sufficient.	EHT	EHT to arrange for specialist advice	Part of on-going building maintenance plan	Annually	Health & Safety monitoring governors to report on work undertaken.	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT.

3. Improving the delivery of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are disabled and for disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the schools’ sites						
Success Criteria – Improvement Indicators				Evaluation – Who, How and When		
Information provided by the Federation for pupils and others is available in accessible formats for those with disabilities. Pupils experience different styles of teaching to meet their learning needs.				<u>WHO</u>	<u>HOW</u>	<u>WHEN</u>
Key Actions	Lead Person	Resources Allocated	Financial Implications	Timeline	Monitoring	Evaluation.
Key documentation to be available in alternative formats and be accessible using a variety of media such as: ipads, laptops, Internet, text, Blog. Language used is free from jargon	Admin staff	Time needed	nil	Ongoing	EHT	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT
Seek views of parents/carers regarding improvements that could be made to communications.	HoS	Time needed	nil	Annually	EHT	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT
Classroom staff to use a range of resources to meet the individual needs of disabled pupils.	Class teacher; teaching assistant		Curriculum budget	Ongoing	HoS to monitor planning, undertake lesson observations and work scrutiny to ensure that teachers enable all children to access curriculum.	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT
Training for key staff in signing for specific disabilities and deaf awareness.	Key Staff	Training course	Supply cover and cost of training	Annually	EHT	Governing Board to receive and review annual report from EHT

