

Ormiston Forge Academy

Accessibility Plan

April 2015



Approved by the Governors Finance and General Purposes Committee under powers delegated by the Governing Body: **15th June 2015**

Review period: **June 2018**

Introduction

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

"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."

The **SEN and Disability Act** (2001) extended the **Disability Discrimination Act** (1995) to cover education.

Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils under Part Four of the DDA:

- Not to treat disabled students **less favourably** for a reason related to their disability.
- To make **reasonable adjustments** for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to **increase access** to education for disabled students.

This duty requires schools to produce an **Accessibility Plan** that identifies the action the schools intends to take over a three year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas, is published and evaluated periodically. The three areas include:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the academy **curriculum**.
- Improving the **environment** of the academy to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery to disabled students **of information which is provided in writing** for students who are not disabled.

In addition, the **Disability Equality Duty** (2006) requires all schools to:

- Eliminate **discrimination** that is unlawful under the DDA.
- Eliminate **harassment** of those with a disability.
- Promote **positive attitudes** towards disabled persons.
- Encourage **participation** by disabled individuals.
- Take steps to take account of disabilities even if this involves treating disabled persons **more favourably**.

This duty requires schools to

- Involve those with a disability in producing a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan.
- Publish the DES/Action Plan.
- Demonstrate they have taken action identified to achieve outcomes.
- Report on progress, review and revise the DES annually

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by DfES in July 2002.

At all times the academy will also be equally aware of the needs of disabled staff, parents and visitors.

Key Objectives

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the academy community for students and prospective students with a disability.
- To provide a caring and friendly environment.
- To provide resources to cater for the needs of the individual students.
- To promote an understanding of disabilities throughout the academy and an awareness of the needs of students with a disability.
- To ensure all staff will be able to meet more fully the needs of disabled students with regards to accessing the curriculum.

Principles

- Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the academy's aims, equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the academy's SEN policy;
- The academy recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):
 - not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
 - not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
 - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage
 - to publish an Accessibility Plan.

- In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002);
- The academy recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on
 - his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to
 - confidentiality;
- The academy provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to
 - meet the needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key
 - principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - setting suitable learning challenges
 - responding to students' diverse learning needs
 - overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

Activity

a) Education & related activities

The academy will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts etc.

Within the curriculum, the academy aims to provide a full access to all elements. Specifically, in all areas of Information & Communication Technology, the academy will have consideration in planning facilities for:

- Wheelchair access
- Screen reader software
- Screen magnifier software for the visually impaired
- Features such as sticky keys and filter keys to aid disabled users in using a keyboard
- Screen Magnifier Software.

To develop communication skills in students, enabling them to express thoughts and opinions successfully through speech, writing and sign language as appropriate.

To give advice and support in curriculum subjects as appropriate, to enable disabled students to participate successfully in lessons within the mainstream academy.

To ensure that the needs of all disabled students and staff are represented within the academy.

To create positive images of disability within the school so that students grow into adults who have some understanding of the needs of disabled people.

b) Physical environment

The academy will 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.

c) Provision of information

The academy will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested etc.

Action Plan

The Plan will be monitored through the Finance & General Purposes Committee of the Governors. The plan is of necessity organic and will need adaptation and additions on a regular basis.

Additionally, the academy will always endeavour to:

- Improve availability of written material in alternative forms
- Improve working environment for students with visual impairment by incorporating appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing and install blinds on south-facing windows

Linked Policies

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

- Site Development Plan
- Equal Opportunities policies
- Curriculum Policies
- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Asset Management Plan
- Prospectus and Mission Statement
- Teaching and Learning