

SAXON MOUNT SCHOOL

Accessibility Plan October 2017

Introduction

At Saxon Mount Community School we are determined to make access to the school as open as possible for every pupil, staff member and visitor. If pupils can engage in the curriculum and related activities and can benefit from all the school environment has to offer, and staff can fulfil their role within the school effectively and safely, then we feel that every effort will have been made to accommodate their needs.

The aim of our plan is to:

- **Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum**
- **Improve its physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided**
- **Improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils**

What has been done already?

Although the school is built on a slope, the more recent extension and the older part of the building have been modified to allow wheelchair access and those using walking aids. Access ramps have been fitted to the mobile classrooms.

A lift links upper and ground floors and ramps have been strategically placed to alleviate the need for steps. Hand rails have been installed to allow access to the hall (as well as the ramp to the back doors). Footpaths have been demarcated to ensure pupils can move safely around the car park areas.

Automatic sound sensitive doorstops in the corridors to widen the corridors for wheelchair access (these release when the fire alarm sounds) have been installed. Corridors have been deliberately cleared of furniture wherever possible as this is both good ASD practice and also allows more space for wheelchair users. Stairs have high visibility nosings to support safe use for those with visual impairments. External doors are fitted so they are wide enough to allow wheelchair access.

Classrooms are generously sized to allow room for wheelchairs etc. and teaching groups are small enough to allow room around the tables. Carpets are low pile.

All areas of the playground and the field are accessible to disabled persons although, again, the sloping site is not conducive to easy access. The site is secured by perimeter fencing.

All areas are well lit and paintwork bright and clean. The environment is ASD friendly, low arousal and predictable. It is kept in a good state of decoration and repair.

There are disabled toilets on both floors, one of which also has a shower area for those who cannot manage the other toilet or shower facilities.

Some teaching areas have been further sound-proofed to ensure that peripheral noise will not confuse those with a hearing impairment. Also, every effort is made to ensure that visual or hearing impaired pupils can sit near to the teacher.

Around the school there are many visual signs so that pupils with literacy impairment can access information. Visual time-tables are also used as are consistent use of signs within class areas. We have also purchased visual aids for pupils with sight problems i.e. magnifying reading stands.

Additional Needs

Provision is made for all children at Saxon Mount because all pupils have additional needs. Sometimes children require individual support and this is usually planned and accounted for by our additional needs team.

Children with emotional/family problems can be given time to talk by our staff in a quiet environment which is suitable for children with complex learning needs. The Blue room is available for a range of support uses, including at breaks and lunchtime.

There is a well-qualified additional needs team and a school nursing service and a linked social worker who can help to support and advise staff about working with children who have emotional, behavioural and health related difficulties.

Speech Therapists work in the school to help our pupils with communication problems and they can offer both regular, formal sessions and more informal help and advice to staff, pupils and parents. Other therapists work in school according to individual needs identified on a child's statement or EHCP.

Future planning

We are constantly trying to improve the building, environment, resources and staff skills to make the school even more accessible.

Recent improvements since the last plan review in 2016 include:

Improved lighting has been installed in more areas as well as window blinds to give a much more versatile and flexible environment.

Smartboards have been updated in all areas to support interaction and access and because they are clear visual display screens.

We have provided additional banks of laptops and tablet PCs so that more computers than ever are now available to pupils in school including in the learning centre area within Y7 and a new area in Year 11.

Carpets have been replaced in rooms and corridors to reduce noise pollution and make for a calmer, warmer and safer environment; there is an ongoing replacement cycle.

Non slip safety flooring has been replaced around the school and a cycle for repair and replacement is in place.

Pupil washrooms are refitted around the school to provide greater accessibility, particularly to pupils who are reluctant to use toilets at school.

Outdoor learning and play areas have been refurbished with accessible and ASD friendly equipment over time and there is an ongoing improvement and refurbishment cycle for all outdoor areas. This includes ensuring pathways are non-slip.

In addition, the school car park, has been recently refurbished and re-lined in terms of safe parking for disabled users, traffic flow and lighting.

All specialist teaching areas have been refurbished to provide up to date and accessible facilities in order to support learning across the curriculum

An outdoor table tennis area has been installed that is suitable for all.

The garden area has been resurfaced so that the raised beds are accessible to pupils who have mobility difficulties.

Our NAS accreditation ensures the school is fully accessible to pupils with autism.

We are constantly aware of the need to be more accessible to the differing needs of the pupils and adults who work here and CPD planning occurs to take account of this.

Further considerations in progress are:

Ensure all fire exits have functioning door closer facilities; some internal fire doors will need to be refurbished or replaced.

Review footpath markings around the school and provide safe access from the mobile classrooms to the playground areas.

All new building or modifications to the environment and provision at Saxon Mount will take into consideration the needs of all abilities and disabilities. We aim for this school to be “open to all” and to be a truly inclusive environment that is able to support the complex needs of the pupils in our care.

Accessibility is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the head of school and considered by the Health and Safety management group.

Chair of AAB.....

Date.....

Executive Headteacher.....

Date

