



# Accessibility Policy

Approved by:	Local Governing Body	Date: May 2023
Last reviewed on:	New policy for school opening	
Next review due by:		

## 1. Introduction

At Matford Brook Academy, we write our story. Our mission is to provide an excellent, all-through education that empowers children to believe they can, and should, change the world around them. We strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community are, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

### Disability

1.1 The definition of disability is as below:

- a) Someone with a physical or mental impairment
- b) The impairment is such that it has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

1.2 Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on students' everyday lives.

### We recognise our duty under the Equality Act 2010

1.3 The Equality Act has simplified and strengthened the discrimination laws which protect people from unfair treatment.

1.4 It is unlawful for a school or other education provider to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- a) direct discrimination
- b) indirect discrimination
- c) discrimination arising from a disability
- d) harassment

1.5 Schools and LEAs must:

- a) not treat disabled pupils less favourably; and
- b) take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty)

1.6 The Local Education Authority and school governors have the duty to publish Accessibility Strategies and Plans. See the separate Accessibility Plan.

## 2. Scope of the policy

This policy covers all three main strands of the planning duty:

### 2.1 Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated purposes.

Matford Brook Academy is a purpose-built building which has taken into account the need for access for all. This strand of the planning duty covers aids to improve the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes things such as steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates,

---

toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs and furniture. Aids to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops and way-finding systems.

Physical aids to access education cover things such as ICT equipment, enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept key boards, switches, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor coordination and poor hand/eye skills, such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

The provision of a special piece of equipment or extra assistance will be made through the SEN framework and to a lesser extent through the planning duty which applies to all schools. The distinction between auxiliary aids and services provided through the SEN route and those provided under the planning duty is that the SEN duties relate to the individual, whereas the planning duty relates to the provision of aids or services in terms of the population (and future population) of the school. For example, a pupil with visual impairment might have low vision aids provided through the statement of SEN but the school might as a general measure provide blinds and adjustable lighting through the planning duty.

## **2.2 Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the Academy's curriculum.**

The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of learners and students access a broad and varied curriculum. This strand of the planning duty will help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

Schools are expected to plan to improve progressively access to the curriculum for all disabled pupils although many adjustments to access will be dependent on individual needs and may be provided through the SEN framework. The accessibility strategies and plans will help to ensure that schools are planning and preparing to respond to the particular needs of individual pupils.

## **2.3 Improving the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities.**

Any pupils requiring additional support are clearly identified on entry to Matford Brook Academy. Those requiring specific support with communication are known by staff so their needs can be met in lessons through differentiation. All teachers are issued with a guide to adapting their classroom to meet the needs of pupils. Some pupils are allocated additional support where communication is used extensively and monitored on a daily basis by support staff. Some pupils are also allocated a key worker to ensure effective communication with parents as well as children.

This part of the duty covers planning to make information normally provided by the school in writing to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to disabled pupils. This will include alternative formats such as Braille, audio tape and large print and also the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or sign language, through a recognised symbol system or ICT. This information should also be made available within a reasonable time frame and take account of the pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats.

## **2. Other related school policies**

Equality for disabled students is included as an explicit aim in all of the school's policies and is supported by the school's other policies including:

3.2 Equalities Policy

3.3 Rewards & Behaviour Policy

3.4 Admissions Policy

3.5 SEND policy

3.6 Medication Policy

---

## 4. Aims

4.1 Matford Brook Academy aims to include all pupils, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this will include:

- having high expectations of all pupils
- finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music, and drama
- planning out-of-school activities including all school trips and excursions so that pupils with disabilities can participate
- setting admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities or treat them unfairly
- devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities
- planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities
- raising awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through a programme of training
- by providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user friendly
- by using language which does not offend in all its literature and make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language

4.2 Actions to ensure equality for pupils with disabilities:

As a new school opening in September 2023, our Accessibility Plan at the end of this policy has been created to ensure our provision meets the requirements of the planning duty. In informing the annual review of this plan, Matford Brook Academy will undertake the following actions:

- a) an equality audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents/carers
- b) As a result of the audit, we shall:
  - write an action plan which includes targets
  - make the policy and targets known to all teaching and ancillary staff, students and parents
  - monitor the success of the plan
- the Plan will be reviewed annually

4.3 The Governing Body will report on how targets have been met in their annual report to parents/carers (and what impact they have had on the achievements of students with disabilities).

## 5. Monitoring

5.1 Matford Brook Academy recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

5.2 We will monitor:

- Admissions
  - Attainment
  - Attendance
  - ★ Rewards
  - ★ Sanctions
  - ★ Exclusions
-

- ★ KS4 option choices (at the point at which our first cohort reaches this stage)
- ★ Post 16 destinations (at the point at which our first cohort reaches this stage)
- ★ Selection & recruitment of staff
- ★ Governing body representation
- ★ Parents & carers attending consultation meetings
- ★ Parents and carers' involvement in the life of the school (representation on parent/carer groups, attendance at parents' evenings, in the classroom, school productions, sports day, fetes etc)

## 6. Satellite site arrangements

Our inaugural cohort of Year 7 pupils will start their education at a satellite site using a designated wing at St Luke's CofE school, part of the Ted Wragg Trust.

---

Matford Brook Academy is opening in September 2023 in a satellite site at St Luke's CofE school.

For strategies relating to our satellite site, see those **highlighted in yellow**.

For strategies relating to our permanent site, see those **highlighted in blue**.

All other strategies which are common across both sites remain unhighlighted.

Note that, whilst we are in our satellite site, we will work with the PFI team at Pinnacle. When we move to our permanent site, our Site Supervisor will resume responsibility.

Strategies	By Whom	Time Frame & Term	Specific aim
<b>1. Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated purposes.</b>			
a. <b>Work with the DfE's team in the works to our satellite site (St Luke's CofE campus) to evaluate any priority procedures required to support disabled pupils in the physical environment.</b> <b>NB: the designated space was originally designed for pupils with physical disabilities. Corridors and doorways were fitted for this purpose.</b>	Headteacher with Business Operations Officer	Prior to September's opening, and  Short term throughout the first half term	Ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, can access the full range of their educational facilities
b. <b>Open move to the permanent site, we will monitor the move into our new school facilities for disabled pupils, identifying any priority areas for improvement and updating this plan accordingly</b> <b>NB: Matford Brook Academy will open in a satellite site and building completion therefore this is an ongoing action throughout 23-24.</b>	Site Supervisor with Business Operations Officer	Fortnightly, including snagging list for new building  Long term	Ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, can access the full range of their educational facilities
c. Maintain a safe and accessible environment	Headteacher with Business Operations Officer	Daily Review regular maintenance programme and risk assessments <b>alongside Pinnacle</b>	Ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, are safe at school
d. Monitor the disabled parking / drop off & pick up zones	Headteacher with Business Operations Officer	Weekly  Medium term NB: likely to be re-evaluated at point of full handover	Ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, can arrive safely to school Ensure that all visitors, including those with SEND, have their access to school enabled
e. Implement the evacuation plan with specific planned strategies on the Pupil Passports for pupils with SEND	Headteacher with Business Operations Officer	Half-termly  Medium term	Ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, safely evacuate school in the event of an emergency
f. Implement and update Pupil Passports for pupils with SEND to highlight measures staff can take to address needs of individual pupils (in line with SEND policy) in consultation with parents/carers. Where appropriate, this may mean the curriculum needs to be adjusted for all pupils in a class/year group or for an individual pupil.	SENDCo	Termly  Medium term	Enable all staff to scaffold and differentiate effectively for the physical needs of our pupils and ensure pupils' needs are met in school
g. Implement and update Healthcare plans where physical needs relating to	SENDCo with	Annually (or as required for any	Ensure pupils and their

health conditions may impact on education	support from Business Support Team	changes) Long term	parents/carers are consulted about physical needs and actions taken to minimise impact on education/attendance
h. Review and update ICT additional support (e.g. SEND laptops, Communication in Print) with training for staff and pupils, as required	SENDCo	Termly Medium term	Support pupils who would benefit from these programmes to fully access and respond to their curriculum
i. Support pupils where recommendations have been made by Occupational Therapy (recorded via their Healthcare Plan)	SENDCo	Termly Medium term	Enable pupils to have their physical health needs met
i. Monitor the accessibility of Academy toilet provision in satellite site to ensure maximal pupil, staff and visitor access to appropriate facilities	Business Operations Officer	Termly Medium term	Create easier access to the building for people with physical disabilities
j. Implement transition procedures for pupils moving into the main St Luke's site for specific subject facilities – for example, for laboratory lessons in Science. Ensure all staff are trained in this procedure. Support disabled pupils with this transition through specific reference on their Pupil Passports.	SENDCo	Termly Medium term	Create access to specialist facilities for all pupils, including those with SEND
<b>2. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the Academy's curriculum</b>			
See 1e and 1f above			
a. Staff are regularly given training on frequently met conditions and any conditions that are new to the school <i>NB: as a new school, we will analyse the needs of our pupils when these are finalised, conduct initial Pupil Passport &amp; Healthcare Plan meetings with pupils and their families, and then devise the CPD programme to prioritise training needs for our staff</i>  <i>We anticipate that training needs may include:</i> - Epi-pen - Diabetes - Assisted Listening Devices	SENDCo	Initially termly, then annually Medium to long term	Ensure staff are confident in meeting our pupils' needs
b. Engage with a programme to become a 'Makaton friendly' school, prioritising common non-verbal signals for use as part of daily school culture (e.g. 'agree', 'thank you')	SENDCo	Long term	Provide a supporting and welcoming environment for anyone with communication difficulties and support the

			language and communication development of all children
c. Pupils who have an EHCP or who have been identified as having additional needs will have an enhanced transition for their entry point to the Academy	SENDCo	Short term	Ensure pupils with SEND are able to access their next phase of education equally
d. Implement an extracurricular and supercurricular programme for all pupils, monitoring the engagement for pupils with SEND and using pupil voice to identify any barriers to this	SLT	Termly Long term	Ensure that all children can access the range of personal development opportunities available at Matford Brook Academy
e. Monitor all culture & behaviour data and review the needs and additional support for pupils who receive exclusions or high levels of sanctions. Implement tariffs in system.	SLT	Half-termly Long term	Ensure that additional unmet needs are not responsible for exclusions or pupils being unable to access the curriculum successfully
f. Order and store emergency medication (asthma, epi-pens) as required for our first cohort	SENDCo and Business Operations Officer	Short term	Ensure that emergency medical needs can be met
g. Consult parents/carers, pupils and staff regarding equality within Matford Brook Academy, including in Admissions Form	SENDCo	Annually	Ensure needs are accurately identified to prioritise next iteration of the accessibility plan
<b>3. Improving delivery of information to pupils with disabilities</b>			
See 1f, 1g and 1f and 2b above			
a. Procure additional resources to support pupils with disabilities in receiving key information – for example, dyslexia friendly resources, multi-sensory resources  <i>NB: specific resources to be identified following analysis of the needs of our first pupil cohort in 23-24</i>	SENDCo	Short term Annually	Ensure staff are confident when delivering learning that they can meet the needs of all learners effectively
b. Implement the use of Language Link assessment (Y7 only) and GL Assessments (NGRT) to identify any pupils requiring support in speech, language and communication and/or literacy. Pupil Passports to be updated as required	Assistant Headteacher – English	Medium term Annually	Ensure that staff are aware of pupils who need additional scaffolding to support their speech, language, communication and/or literacy needs and appropriate intervention is established



c. Explore additional methods for communication streams from the Academy, including in sharing information with families	Business Operations Officer	Long term  Termly	Provide families with accessible information about Academy life and their child(ren)'s progress and engagement
--	-----------------------------------	-------------------------	--

---