

Northgate High School Accessibility Policy and Plan

3 Year Plan covering 2017-2020

Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

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

This plan sets out the policy of the school in relation to access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

1. Curriculum:
increasing the extent to which disabled pupils/students can participate in the school curriculum and that all pupils/students have the opportunity to learn about and see modelled, the principles of inclusion.
2. Physical environment and access arrangements:
improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils/students can take advantage of education and associated services;
3. Delivery of information:
improving the delivery to disabled pupils and adults, of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Definition of Disability

“A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” DDA
Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties.

Northgate High School Context

Northgate High School is a mixed comprehensive school with 1650 on roll pupils and student. It is the vision of the school to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treated with respect. Pupils and students should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity. They should develop values which prepare them for and help them to develop an appreciation of life in modern Britain. Northgate High School has three core values – Respect, Determination and Teamwork. The school aims to reduce and remove barriers to learning in every area of the life of the school and is committed to delivering equal opportunities, and best provision for all pupils and students.

(See Equalities Policy, SEN Policy and Local Offer and Curriculum Overview)

1. Curriculum

The reasonable adjustments needed for each student are assessed at transition, on admission and through data analysis, Annual Review of pupils with EHCP and via an Individual Health Care Plan (see SEN Policy).

Northgate High School recognises that key elements in a successful planned and accessible approach are likely to be:

- a focus on medium term planning, at the level of schemes of work;
- a focus on differentiation and accessibility of lessons;
- a clear assessment of the current National Curriculum levels of the full range of pupils, particularly in relation to speaking and listening levels;
- high expectations;
- appropriate deployment of learning support;
- appropriate pupil grouping and use of peer support.

As such, Northgate High School reviews the use of Learning Support staffing and resources, the training needs of subject staff, deployment of TAs, how schemes of work, including PSHEE, develop awareness of disability through the curriculum and access to specialist support, on a regular basis.

Disabled pupils need access to the 'formal' 'taught' curriculum of the school, but also to activities of the school day and beyond the school day, for example:

- recreation;
- movement around the school;
- special events: sports days, visits by speakers etc.;
- extra-curricular activities: breakfast clubs, after-school clubs;
- school trips require an assessment of pupil and student needs and accessible transport is available from Suffolk County Council.

Northgate High School is committed to ensuring that this takes place and reviews outcomes for disabled pupils, including:

- a detailed analysis of outcome data: year group progress checks, attributes for learning and end of Key Stage outcomes;
- achievements in extra-curricular activities e.g. support for access to school show rehearsals, Discovery Sport Club and extra-curricular events including sailing, horse riding and team sports such as boccia are celebrated

2. Physical Environment

The physical environment of the school has a differential impact on access for different groups of disabled pupils. Different aspects of the physical environment need to be considered in relation to different groups of pupils.

The Assistant Headteacher, Learning Support, undertakes an assessment of accessibility needs based on Year 6 statement information – around May/June in year prior to pupil joining the school.

Northgate High School complies with DDA access requirements e.g.

- First floor areas are accessible by lift
- Disabled toilets are provided in all teaching blocks and a fully-equipped changing and toilet facility enables personal care for wheelchair users
- TAs are trained in Manual Handling techniques and this is refreshed annually

- Accessibility of extra-curricular provisions e.g. library on ground floor, homework clubs on ground floor

All site accessibility work will be assessed annually on the basis of need of intake and progression of pupils through the school. The Principal Finance Officer, Site Manager, Assistant Headteacher Learning Support will walk the site with relevant expert support e.g. V I Access Manager. The responsibility for progressing this work will be handed over to the site manager, who will report directly to the PFO.

Aspects of school environment to be considered against accessibility criteria when renovation work is undertaken, to include:

- improvements to lighting, signage, colour contrast, the acoustic environment, floor coverings;
- improvements to toilets, washing and changing facilities;
- changes to the layout of the playground and other common areas;
- the provision of ramps and lifts and improvements to doorways;
- the provision of particular furniture and equipment to improve access.

3. Delivery of Information

Information for disabled pupils provided in writing for pupils/students and parents who are not disabled might include:

- handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, information about school events, letters home, Schoolcomms

Improving the delivery of information might include making information available:

- in Braille, in large print, in simplified language, on audio-tape, through sign language, using a symbol system or pictorial system on different coloured paper.

Identifying the appropriate format must take account of:

- pupils' impairments:
access to information may be improved for particular groups of pupils by particular approaches, for example: pupils with learning difficulties may be able to access information more easily where it is provided in simplified language; pupils with language and communication difficulties may be able to access information more easily where it is provided in picture/symbol systems;
- preferences expressed by pupils or their parents.

Accessibility Plan 2017-18– appendix Action Plan – to be revised May annually

The nature of the Northgate site means that adjustments can be made on a two-year cycle i.e. pupils transferring to the school at the end of Year 6 will be taught in the Lower School building for the majority of their lessons.

In the academic year 2017/18, we will continue to support visually impaired pupils and students. Maintenance of movement indicators, braille door signs on most doors at a suitable height and access arrangements for the accompanying guide dog are assessed.

We anticipate the transfer of at least one pupil from Year 6 into Year 7 with hearing impairment needs and will aim to recruit a teaching assistant with British Sign Language expertise.

Ongoing training of TAs and teachers to prepare for transfer of the diverse range of needs of pupils will be anticipated each spring.

Accessibility themes such as disfigurement, prejudice-related bullying are included in the PSHEE curriculum and are themes in the Tutorial Programme.

Key action points

- To continue to review the accessibility of the school site for visually impaired pupils and wheelchair users
- Continue to develop training for TAs and teachers in specific learning difficulties e.g. autism, ADHD and visual impairment
- Continue to adapt the curriculum to enhance the inclusive ethos.

SJA/LJW May 2017

To be reviewed after May half term 2018 and annually to 2020.

A coherent Fire Plan is reviewed each September and as appropriate for mid-year transfers.