



Central Academy

Accessibility Plan 2017-2020

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Name of person responsible:

Gemma Patel- SENDCO

Central Academy

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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 student, under part 4 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 substantial disadvantage.
- To maintain access to education for disabled students.

This Accessibility Plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of Central Academy to increase access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA and the Equality Act 2010:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled student.

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, encourage independence for our disabled students to make them as prepared for their post school life.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed, and revised as necessary. Attached is an action plan showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

1A: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

This scheme and plan should be read in conjunction with the school's other policies on Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs and Disability.

The philosophy of Central Academy is based on inclusive principles, which strive to promote equality.

Equality of opportunity at Central Academy is about providing equal access and excellence for all, in order to promote the highest possible standard of achievement.

Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – students, staff, governors and parents.

- To develop all students as responsible citizens, each in their own right.
- To give each student an equal opportunity to fulfil their own potential, personally, socially and academically, within a rewarding and stimulating environment.
- To provide all students with a broad, balanced and relevant education, this will enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for lifelong learning and to adapt to a fast changing world.
- To develop an enterprising culture for our learning community.

The school's strategic aims for 2017-2020 are that:

By learning together, we want our community:

- To realise the highest standards of achievement.
- To be an inclusive school.
- To meet the challenges of the future.

In addition, the statutory inclusion statement in the National Curriculum for England describes schools' responsibility to provide a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of students. It sets out three principles that are essential for teachers and schools to follow when developing an inclusive curriculum.

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to students' diverse learning needs.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

In order to achieve these aims, all members of our community must be able to access provision when they attend school. The values of respect and responsibility underpin our aims. All members of our community have a duty to respect the rights of others and to take responsibility for removing barriers to learning for disabled students.

1B: Information from student data and school audit

The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in former Disability Discrimination Acts.

The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has:

‘A physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as Dyslexia, Autism, Speech and Language impairments and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). As such, there is a significant overlap between those considered to have a disability and those who have Special Educational Needs.

Unlawful behaviour with regard to disabled students

Chapter 1 (1.17 – 1.24) explains the general definitions in the Act of direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment. The rather different and more complex provisions that apply in the case of disability are set out here.

Direct Discrimination: A school must not treat a disabled student less favourably simply because that student is disabled – for example by having an admission bar on disabled applicants.

A change for schools in this Act is that there can no longer be justification for direct discrimination in any circumstances. Under the DDA, schools could justify some direct discrimination – if it was a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. What the change means is that if a school discriminates against a person purely because of his or her disability (even if they are trying to achieve a legitimate aim) then it would be unlawful discrimination as there can be no justification for their actions.

Indirect Discrimination: A school must not do something which applies to all students but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled students only – for example having a rule that all students must demonstrate physical fitness levels before being admitted to the school – unless they can show that it is done for a legitimate reason, and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability: A school must not discriminate against a disabled student because of something that is a consequence of his or her disability – for example by not allowing a disabled student on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for him or her to get out and back. Like indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability can potentially be justified.

Harassment: A school must not harass a student because of his or her disability – for example, a teacher shouting at the student because the disability means that he or she is constantly struggling with class work or unable to concentrate.

Disability Equality Duty – schools previously had a statutory duty which required them to take proactive steps to tackle disability discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity for disabled students. Under the Equality Act, this has been replaced by the general equality duty and the new specific duties – covered in chapter 5 of this guidance.

Reasonable adjustments and when they have to be made

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. For schools the duty is summarised as follows:

- Where something a school does places a disabled student at a disadvantage compared to other students then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled student when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the student would face in comparison to non-disabled students.

1C: Views will be gathered of those consulted during the development of the plan. The school will then set priorities following the consultation process of the plan.

2A: Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum

The SEND team is the primary link between the school and disabled students. Their needs are taken into account and disseminated to all staff via the SEND register and through ProvisionMap. A One Page Profile (OPP), Pen Portrait (PP) or a Physical Management Plan is created if required. Students are supported in class by TA's if required and dependent on the level of need and specialised support, are appointed a TA who will have an in depth knowledge of students needs and strategies for learning. Where required students will have personalised support strategies that may involve alternative timetables to improve Literacy and Numeracy skills. The SEND department work collaboratively with external services and organisations to gain specialist advice, guidance and support, regarding learning needs, strategies and provision. The ProvisionMap software is used as a communication tool between the SEND team and staff. There are plans for this to extend to parents in the spring term.

SEND students are encouraged to attend break and lunchtime clubs and are reassured to know that they can approach any member of the team with a problem or a concern. Some students prefer a quiet space to spend break and lunchtime, which can be arranged. However, students may not always want to discuss problems with members of staff and may need someone their own age with whom to discuss their concerns. Therefore, the student leadership team is available for them to speak and meet with. Where appropriate a 'Peer Buddy' maybe appointed to ensure that the student develops friendships and feels supported. Students are encouraged to attend extra- curricular activities and residential trips

As a school we provide extensive Continual Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for all staff through whole staff meetings, departmental and pastoral meetings. The SENDCO, TA's and Teaching and Learning Team work collaboratively with all departments to ensure lessons are differentiated appropriately. The whole school complete a 'Do It Now' activity at the start of each lesson that is designed to stretch, challenge and be achievable for all learners. There is close contact between staff and the SEND team to ensure effective communication between SEND, subject and pastoral teams. Specialist and Targeted students have a Pen Portrait and where required, targets are set and reviewed half termly. TA's, Students, Parents/Carers, External Professionals and other key staff are involved in the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle. TA's and the SENDCO have facilitated a far greater awareness of students needs with all staff and continued partnership with a number of outside agencies, this has meant that the school can plan and adapt the curriculum to suit the requirements of all students.

The school has set the following priorities for increasing curriculum access:

- To ensure TA's have the knowledge and understanding of data to help them to support individual children's progress.
- To ensure individual TA's are specifically trained in key areas of SEND, which will provide all staff with strategies to use in the classroom.

- To continue to be creative in engaging parents, including our hard to reach parents.
- SENDCO and all TA's know their roles and responsibilities.
- To ensure that students identified as SEND have leadership opportunities in school.
- To ensure that students who are identified as SEND are aware of how to keep themselves safe, both in and outside of school.

2B: Improving the physical environment of the school

The physical environment of the school caters for the needs of all students including physically disabled. Corridors are well lit and free of obstacles and lesson changeover is signalled by a bell.

The school has set the following priorities for physical improvements to increase access:

To use the additional stairwells to minimise congestion and avoid situations which may cause anxiety for SEND students.

- To provide training on Evacuation Chair system for TA's.
- To review and change the layout of the hand drying and toilet roll dispensing.
- To provide Manual Handling Training for all TA's.
- To continue to ensure the building supports some of our most vulnerable students by being creative and innovative in terms of accessibility and through creating specific designated areas.

Students with a physical or medical condition affecting their mobility will have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

2C: Improving the delivery to disabled students of information that is provided in writing for students who are not disabled

- Worksheets, literature and other resources are differentiated by content and layout.
- Use of computers.
- Access to a scribe where appropriate.
- The school website and network are simple and easy to access.
- Departments to have pictorial clues and keywords on display.
- Timetables printed and put into students' passports where appropriate.
- Pen Portrait to provide achievable and measurable half-termly targets that are communicated to parents/carers. Students are provided feedback and both student and parents/carers to be engaged in the reviews.

The school has set the following priorities for providing information for disabled students:

- Improve the understanding and availability of SEND friendly formats.
- Develop and extend multimedia availability for students with SEND e.g. Dictaphones, voice recognition technology and SEND ICT packages.

3A: Management, Co-ordination and Implementation

Progress towards the Accessibility Plan will be reviewed as part of the school's annual evaluation of its 'Improvement Plan.' The results of that evaluation will be shared with the Local Governing Body along with the annual SEND Information Report.

Evidence for the evaluation will include: actions taken; resources deployed; scrutiny of school communication systems; lesson observations; and a judgement of the impact on Teaching and Learning.

The plan will be co-ordinated by the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and SENCO. The Accessibility Plan is fully consistent with the school's SEND policy and National SEND legislation. It should also be applied consistently with the schools other policies on:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Behaviour for Learning
- Bullying
- Child Protection
- Differentiation
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Teaching and Learning
- School Improvement Plan
- Professional Development Plan
- SEND Policy
- Regular contact with a number of outside agencies i.e. PSS/Physio/Visual.
- School Nurse/Counsellor

Initial implementation of the plan begins with the recruitment of specialist staff, design of the physical environment and CPD. Students' needs will be identified at the earliest opportunity, through liaison with SENAR and Primary School Partners.

The school will work closely with the Local Authority Inclusion Team and Special Educational Needs Support Service and where appropriate enlist the support of the Primary Care Trust and Social Services.

3B: Publication and dissemination of the school's plan

The school's accessibility plan is available in alternative formats on request.