



Ark John Keats Academy

Accessibility Policy and Plan

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1. Introduction to the Accessibility Policy

This plan identifies the ongoing actions of the Governing Body of Ark John Keats Academy to increase access to education for pupils in the following three areas:

1. By increasing the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum
2. By improving the physical environment of the Academy to increase the extent to which students with disabilities can take advantage of education and associated services
3. By improving access to information for students with disabilities.

Ark John Keats Academy may develop individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in line with this Accessibility Plan which will be fully supported and resourced by the Governing Body and were implemented from September 2020 onwards. Each plan is reviewed annually and should be read alongside the Ark John Keats Academy Disability Equality Policy.

2. Vision and Values

Ark John Keats Academy is committed to providing a fully accessible environment and curriculum, which values and includes all children and enables them to achieve their very best taking into account their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

Ark John Keats Academy aspires to remove all barriers to ensure that every child can enjoy and fully participate in all aspects of school life and benefit from the full breadth of the opportunities we provide.

Ark John Keats Academy is committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusivity within our school.

3. Definition of Disability as amended by the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act (2010) states that a person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if:

- The person has a physical or mental impairment, and
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment, not the cause.

In relation to physical impairments:

- This includes physical and/or sensory impairments that affect the body such as arthritis, cerebral palsy, hearing or visual impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses) as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered

- This also includes medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, which are all covered from the point of diagnosis
- This also includes severe physical disfigurement (such as scarring), even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided that it has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on the person.
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist, are automatically covered under the Equality Act (2010).

In relation to mental impairments:

- This includes learning differences such as Autism Spectrum Disorders and Downs Syndrome and specific learning difficulties such dyslexia and dyscalculia.
- This also includes mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia.

Tests to apply to decide if someone has the protected characteristic of disability are :

- The length of the effect of the condition must be long term. This means that an impairment has lasted or is likely to last at 12 months and is likely to last for the rest of the person's life. If the person no longer has the condition or it is likely to recur they still have the protected characteristic of disability.
- The effect of the impairment makes it more difficult and/or time-consuming for a person to carry out normal day-to-day activities compared to someone who does not have the impairment at work or home. This must cause more than minor or trivial inconvenience
- The condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication the person is taking or any aids or assistance or adaptations they have, such as a wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or adaptive software. The exception to this is the effect of wearing of glasses or contact lenses for a visual impairment which is taken into account.

4. Definition of Special Education Needs

The Children and Families Act (2014) states that:

- A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
 - Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children and young people of the same age.
 - Has a disability when prevents him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.

Many, although not all, disabled children will have a special educational need if they have difficulty accessing education or if they need special educational provision to be made for them.

5. Key Objectives

The school recognises that many of its pupils, visitors and staff, whether disabled or otherwise, have individual needs when using school facilities. We recognise that for all pupils, the nature of their disabilities may mean that they experience specific difficulties related to accessing education, and the physical environment. As part of the ongoing commitment to the delivery of an inclusive educational service, we will endeavour to ensure that all our pupils receive as high a standard of education. In order to ensure that the educational services it provides effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities, the school will:

- Inform all staff of this access policy so that the provision of educational services ensures the inclusion of all of our students. Such communications will address the legal obligation of staff, and the school
- Make all prospective employees aware of the disabilities of the students in the school. Any applicant for a new position will be made aware of their role in delivering the curriculum, personal care, therapy programmes and maintaining the health and safety of our students at all times
- Provide appropriate training for staff which will explain the school Accessibility Policy and Plan and ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of this Policy.
- Encourage all visitors to school including suppliers and contractors, to adopt similar policies towards disabled pupils
- Consult with disabled pupils, parents, staff and disability organisations
- Regularly review whether its education (and other) services are both accessible and effective, and take appropriate action.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this Policy on a regular basis
- Operate an accessible complaints procedure whereby disabled people can make improvement suggestions and request assistance
- Ensure that this Accessibility Policy and Plan is published on the School's website.

6. Access to Non-Educational Services within Educational Buildings

Ark John Keats Academy also hires the facilities to non-educational and community bodies. This is an important income stream and provides a strong link with the local community.

As a school, we comply with all of the regulations relating to the provision of non-educational services to the public by providing access to all users. The provision of non-educational services may include activities such as:

- Governors meetings;
- Services offered to parents, such as meetings to present the annual report, admission and exclusion hearings where an appeal is by the parents;
- Leisure time activities for children or adults without any element of educational development;
- The use of school sports facilities by the local community or the hiring of school accommodation to members of the public
- After School Clubs, activity clubs run by private hirers.

7. Our Physical Environment

Ark John Keats Academy buildings are all DDA compliant with accessibility for all users, having space in which people can easily move, interact and use the physical features. Employees are part of the school, both in terms of their own interaction with pupils and parents, and also the ease with which they work within their physical environment. Not all areas around the school are on one level. Lifts within the main buildings (A and B block) are provided for use by wheelchair and ambulant users. Lifts are used by pupils and staff with other disabilities. The school has an accessible entrance foyer with a disabled user operated button for the doors. There is access to seating in the reception foyer and two disabled toilets. The top floor of the main building is accessible by lift and there are disabled toilets in this building both on the top floor and the bottom floor. In the Gym area there is an additional specialist shower facility and disabled toilet.

- Water fountains are located on all floors and between classrooms for easy access
- Signage around the school adheres to current Health and Safety regulations
- Lighting is suitable for purpose in all rooms with blinds in most rooms to allow for adjustable lighting
- The school is aware of the affect that noises, such as lights buzzing, can affect the sensory needs of students to work and concentrate. This is kept to a minimum and the premises staff undertake repairs as soon as possible
- Evacuation procedures are displayed around the school and shared with staff. There is a fire drill every term. There is a high staff to student ratio to meet the needs of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in an emergency evacuation.
- There is a schedule of regular evaluation of the school site for accessibility
- The premises team monitors the general internal condition of the school on a daily basis, also monitoring Health and Safety issues and completing statutory building checks. Staff record maintenance issues via request an online 'Every' portal. These requests are attended to promptly and contractors are brought in for issues not within the remit of the premises team.

8. Access to the Curriculum.

Ark John Keats Academy believes in the limitless potential of all students. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum for all students and provides additional, internal targeted interventions and external specialist provision to support all students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), to access the curriculum, remove barriers to learning and promote independence.

Teachers and support staff receive appropriate training and professional development to teach and support students with SEND through a schedule of regular INSET days, Ark network training days and individual professional development courses.

Teachers use Quality First Teaching strategies and have access to students Pupil Passports with individualised strategies to plan lessons that are appropriately scaffolded, working alongside class based Teaching Assistants to ensure that all students can access all curriculum opportunities. The impact of our interventions and class based support are measured through termly SMART outcomes using the graduated response as part of students Individual Learning Plans.

- Individual SMART targets are set termly to support all students with SEND to achieve their potential in all lessons.
- All students have access to art, music, drama and Physical Education as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- Staff make use of specific and individual strategies on Pupil Passports to ensure that students are given additional time to complete learning activities as required.
- All students have access to Chromebooks as part of Ark John Keats Academy digital strategy.
- Educational visits and extra-curricular opportunities are accessible to all students regardless of attainment or SEND.

9. Quality First Teaching

Great teaching is a combination of high expectations and Quality First Teaching. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) refers to Quality First Teaching as: *“High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the starting point in responding to students who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and SEN support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly review and carefully review the quality of teaching for all students, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and where necessary, improving teachers’ understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of SEN”.*

Our signature strategies for Quality First Teaching are high-leverage, common teaching strategies that when consistently implemented, provides routine and structured experiences to support and build confidence for students with SEND.

Teachers are responsible for the progress and development of every pupil in their class, including those who get extra support from teaching assistants or specialist staff as result of their special educational need.

All students who attend Ark John Keats Academy and are either on SEN support level or have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) will have a Pupil Passport and Individual Learning Plan (ILP) (Appendix 2).

Pupil passports provides detailed information about each student, detailing their personal likes and interests, barriers and challenges to learning, and adaptations and strategies to remove these identified barriers. These are professional documents that all professionals working with students at Ark John Keats Academy have access to, and where appropriate, be involved with the review and amendment process of the Pupil Passport.

Individual Learning Plans detail specific student learner outcomes. A student's ILP clearly states the desired outcomes and the small steps and milestones on route to achieving these. The ILP detail the role of any supporting adults, adaptations, strategies, and resources required. ILPs are reviewed termly as part of the Academic Review Day and this process involves the student and their family/carers.

10. Access to the Classroom

Each classroom is set out to provide the most positive environment to work in, to ensure that all students can work effectively in a calm and purposeful learning environment.

- Classrooms have sufficient space for all students in any lesson.
- Designated toilet facilities are available close to each classroom. Signage is in place to signpost users of all abilities to the facilities
- Educational Technology and IT support is invaluable in providing access to the curriculum. Assistive technology is used where appropriate throughout school to support the learning of students with SEND.

11. Access to Education

Ark John Keats Academy recognises that students must have access to education in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). We follow statutory guidance which advises the responsibilities of education bodies in the preparation of accessibility strategies and seeks to:

- Improve access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education as identified in the Academy Improvement Plan.
- Increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with SEND, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils are as equally prepared for life as other pupils of the

same age in mainstream schools; this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist auxiliary **aids and assistive technology**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.

- Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks, booklets and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

12. Reasonable Adjustments

Schools and education authorities have a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities under first the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and then the Equality Act (2010). Schools are expected to make long-term proactive plans for improving access to their buildings through their planning duties and this document should be read in conjunction with the School Development Plan.

Ark John Keats Academy will continue to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that all students, families or visitors with disabilities attending the school are not discriminated against. Reasonable adjustments include but are not limited to:

- Specific changes in practices or procedures
- Changes to physical features of the school environment.
- Changes in how students are assessed (see Access Arrangements Policy).
- Provision of additional support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment).