



Ark John Keats Academy

Accessibility Policy and Plan

Date of last review:	September 2021	Review period:	Every year
Date of next review:	September 2022	Owner:	Debs Harter
Type of policy:	Statutory	LGB or Board approval:	LGB

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1. Introduction to 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:

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

Ark John Keats Academy may develop individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in line with this plan which will be fully supported and resourced by the Governing Body and will be implemented from September 2020 onwards. Each plan will be reviewed annually and should be read alongside 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 inclusion 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 if they have a physical and/or mental impairment – ‘a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their 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 impairment:

- Physical/sensory impairments—that affect the body such as arthritis, cerebral palsy, hearing or visual impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses), diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered

- HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of diagnosis
- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met.
- 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 ~~treated~~ as disabled under the Act.
- Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down's syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia.

The other tests to apply to decide if someone has the protected characteristic of disability are:

- Whether the effect of the impairment is to make it more difficult and/or time-consuming for a person to carry out an activity compared to someone who does not have the impairment, and this causes more than minor or trivial inconvenience
- If the activities that are made more difficult are 'normal day-to-day activities' at work or at home
- Whether 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, like a wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or special software on their computer. The exception to this is the wearing of glasses or contact lenses where it is the effect while the person is wearing the glasses or contact lenses, which is taken into account.

For example:

Someone who has epilepsy might be considered to have a disability even if their medication controls their condition so well that they rarely experience any symptoms, if without the medication the epilepsy would lead to seizures or other long-term adverse effects. Progressive conditions and those with fluctuating or recurring effects are included, such as depression, provided they meet the test of having a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

4. Definition of Special Education Needs

The Children and Families Act (2014) states that:

1. 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.
2. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
 - ~~A child or young person has a learning difficulty if they have~~ 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.

~~Children or young people must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language in their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.~~

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 on-going 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 as their counterparts in mainstream schools. 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 pupils. Such communications will address the legal obligation of staff, and the school
- Make all prospective employees aware of the disabilities of the pupils 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 the pupils at all times
- Provide appropriate training for staff which will explain the school access policy and ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of it
- 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 plan on a regular basis
- Operate an accessible complaints procedure whereby disabled people can make improvement suggestions and request assistance

- Ensure that this Accessibility Plan is published on the Schools 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 new build 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. The 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 (G-block) are provided for use by wheelchair and ambulant users. Lifts are used by pupils and staff with other defined 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.

- There are water fountains on all floors and at intervals 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 e.g. lights buzzing, can affect the ability of the children to work and concentrate. This is kept to a minimum and the premises staff undertake repairs as soon as possible
- The evacuation procedures are displayed around the school and there is a fire drill every term. There is a high staff to pupil ratio to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities under 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. The school staff note any maintenance items via request on the '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 offers a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils and provides additional, external specialist provision to enable all pupils with learning difficulties to access the curriculum, remove barriers to learning and aid their educational development. The teaching environment / facilities include:

Teachers and learning support staff have the necessary training to teach and support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) through regular INSET days, individual courses and network training days.

Teaching staff work in collaboration with colleagues from the Inclusion Department to ensure that learning is stretched and scaffolded to support all students to access all curriculum opportunities, have appropriate means of communication and to assess, plan and review SMART outcomes for inclusion on pupil passports and individual learning plans.

- Individual SMART targets are set termly to support all students with SEND to achieve to the best of their ability in all lessons.
- All pupils take part in music, drama and physical activities as part of the access to the curriculum
- Staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by our pupils to use equipment in practical sessions
- Pupils have access to 1:1 laptops and digital strategy
- School visits are accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment
- AJK believes in the limitless potential of all children.
- Staff constantly seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation.

9. Flexibility of Teaching

Ark John Keats Academy teachers and support staff are flexible enough to adapt their teaching approaches to enable our pupils to learn effectively in their classrooms.

- Staff present work in many different ways using a variety of equipment. Work can be carried out individually, in small groups or as a whole class
- Staff enable the pupils to show their interest, knowledge and skills despite their difficulties e.g. communication through visual or kinaesthetic means
- Visual timetables are given where appropriate to ensure pupils are aware of the routines required throughout the day
- Reward systems are in place to support the children with positive strategies
- Detailed pupil information is given to all relevant staff to help with planning lessons
- Specific resources are used to differentiate the curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress

- Special considerations are in place for pupils taking part in exams e.g. rest breaks, adult readers, oral language modifiers and scribes are provided if appropriate

10. Arranging the Classroom

Each classroom is set out to provide the most positive environment to work in, to ensure the pupil learns effectively.

- Classrooms have sufficient space for all the children and young people
- Designated toilet facilities are available close to each classroom. Signage is in place to signpost users of all abilities to the facilities
- A variety of resources are used to ensure that the pupil learns effectively
- IT support is invaluable in providing access to the curriculum and assistive technology is used where appropriate throughout school to support the learning of disabled pupils.

11. Access to Education

Ark John Keats Academy recognises that all disabled children should have access to education in accordance with the Equality Act and adheres to the code of practice which advises on the statutory 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 School Development Plan.
- Increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a 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. Making adjustments

The Equality Act states that schools are not expected to make any adjustments that are not reasonable. They are however 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 disabled pupils, parents or visitors attending the school are not discriminated against. Making reasonable adjustments could include:

- changes to practices or procedures
- changes to physical features

- changes to how learners are assessed
- providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment).

Target	Strategy	Persons responsible	Success Criteria	Timescale
Increasing access for students with disabilities to the curriculum	Ongoing programme of staff training in disability awareness to reflect diverse needs of students within the school and anticipatory duties.	SENCo	New Staff Induction to include training on the needs of the pupils in the school with SEND and how to meet the needs of these pupils CPD to raise staff awareness of the accessibility plans in place in the school	Sept 2021 ongoing Ongoing training for new staff
Improving access to the physical environment	Increase site access to meet diverse needs of pupils, staff, parents and community users. Plan any new building works to ensure maximum accessibility- e.g. with new sixth form building works	Ark, SLT, Premises team, SLT	-Review evacuation plans and make staff aware of evacuation plans for pupils/ visitors with disabilities through CPD/ induction. -Review fire exits and drills -Plan for accessibility in the any new building work that may occur to accommodate the new sixth form pupils	Sept 2021 ongoing Ongoing reviews
Improving the delivery of written information to students with disabilities	Ensure that newsletters and parent information is sent home in an accessible format	Assistant Principals for Inclusion and Curriculum. SENCO	Continue to email newsletters home so that parents can access information in a suitable format for them Continue to review the accessibility plan as new pupils enter the school to ensure that we are meeting their needs	Sept 2021 ongoing