



SAND
ACADEMIES TRUST

Battledown Centre for Children and Families

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN

Date of Policy: April 2024

Review Date: April 2025

Signed by: Imran Kaderbhai Date: 2/5/2024
Chair of Governors

Introduction

We believe that this Accessibility Plan is compliant with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal daily activities.

Legal requirements

Every school has a duty to prepare an Accessibility Plan. These plans:

- must be in writing
- must be reviewed and revised if necessary
- must be published by governors
- will be inspected by Ofsted
- should cover the whole life of the school and all its policies, procedures and activities

Current provision

The purpose of Battledown Centre for Children & Families is to provide appropriate education for 65 FTE children (including additional number when taken over numbers), aged from 4 to 11, with a wide range of special needs including severe learning difficulties, communication difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder, visual/hearing impairment, profound and multiple learning difficulties, moderate and complex learning difficulties and emotional & behavioural difficulties.

All pupils are likely to be deemed disabled under the definition.

Our vision statement is:

“Removing obstacles and enabling access to learning”

All of our policies, procedures and activities are designed to ensure accessibility to the curriculum for all pupils. The school is also committed to providing ease of access to all relevant parts of the building and grounds, and equality of opportunity regarding trips, visits, clubs, special events and all school-related activities.

The school aims to include all pupils and staff in the full life of the school through the implementation of all its policies.

Scope of the plan

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

- Improving the physical environment
- Participation in the school curriculum
- Information to pupils with disabilities

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 services.

Battledown has been and continues to be developed with the purpose of providing access for all. The building was built in 1902 and many improvements / changes have been made to the layout meaning the ground floor areas are accessible to all pupils, however the first floor is not accessible to those in a wheelchair. The installation of a lift is under review for future proofing. All lessons that take place upstairs e.g. cooking can be done in the classrooms.

The principle has been applied indoors and outdoors:

- Use of specialist switches, touch screens, augmentative communication aids
- Supported seating
- Personal care equipment including a washdown bed which is available in shared toilet area.
- Referrals to specialist services such as physiotherapy and speech and language therapy
- Introduction of a TEACCH style class
- A safe space tent was installed for the benefit of a small number of pupils with behaviours which require them to calm down/take out time out of class.
- Fob entry to reception area lowered to ensure safe access/exit is accessible to all fob users.
- Changing the size of the toilets to meet the changing needs of the children
- New fencing and improvement to the rear of the school to improve safety and security generally but also for a specific pupil
- Ramp outside Owls class for wheelchair access.
- Installation of a trampoline to provide more opportunities for movement breaks
- Therapy equipment in Otters Class as well as Therapy room.
- Widen door access to Owls Class children as part of a redevelopment of the classroom areas.
- Handrails on staircase to upstairs intervention rooms
- All outdoor areas accessible to pupils in wheelchairs
- Appropriate staff are trained in medical matters such as feeding pupils with gastrostomies, Epilepsy and administration of rescue medication.

The effectiveness of the premises is reviewed continually and improvements /alterations made where these are appropriate, possible, relevant and affordable.

A necessary health and safety measure to keep children safe is an internal two-handle door system or high handle to prevent them running off. There is a high staff to children ratio so no child would be left unattended with no means of escape in the event of an emergency. There are no locking mechanisms on the top handle.

2. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum.

Battledown offers a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated appropriately according to the age and learning difficulty of each pupil. We have a substantial commitment to professional development for staff at all levels and careful deployment of staff to meet the individual needs of pupils.

Planning, schemes of work, EHCPs, annual reviews and pupil profiles, alongside recording on SOLAR provide detailed evidence of the curriculum delivery, teaching and learning, individual targets and additional support / interventions.

The school has increased staffing levels to better support the needs of the individuals and groups. Pupils with very high levels of disability may follow individual adapted programmes but care is taken to ensure that this is a response to individual needs rather than organisational expediency.

Battledown works with outside community based providers to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes organisations such as AllSorts, Dinky Ponies, Therapy dogs who work regularly with Battledown pupils.

3. Improving the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities.

Staff at Battledown have a great deal of skills and experience of a wide range of special needs and learning difficulties enabling them to assess and implement channels of communication appropriate to a class, group or individual pupil. Continual access to CPD for all staff ensures the provision offered is up to date and in line with best practice in the sector thus ensuring accessibility and student voice is heard and maintained

We promote a total communication environment, with all staff being trained in this.

We promote the use of:

- Speech
- Written word,
- Signing
- Symbols – objects of reference, photos, TOBIS, colour line drawings

We use the above to support:

- Communication
- Access to learning opportunities throughout the school day including worksheets
- Sharing important messages throughout the school e.g., school rules

A school council with a student representative from each class has been introduced to record the student's voice.

Our school remains committed to continuing to help staff and pupils develop effective communication skills of all kinds.

Monitoring

This plan alongside regular visits with curriculum leads are held by the LAB in order to ensure that the effective quality of the provision offered is maintained. This policy is also reviewed regularly in accordance with the Academy structure of policy review.

DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE PLANS

Battledown is flexible in its approach and works hard to meet the needs of each individual pupil as well as supporting the staff and parents. Specific requirements previously not encountered or provided for are fully assessed and met to the best of our ability examples of this are:

- *Improved ICT equipment allowing for better access to the curriculum for many pupils.*
- *Introduction of a TEACH type class.*
- *Installation of a safe space to enable challenging behaviours to be defused and staff safety to be protected and others students learning to be uninterrupted.*
- *Introduction of a specific home economics room, music room, library and role play room.*
- *Continual Development of a sequential curriculum.*

TO WORK TOWARDS:-

- *Future Lift and extension of hall.*
- *Shaded areas to outside areas extending the classroom and provide continuous provision.*
- *Perimeter fencing around the front of the school designed to improve safety and security for children and limiting external traffic using carpark as a turning point.*