



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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Arena Academy Accessibility Plan 2016-2019

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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 SLT at Arena 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 and 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 Arena Academy is based on inclusive principles which strive to promote equality.

Equality of opportunity at Arena 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 2016-2019 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.

The current number of students on roll who have a SEND need is 91(subject to change).

Arena Academy has wheelchair access with ramps and the use of a lift. Every room is wheelchair friendly and disabled toilet facilities are available around the school.

The Access Plan of 2008 identified short, medium and long-term strategies for improving access to provision:

- To maintain up to date resources and equipment.
- To maintain links for Visual Impaired students with Priestley Smith and Outside Agencies.
- To inform all staff on students with Visual Impairments and their requirements.
- To maintain provision for our Hearing Impaired students using radio aids and to encourage student independence.
- To inform staff and train a specific Teaching Assistant on the use of hearing aids and the needs of students with hearing difficulties.
- Enable students with temporary mobility problems to access curriculum and to move between lessons safely. Nurse and TA support is already in place for SEN students to enable them to fulfil their potential.
- To maintain differentiated curriculum.
- Make minor alterations to premises to meet statutory requirements on rolling programme as improvements are made to school e.g. improvements to signage, continuous evaluation of site to maintain access to all students. Ramps to all areas of the school are already in place for disabled students to access all areas.
- Access to all levels of school via lift. Evacuation procedures are already in place.

Progress has already been made on all of these strategies, although further improvements can be made and are identified in the Action Plan.

- Consultation with students and parents.

- Raising staff awareness and consultation.

1C: Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

On the whole, students at Arena Academy happy with the provision provided. Students feel supported by the SEND department and feel that the support in class helps them access all subjects. Most teachers have a good understanding of their difficulties and make appropriate adjustments in class to help them succeed. Each year group has a designated area within the school to encourage students to feel safe and secure within their year group. Students enjoy using the Hub during break time and lunchtime clubs, as it gives them a place where they can get help with homework, play games and socialise. It is a very informal and friendly environment which supports our most vulnerable students as they settle into Arena Academy in Year 7. Many of our Year 7 students, who attend, then go on to become Buddies and support our new Year 7 when they are in Year 8. Hot food is available for breakfast at break and during lunchtimes. Students feel happy with the transition from primary school to secondary school and found the induction days in July very helpful. A number of students also get a chance to visit the school, prior to the induction day, where they tour the school and have a few taster lessons on a more personal level. A number of primary schools were visited in order to assist with a more successful transition to Arena Academy. Students were happy with the extra curricular provision and felt able to participate if they wished.

Students do sometimes feel the need for extra support, academically and emotionally, but know they can approach the SEN staff at any time to help and support them, during homework club, social times and mentoring sessions. All of the students felt secure within their education and hope to achieve passes in their exams. Most students felt well supported, enabling them to reach their goals.

Parents are very happy with the support and provision made by the school. They are kept informed of their child's progress and feel that all staff understand the nature of their difficulties. The students are developing well as young people and most are growing in confidence as they progress through the school. Parents felt that students were stretched to achieve the very best and that they are encouraged to participate in all areas of school life. They were also happy that the lunchtime club provides a safe environment for a number of our students at quite a difficult time of the school day for them. We are well supported by Outside Agencies.

Some parents felt that students may need a little more vocational training as they progress through school. We acknowledge this by offering Level 2 courses, which allow them to concentrate on all other subjects with support given and that the pressures of 8 or 9 GCSEs were alleviated. Level 2 students are encouraged to follow a path they can succeed in, which is supported by all staff. Any individual concerns of parents/students are addressed by encouragement for parents to contact school straight away. We also hold SEND Surgery session on a regular basis for all SEN

students and all members of the SEND department are available for parents to speak to. The SEND Surgeries are informal meetings to encourage parents to be fully involved in their child's education and to keep them well informed. Based on a questionnaire completed by parents on our provisions for students, parents felt that Arena Academy provides a safe environment for their child to achieve as well as give excellent support for their child's personal development.

The school has set the following priorities in respect of consultation on the plan:

- To continue to raise awareness and understanding of our students disabilities with members of the school community.
- To continue to support students in the transition from Key Stage 2 to 3 and between key stages 3 & 4.

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

The Learning Support Department is the primary link between the school and disabled students. Their needs are taken into account and disseminated to all staff via the SEN register, Personal Development Plans and an information sheet on all new Year 7s when entering school. Generally, students are withdrawn from a small number of lessons per week, or supported in class by specialised Teaching Assistants. Students feel well supported and their needs are clearly understood. They are given the opportunity to attend break and lunchtime clubs, and are reassured to know that they can approach any member of the department with a problem or a concern. However, students suggested that they would not always want to discuss all problems with members of staff and would like to have someone their own age to discuss their worries. Therefore Buddies, Peer Mentors, TA Mentors and Senior Students meet up or speak to them on a regular basis. Students feel they can participate fully in school life; they enjoy trips and extra curricular activities as well as residential visits.

Effective differentiation has been the subject of several staff meetings, and with the support of the Teaching Assistants, all of the departments are supported to differentiate their lessons. There is close contact between staff and the Learning Support Department as Teaching Assistants and teachers liaise to review and set new targets on a termly basis. Teaching Assistants have facilitated a far greater awareness of students needs with all staff and continued partnership with a number of outside agencies has meant that the school can plan and adapt the curriculum to suit the requirements of all students. Highlighted area for improvement is continued work on differentiating individual schemes of work within departments.

The School has set the following overall priorities for increasing curriculum access:

- Collating a bank of subject differentiation.
- Using small step approaches to deliver subject content
- Differentiation by: content, support, interest, pace, level, response

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 and students follow a one-way system.

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

- Training on Evacuation Chair system for Teaching Assistants.

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

- Worksheets differentiated by content.
- Use of computers / Laptops.
- The school website and network is simple and easy to access.
- Most departments have pictorial clues and keywords on display.
- Timetables printed and put into students passports.
- Personalised strategies.

3A: Management, Co-ordination and Implementation

Progress towards the Action Plan will be reviewed as part of the school's annual evaluation of its Improvement Plan in the spring term. The results of that evaluation will be reported to SLT and the full governing body.

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 lead staff identified in the plan.

The DES/AP is fully consistent with the school's SEN policy and SEN legislation. It should also be applied consistently with the schools policy 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 including PSS/Physio/Visual/CAT/SALT.
- School Nurse. Counsellor on site

Implementation of plans are already specialised in place we have a number of specialised Teaching Assistants, who all support in one particular subject area. The students are identified and individual needs are met.

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.