

# North Halifax Grammar School

## Access Policy



<b>Approved by:</b>	Full Governance Board
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<b>Policy owner:</b>	Academy Finance Director

## **NHGS Accessibility Plan**

### **Purpose of policy**

The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Academy endeavours to be as accessible as possible to as many people as possible in everything that we do. This includes, but is not confined to, the physical environment, the curriculum, management of the Academy, the support provided to individuals and the information that we provide.

The Academy recognises that many of its students, visitors, parents, carers and staff, whether disabled or otherwise, have individual needs when using the Academy. However, we also recognise that for some students, the nature of their disabilities may mean that they experience specific difficulties related to accessing education and the physical environment.

We will endeavour to ensure that disabled students receive the same standards of education as those without a disability. We will also ensure that we remove any barriers and make reasonable adjustments as required to ensure all our staff, visitors, parents, carers and students have the same access rights in and around our buildings.

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

### **Guiding Principles**

North Halifax Grammar School's motto is 'Living to Learn, Learning to Live' and the Ethos Statement includes the following values which the school encourages all students, staff and visitors to demonstrate: Enthusiastic, Enquiring, Engaged, Creative, Co-operative, Confident, Mannerly, Mindful, Motivated.

North Halifax Grammar School believes that it has a duty to ensure all pupils and young people:

- achieve their best;
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives; and
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

North Halifax Grammar School believes that it has a duty to ensure all staff, visitors, parents and carers:

- are included in everything we do;
- are fully supported to fulfil their work commitments;
- are able to access as much of the physical environment as possible;
- are able to access all aspects of information provided by the Academy; and
- are treated fairly and respectfully.

### **Definition of Disability**

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one. However, under the Equality Act 2010, a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are also included. Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included.

If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoverers and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

## **Scope of the Accessibility Plan**

This Plan covers all three main strands of the planning duty as required by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, together with the provision of information for those involved in the school community. This is done by:

- managing and improving the physical environment of the Academy;
- ensuring that the curriculum is differentiated, to meet the learning needs of young people with SEN and disabilities;
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to all students, staff, parents, carers and visitors with disabilities; and
- ensuring that information is provided in a suitable format for all members of the school community.

This is achieved through whole school planning, strategy and policy reviews, staff training, listening to the student voice and working with individuals on a 1:1 basis. This ensures that decisions are made with a view to improving the accessibility of education in its many aspects, for current and prospective young people and all members of the school community.

## **Improving the Physical Environment**

The Academy site comprises of one large original main building dating from 1959, which has had a number of additions over the last 50 years. The main building is set over three floors and houses the majority of the school's specialist teaching provision and has various changes in level. Up until 2017, only 32% of the school site was accessible and of this, only 20% of the specialist teaching areas.

Significant work has now been completed to make 96% of the site and 100% of the specialist teaching areas accessible for all young people, staff and visitors. This has been achieved through the addition of a passenger lift in the main building, additional platform lifts and ramps, the introduction of wider access and corridor doors to meet the requirements of the DDA Act 1995 and new toilet facilities.

The new sports hall building is 100% accessible and has been built to enable access for all users and visitors with specific washing and toilet facilities, a passenger lift and corridors and doors wide enough to accommodate wheelchair access.

All new building work will be mindful of the accessibility requirements of all users and shall be completed to support 100% accessibility.

The physical environment will continue to be monitored on a regular basis and changes will be made wherever possible, subject to the availability of the appropriate financial resources.

The evacuation of the premises is considered with each individual young person, staff member, carer, parent or visitor. Where potential mobility or physical issues are identified, the school welfare officer holds a detailed discussion with the individual and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is agreed and documented. A PEEP details the particular arrangements for the individual should there be a need to evacuate the building.

This process is followed for both temporary, for example a broken leg, and permanent mobility and access issues. A temporary PEEP will be reviewed at dates agreed with the individual, for example following key hospital or physiotherapy appointments, whereas a permanent PEEP will be reviewed annually at the start of each school year and as required during the year, for example if circumstances change. These are held in Reception and also the Mobility Board signed for temporary PEEPS, shared with both the Premises Team and Reception.

## **Curriculum planning and differentiation**

The Academy sets high expectations for disabled students and sets them appropriate and challenging academic targets. It is the expectation that disabled students will make good or outstanding progress from their starting points and staff will provide for and support disabled students in appropriate ways.

Senior and middle leaders will ensure all students can access the curriculum by making reasonable adjustments to curriculum planning, timetabling, the use of resources and the appropriate deployment of support staff.

Disabled students themselves and their parents and carers will be consulted and play a key role in planning how the school will meet their needs.

Particular issues will need consideration and these include:

- PE for students with physical disabilities;
- Sex education for those who are particularly vulnerable or have inherited conditions;
- Music for deaf or hearing impaired students;
- Easy language or taped information for students with learning difficulties;
- Pictures and symbols for students with communication difficulties;
- Pre-printed homework for dyslexic students;
- Large print for the visually impaired and clear signs especially health and safety advice;
- Adjustable tables in classrooms for wheelchair users;
- Classroom organisation to allow for movement of wheelchair users;
- Lighting that supports lip reading;
- Appropriate level of on-site medical provision (trained or school nurse) to support students with medical needs;
- The positive promotion of disabled people through images, books, teaching materials and the wider curriculum in order to raise the self-esteem of disabled students; and
- The elimination of bullying of disabled students.

## **Provision of Support**

### *Teaching and Learning Support*

As set out in the SEND Policy, the Academy has a graduated approach to support for young people. This follows the steps as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014. The steps to this approach are:

#### **Assess**

- After identification of a potential issue, the SEND team will carry out an analysis of a student's needs (including identification of barriers to learning). This will draw on information from all of the student's teachers, from the student themselves, from the student's parents/carers, and from outside agencies, as appropriate. The assessment will take account of the young person's current progress against their expected progress, benchmarked against their peers and national data, as appropriate.

#### **Plan**

- Parents will be formally notified if a student is provided with SEND support (though they will have been involved earlier: this will be a formal notification).
- The SEND team, will liaise with teachers, parents/carers and the student, to agree the outcomes sought and support needed.
- Teachers will be responsible for implementing strategies and working towards appropriate outcomes, with support from the SEND team/SENDCo as appropriate.
- A 'One Page Profile' or a 'statement of support' (whichever is more appropriate) will be produced which will detail these strategies. Each of the student's teachers will be given this profile.

#### **Do**

- Strategies will be implemented.
- A review date will be agreed.

#### **Review**

- The effectiveness of the strategies/support/intervention and their impact on the student's progress will be reviewed.
- The impact and support of the interventions/strategies/support will be evaluated (this includes feedback from parents/students).

If the young person is found to be making expected/good progress, the effective strategies will remain in place and will continue to be reviewed as required.

Where, despite the school taking 'relevant and purposeful action' to identify, assess and meet the needs of a young person, the young person does not make expected progress, the Academy, in partnership with the parents/carers and the young person, will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment. Please refer to the SEND Policy for more information.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan (or retains a statement of Educational Needs), the Academy will co-operate fully with the Local Authority and other relevant partners in implementing and reviewing the plan.

#### *Support for staff and visitors*

Similar individual support to that provided to young people will also be provided for all staff, visitors, parents and carers.

#### **Assessment and Planning**

- Discussions will be held with the individual to assess their access needs and their requirements for working at, or visiting the school. This will involve the Personnel Officer, the School Welfare Officer and the line manager (for staff) or school contact (for visitors, parents and carers) to ensure that all needs are considered.
- A 'statement of support' (whichever is more appropriate) will be produced which will detail these strategies.

#### **Do**

- Plans and strategies will be implemented.
- A review date will be agreed.

#### **Review**

- The effectiveness of the plans and their impact on the individual will be reviewed and evaluated. If necessary, plans will be revised to provide better support or have more impact.

In addition, the Academy will ensure that for disabled parents, carers and visitors to the school:

- Information will be made available in different formats (braille, large print, audio copies, appropriate language), as required.
- Reception can cater for the needs of all visitors including the deaf, those with communication difficulties and wheelchair users.
- Signage is clear.

#### *Involving Specialists*

The Academy will contact an outside specialist whenever it is felt it is in the best interests of the student, member of staff or visitor. This will be in consultation with parents/carers and the student, or the individual.

We regularly work with specialists from the following services:

- Child Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Autistic Spectrum (Dis)Order service
- Specialist Inclusion service
- Family Support services
- Calderdale Youth workers
- Unique Ways
- Noah's Ark counselling services
- Barnado's
- Insight
- School Nursing team
- Health and Safety team
- Access team (supports pupils with independent travel)
- Occupational Therapy

As our students travel to school from a wide geographical area, we regularly work with services from both within Calderdale and neighbouring areas.

## **Provision of Information**

All members of the school community are entitled to receive information that is in a format that is accessible to them. Information may therefore be required in a number of formats including providing information in braille, large print, simplified language, on audio tape, on video tape, sign language, using a symbol system or in another language.

Handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, monitoring information and general information about school events must be adapted where needs are known in advance or must be provided in a timely manner when requested. It is a priority of the Academy to ensure that the website includes at least a high visibility link and details of how to ask for information in an alternative format.

## **Monitoring of the Plan**

Monitoring of the physical environment and the continued access requirements of all young people, staff and visitors will be undertaken continually through regular walks of the building and site. The Academy will liaise with individuals requiring specialist access and seek feedback from all young people, parents/carers, staff and visitors. Any issues arising or areas where improvements are required will be reported to the Health and Safety Committee or the Governance Board. This will be the responsibility of the Finance Director.

Monitoring is essential to ensure that young people with SEN and disabilities are fully able to access the curriculum. Monitoring information will be provided at least annually that shows how disabled students have performed against their own targets and against their peers. This information will be reported to the Governance Board three times a year and will be discussed with the Governor responsible for students with SEND. This will be the responsibility of the Vice Principal (Behaviour, Safeguarding and Inclusion).

We will monitor the following:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Achievement
- Attendance
- Rewards and Sanctions
- KS4 option choices
- Post-16 option choices
- All destinations

Monitoring of the support provided to young people will be the responsibility of the SEND team, monitoring of the support for staff will be the responsibility of the Personnel Officer and monitoring of the support for visitors, parents and carers will be the responsibility of the School Systems Manager.

## **Other related Academy Policies**

Equality for disabled individuals is included as an explicit aim in all of our policies and this Accessibility Plan is supported by the following documents:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies
- Academy Improvement Plan
- Policy for Academy visits and excursions
- SEND Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Lockdown and Fire Evacuation Procedures