

SPARKLERS FOUNDATION AND CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

ACCESIBILTY PLAN



January 2020 Statutory Annual Personnel & Pay Policy Committee

Accessibility Plan Introduction

This policy was formerly drawn up in accordance with the Education Act 1944, Disability Act and the Constitution of Ghana. It is also in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) in UK. It drew on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by the DfE in July 2002.

On October 1 2012, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. The Equality Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law. It is designed to simplify the law and it extends protection from discrimination in some areas. As far as schools are concerned, for the most part, the effect of the new laws is the same as it has been in the past - meaning that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The exceptions to the discrimination provisions for schools that existed under the previous legislation - such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship, and admissions to single-sex schools and schools of religious character, are all replicated in the new act. However, there are some changes that will have an impact on schools. The new single Equality Duty which has replaced the three separate duties on race, disability and gender, requires schools to publish equality information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Equality Duty, and prepare and publish equality objectives by 5 April 2012. The published information should be updated at least annually, and objectives should be published at least once every four years.

The adopted Equality Duty of Sparklers Foundation has three main elements:

- Eliminated discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the above policies.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Schools must have due regard to the three elements outlined above, which means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to equality implications.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 required schools to produce Accessibility Plans every three years; this duty is replicated in the Equality Act 2010 with new

accessibility plans being required, in line with the regulatory framework, for a three-year period. Schools should take reasonable steps to implement their plan.

Disability

The overriding principal of equality legislation is generally one of equal treatment, however, the provisions relating to disability discrimination are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled and may have to make changes to your practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what you offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can.

Schools are expected to make reasonable adjustments and to now supply auxiliary aids and/or services for disabled pupils. The reasonable adjustment duties are intended to complement the accessibility planning duties.

Definition of Disability

“A person has 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 day to day activities”.

Key Objective

To reduce and eliminate barriers to allow access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for learners and prospective learners with a disability. The school is committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all learners, staff, parents and visitors to the school

- To increase the extent to which disabled learners can participate in the curriculum
- To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled learners can take advantage of education and associated services.
- To improve the delivery to disabled learners of information which is readily accessible to learners who are not disabled.
- Not to discriminate against disabled learners in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
- Not to treat disabled learners less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled learners at a substantial disadvantage
- To produce an accessibility plan

1. In performing their duties, directors and staff will have regard to existing disability codes of practice in the country.

2. The school recognises and values families knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities and respects the parent's and child's right to confidentiality.

3. The school provides all learners with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual learners and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in our adapted, inclusive curriculum which is tailored to the personalised needs of learners and for the holistic development of all learners inclusive curriculum:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to learner's diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of learners

Activity

The school plans, over time, to increase the accessibility of the provision for all learners, staff and visitors. Actions under this Accessibility plan will relate to:

a) Education and related activities

The school will increase access to the curriculum, expanding the curriculum if necessary (see Equal Opportunities and Respect for All Policy). This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in clubs, leisure activities, school visits and activity week. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment which may assist learners in accessing the curriculum.

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of the local authority services and professionals from the Medical Trusts and Social Services Departments.

The school acknowledges that there is a need for ongoing awareness raising and training for staff and directors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter.

b) Physical Environment

The school will take account of the needs of the learners and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, (see Appendix 1 & 2).

Given that the school is housed in two buildings - the KS 4/5 building (two storeys) dates from the 19th and early 20th century, and KS 2/3 (single storey) from the 1950's - and each building has various sets of steps and levels, improving access to the physical environment will take place over time as outlined in Appendix 2.

c) Provision of information

The school will improve the delivery of written information to learners, staff, families, Governors and visitors. The information should be made available in various preferred formats. The school will make itself aware of local services for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested. See Equal Opportunities and Respect for All Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Equal Opportunities and Respect for All Policy.

Appendix 1

Improving the Physical Access at School

1. Front car park Disabled parking bay designated and marked by Disabled Parking sign
2. Access signs mounted in entrance area
3. Disabled ramp and handrail installed
4. Automatic entrance doors for disabled access
5. General Instructed reception staff in assisting disabled visitors
6. General Portable ramp purchased for use around the site
7. General Various wooden ramps constructed on site and positioned at various doors to assist access
8. Ceiling hoist and height adjustable couch installed in toilet area for changing purposes for wheel chair users
9. Disabled showers fitted with low level access tray

10. Vehicles Minibus purchased with wheelchair access
11. All new fire doors are at least 900mm wide for disabled access
12. Talking fire alarm system installed which is less frightening and distressing for learners
13. Hearing induction loop Portable hearing induction loop available in reception and staff trained in its use
14. Disabled access around the site.
15. Sound reduction /acoustic systems for reduction of noise levels and noise distraction for learners making dining a more pleasant experience for those with hypersensitivity to noise