

Protocol: Accessibility Plan

Reviewed: July 2024

Next review: July 2027

Mid-year updates: October 2024

Policy Monitoring

Libra Policies are reviewed when the need arises in line with legislation updates, guidance, and useful information we receive in order to improve and enhance our provision. Additionally, Policies are updated annually by relevant members of staff and the Senior Leadership Team.

Equality Statement

We believe that this policy is in line with the Equality Act as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any child or member of staff, and it helps to promote equality at this school.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates into all aspects of school life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with this school to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We acknowledge the findings of the Race Disparity Audit that clearly shows how people of different ethnicities are treated across the public services of health, education, employment and the criminal justice system.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

Introduction

The Equality act places responsibility on schools to remove discrimination against children with disability. Disability is defined as when a person has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition includes a wide range of impairments including sensory impairments and those affecting sight or hearing. The definition can also include hidden impairments such as Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and speech and language impairment. Some disabled children may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may be receiving support via school-based SEN Support or have a statement/Education Health Care Plan. The fact that a disabled child has SEN does not remove the duty to make reasonable adjustments for them; some disabled children with SEN will still require reasonable adjustments to be made in addition to any support they receive through SEN provision. The Equality Act requires school to make "reasonable adjustments" to their policies, procedures and practice to accommodate children with disability in school life.

Aims and Objectives:

We aim to:

- Provide an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all children, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.
- Recognise and value parent's knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out everyday activities and respect the parent's and child's right to confidentiality.
- Show how access is to be improved for disabled children, staff and visitors to the school within a given time frame and anticipate the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.
- Increase access to the curriculum for children with a physical disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that children with a disability are as equally prepared for life as the able-bodied children. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in offsite outdoor learning or visits.
- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe.
- Improve the delivery of written information to children, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

Contextual Information

All children placed at Libra have EHCPs and all are accessing the curriculum, environment and written information. None are physically disabled requiring wheelchair use, one child has a hearing impairment, and we have some children with a range of speech and language needs.

Process

Our accessibility plan has been developed as follows:

- Review of the current curriculum and physical resources of the school.
- Actions to eliminate barriers identified.
- Publication of the plan
- Evaluate the plan every 3 years (with the accessibility plan under on-going review and revision as necessary).

In addition to this we will:

- Continually review the environment of the school, the way we plan, prepare and deliver curriculum and the information we provide for children, so that we can improve access.
- Work to provide an atmosphere where all children feel safe and valued.
- Promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.
- Continually review those parts of our active offsite curriculum to ensure that we continue to provide access for children with disabilities.

Curriculum		
All children on roll have additional needs. There is a growing number of children either diagnosed with ASD or on the pathway for a diagnosis, alongside a significant number of children who have speech and language delays and/or disorders. An increasing number of children struggle with literacy-based learning skills. We have developed our phonics program to help readers build their confidence and skills in reading, so that over time they can become independent readers. Whilst they are learning to read, the children are able to access our Rhino Readers reading scheme where they can enjoy phonetically accessible books for their level. We support readers through directed phonics teaching alongside specific interventions like Rapid Reading, and fun activities to increase exposure and learning opportunities. Children are identified and this support is added to their timetables and the main staff working with those children on a day-to-day basis are made aware of their phonics ability and needs. Staff undertake dyslexia training, enabling internal diagnosis and adapted provision within classrooms as well as for individual children		
Improvements already made to enhance access to the curriculum		
Regular Learning Walks, book scrutinies, child voice, parental communication and data analyses are triangulated by the SMT to consider how children are accessing the curriculum. Where needed, swift action is taken to adapt provision / provide reasonable adjustments to optimise access to the curriculum. Information-sharing is also prioritised so all staff working with children understand their needs and how to meet them. Our phonics and reading programme have had a big impact in enabling access to the curriculum, through improving the reading skills of children. Our curriculum is always under review, with a focus on developing a curriculum for all and promoting inclusion through using outdoor learning. Our staff team meet children's SEMH needs, and high staffing ratios ensure that classrooms and social interaction are positive and calm. Trained LSAs work with our SALT to support speech and language development, completing assessments, and supporting children through specific directed speech and language work. Children whose social and emotional needs inhibit engagement with the curriculum have access to play therapists who can support their social and emotional development which in time will help them access the curriculum more positively.		
Ongoing Review		
Target	Strategies	Success Criteria
To liaise with educational establishments and the LA SEN team to prepare for the intake of new children who transfer to Libra	To identify children who may need adapted or additional provision	Provision set in place ready for when the child/ren start school

To ensure that curriculum adjustments provide fair access for all	Consider needs of all children when planning lessons, adjust resources accordingly such as text size, paper colour, writing equipment, classroom position etc. Consider those children with general and specific learning difficulties. Ensure staff have access to the SEN information for children they teach, to ensure they can plan and deliver to meet need.	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed.
To ensure that teaching and learning methods and environment supports children with hearing impairment	Sound field system if appropriate. Quiet classrooms, child facing teacher to facilitate lip-reading (and/or angled towards the teacher, to maximise hearing to the best ear. Clear enunciation and considered talking speed. Further support as required, inc. from the Advisory Team.	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed.
To ensure that teaching and learning methods and environment supports children with visual impairment	Child faces teacher, glasses worn. Modified print if needed. Use of IT and technology as needed, including from the Advisory Team	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed.
To ensure that teaching and learning methods and environment supports children with SEMH needs.	Layout of classroom, time out, clear targets, clear behavioural expectations. Pastoral support as needed, including from the therapeutic team.	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed.
To ensure that teaching and learning methods and environment supports children with physical needs.	Adapted seating, weighted blankets, lap cushions, standing desks etc. Therapy programmes as advised by external professionals. Rest and movement breaks as needed.	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed.
To ensure that teaching and learning methods and environment supports children with diagnosed medical conditions	Staff have sufficient training to meet medical needs. Liaison with parents and medical professionals. Medication and equipment safely stored. Planning and risk assessments for trips and visits	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed.
To ensure that teaching and learning methods and environment supports children with ASD / suspected ASD.	ASD-friendly approaches incorporated universally (eg visual timetables). In addition, specific further adaptations are made for individual children. Ongoing staff training	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed.
To ensure that effective speech and language provision is in place	Annual screening for identification of SALT needs. Targeted support and intervention provided, often by SALT and specialist LSAs.	All children can communicate and interact effectively, removing barriers to progress. All children can access the curriculum.
To ensure that improved identification of (and provision for) children who have specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia	Staff training around possible resources and cascaded as appropriate. Resources purchased to support dyslexic children in school (eg Nessy) and strategies used by staff to make dyslexia-friendly classrooms	All children can access the curriculum. Barriers to learning are removed. Children are supported to manage their learning difficulties.

Physical environment and improvements already made to enhance access to the physical environment

The Libra School was originally a farmhouse with additional buildings that have been converted for school use. The property was purchased primarily for its location and the potential it offered for children with SEMH and

sensory needs but was not originally well planned for disabled access. Libra has undertaken significant investment over the past 3 years to increase the number of rooms accessible on the ground floor and to improve accessibility from the car park to the reception to include disabled parking bays. The reception area is fully accessible. The ground floor of all the buildings and outside rooms are accessible to wheelchair users. We have toilet facilities suitable for wheelchair users. All fire exits from the buildings on the ground floors are fully accessible to wheelchair users. Our offsite resources, the farm and forest school sites, are all accessible by wheelchair users although all terrain wheelchairs would be advantageous due to the rural nature of these locations. Our minibuses can transport wheelchairs which fold down

Ongoing Review		
Target	Strategies	Success Criteria
To be aware of the access needs of all children, staff, parents and carers and to make reasonable adjustments accordingly	Gather data around access needs when a disabled child starts at our school. Create access plans for individuals as required. Regular reminders to parents and carers to let us know if they have problems with access to any areas of the school.	Our buildings and grounds are accessible for all children, staff, parents and carers, and visitors to the school.
To ensure safe, clear access throughout the site at all times	Daily checks to ensure exits, entrances and walkways are clear of obstructions, pathways are gritted and ice-free, exterior lighting is working etc. PEEPs are in place for those who need them.	Our site is accessible for all.
To ensure that the disabled toilets remain accessible to all.	Disabled toilets are kept free from clutter.	Disabled toilets are always easily accessible

Information - Improvements already made to enhance access to information

Libra has children with a wide variety of SEND needs which impact upon their communication and the methods they need to support them in understanding the information provided. Our teaching methods rely heavily on the use of information provided to children directly from the teacher and resources for children to use at their tables. There is very little use of textbook style learning. Newsletters are emailed out to all parents (where possible) and the format has been developed to provide information in smaller chunks with a clearer layout. Our DSL and Early Help Officer works with specific families to support information sharing between home and school.

Ongoing Review		
Target	Strategies	Success Criteria
To ensure that all staff are aware of children or parents/carers who need information shared in a different format, have hearing or communication	Detailed EHCP information to share relevant information from professionals. Relational support plans for children to include specific information regarding communication strategies.	All children and parents are fully included and feel supported.
To ensure that learning materials provided in classrooms are targeted to meet individual needs where required	Training for all staff where needed. Access to key programs to create resources – Widgit online for example	Children's needs are met in a timely manner and teaching is adapted to meet their needs. Improved engagement in learning and progress.

Staff training and supervision

Through self-review and Continued Professional Development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote excellent teaching and learning for all children. We aim to meet every child's needs within inclusive classes.

Monitoring and evidence

- Curriculum
- Schemes of work

- Attainment records
- SMT data meeting minutes
- SEF

Responsibilities

The senior management team will:

- work in conjunction with the Directors to ensure all school staff, children and parents are aware of and comply with this policy.
- provide an environment that is safe, fun, stimulating and challenging to all children.
- promote an awareness of and respect for a diversity of cultures, values, beliefs and abilities.
- encourage parents to take an active role in policy development where appropriate.
- ensure all relevant risk assessments are in place to ensure a safe school environment.
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality.
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff.
- consider providing remote learning to children in circumstances when in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government guidance in accordance with school risk assessments and safeguarding guidance. This might include occasions when:
 - we decide that it is not possible for the school to open safely, or that opening would contradict guidance from local or central government.
 - individual children, for a short period, are unable to physically attend school but are able to continue learning.
- monitor and evidence the effectiveness of this policy.

Teaching and learning support staff will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy.
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes.
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination.
- attend appropriate training sessions.
- report any concerns they have about any aspect of the school community.
- receive relevant training, periodically and ongoing as required, according to their role.
- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Linked Policies and documents:

Relational / Health & Safety / School Evaluation and Development Plan / Special Educational Needs Policy / Supporting Children with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicines / Offsite Visits / Complaints

Policy Location

This policy can be found:

- on SharePoint within the staff and master's folder
- on the school website www.libraschool.co.uk
- available upon request from the office: admin@libraschool.co.uk / 01598 740044

