**Accessibility Plan and Disability Equality Plan**

March 2021-July 2023

At Birchfield Nursery School we are committed to creating a fully

accessible environment which values and includes all children, staff, family members, students and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

**Definition of Disability**

A disability under the Equality Act 2010 is:

**‘A physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.**

The definition includes more people than many realise ’long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer

We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. The Equality Act 2010 and Equality Duty 2011 placed responsibilities upon schools to remove discrimination against pupils with disability.

It requires schools to make “reasonable adjustments” to their policies, procedures and practices to accommodate pupils with disability more fully in school life. A school’s duty to make reasonable adjustments is an anticipatory one and therefore schools need to think in advance about what disabled children might require and what adjustments might need to be made.

* The duty requires us to ensure disabled children and families are not treated less favourably.
* To take reasonable steps to avoid putting children at a substantial disadvantage.
* To maintain an inclusive ethos.
* To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum addressing the needs of all children.
* To have systems which enable the early identification of barriers to learning and participation.
* To have equal opportunity procedures for the recruitment and retention of all staff

Our transition procedures at Birchfield Nursery School enable the staff to become aware of the child’s needs regarding

* Cognition and learning
* Communication and interaction
* Social, Emotional and mental health
* Sensory and physical

From April 2018, on our admissions paperwork, we will ask parents/carers if they are disabled and if there are any adaptations, we can make to enable their access and inclusion.

The planning duties of the DDA makes three requirements of the Governing Body

 To increase the extent to which disabled children can participate in the school curriculum

 To improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled children can take advantage of education and associated services

 Improving the delivery to disabled children of information which is provided for pupils who are not disabled in a format appropriate to their needs

We are required to resource, implement and review our accessibility plan as necessary. This plan will be monitored and evaluated by the governing body.

This plan will be made available upon request to any current parent or prospective parent who requests it. The plan will be made available on our website. This plan will also be made available to staff and will inform relevant aspects of the school’s development plan.

We acknowledge that there is a need for ongoing awareness raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans.

**What is already in place?**

The staff provide information for families in a huge variety of ways (display boards, newsletters, online learning journey, website, twitter, our app

**What do we need to do over the next 3 years?**

Consult families on entry / mid-year about the ways we can improve the information we share. Investigate different ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents, family members, and other disabled adult users of the site. Produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired students

Areas to be considered:

**Physical Access**

**(This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education)**

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| **What is already in place?**  The nursery has recently undergone some refurbishment and remodelling to allow for further accessibility to all areas and to increase capacity in provision of ‘Quiet spaces’ and bays for focussed small group/1:1 activities.  Benches that narrowed the main corridor were removed to allow extra space for mobility aids and a neural, calming colour palette was introduced.  Flooring was replaced and new toilets were installed to improve accessibility.  The school will continue to take account of the needs of children and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.  We have replaced fire doors to ensure that they have adequate width for mobility aids and are more lightweight to improve safety. Lighting around the nursery was improved to ensure that, seasonally, the entrance to nursery is safe for all.  Cloakroom pegs are at a height accessible for disabled children who may be wheelchair users.  It is expected that, prior to starting nursery, visits are planned and organised so that all children are able to access the environment fully and any additional planning or resourcing can happen ahead of time.  **What do we need to do over the next 3 years?**  For our planned paint works we will continue to use a neutral palette that minimises negative stimulus. We will look to upgrade all internal doors to include a visibility window to support those children who may be anxious before entering.  The top part of the garden is difficult to access at the moment so we will consider this in our garden developments which will commence during the 2018-19 academic year.  When we enhance signage we will include tactile or braille signage. When we replace taps we will choose lever style taps to assist those with manual dexterity difficulties.  We will lower the height of all sinks and change the materials used to allow increased accessibility and promote independence. |

**Plan for improving Physical Access to the Physical Environment.**

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| **Targets** | **Strategies** | **Success indicators** | **Timeframe** | **Goals achieved** |
| To provide clear information to all adults about evacuation procedures for any disabled persons in the building at the time of a fire. | Guidance included in Fire Drill information. | Safe evacuation of all persons.  Information added to signing in procedures | Ongoing reviews where PEEPS are needed | Individual risk assessments for children with additional needs to include fire risk assessment |
| Improve accessibility to the garden for disabled persons | Include reference to within garden developments | Disabled persons will have better access to outdoor environment. | Garden developments 2022-23  Summer 2023 | Ramp purchased for access to sand/building area.  Ramps to outside area checked regularly. |
| Improve accessibility for those with manual dexterity difficulties and hearing impairment. | Maintain and monitor environment.  Liaise with outside agencies | When any internal refurbishment is completed, install lever taps.  Access appropriate training | By Spring 2023 | Liaise where necessary to follow individual needs in this area |

**Curriculum Access**

**(This includes expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that children with a disability are as, equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied children. It covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist all children in accessing the curriculum.)**

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| **What is already in place?**  From our first contact with families we value the information they share with us about the needs of their child, this includes an initial home visit.  Staff at the Nursery have a range of experience in working with children with disability. Specific training is completed as required. The Nursery works with a range of outside agencies who may offer advice, guidance and support.  These agencies include:  working with parents and where needed, specialist agencies, e.g, Portage, Speech and Language, Educational Psychology, Child Development Centre, Occupational Therapy.  The children all have choices about where they access our provision and the staff work to promote their maximum participation.  We offer positive examples of disability and inclusion in book and images that we provide in the environment. Some staff have accessed training in Makaton and use it regularly. This year staff have begun to introduce elements from Picture Exchange and Communication System (PECS) with the children and the use of visual timelines is embedded.  When we know that we are to admit children who have chronic conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, we obtain training from the appropriate professional about the child’s unique requirements and medical plans are completed.  Our outdoor area is large and poses some risks and challenges. Staff are aware of where children are who have mobility difficulties, and ensure that children are not left to struggle outdoors, whilst helping them to be as independent as possible.  Training is regularly sourced to support staff including Wellcom , positive behaviour service, Speech and Language programme, , Autism training, sensory profiling and processing ,Asthma and allergy Awareness and Paediatric First Aid.  Systems are in place to promote effective transitions, both at the point of admission to Nursery and as the children move on to Primary School. All children who attend the Nursery have access to a curriculum and provision that is appropriate for their needs. Staff consider this all the time and our focus child approach means all children are treated as individuals. Our resources are open ended, so that children can succeed at their own level, with no pre-determined outcome. We very much have a “can do” attitude and risk assess in order that children can take part and stretch themselves as far as they can.  **What do we need to do over the next 3 years?**  Extend staff knowledge and use of Makaton and PECS  Ongoing updates from other professionals about needs of particular children  Regular Asthma training updates from the Asthma Nurse |

**Curriculum Access**

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| **Targets** | **Strategies** | **Success indicators** | **Timeframe** | **Goals achieved** |
| Support staff in use of communication methods e.g. PECS/Makaton | Access training for all staff | Communication methods become common practice | Summer 2023 |  |
| Opportunities to scaffold and support those below ARE/above | Staff meeting time to share scaffolding ideas  Staff use ‘planning in the moment’ approach | All children retaining knowledge and developing skills within appropriate development bands.  Accessibility to all aspects of curriculum. | Summer 2023 |  |

**Information Access**

**(Improve the delivery of written information to staff, families and visitors with disabilities. The information will be available in various preferred formats within a reasonable period.)**

**Information Access**

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| **Targets** | **Strategies** | **Success indicators** | **Time Frame** | **Goals Achieved** |
| To provide information in a format suited to the needs of the individual. | Regularly send questionnaire to families and governors to determine the needs of users. | All stakeholders have access to information in a format suited to their needs. | Ongoing | To provide information in a format suited to the needs of the individual. |
| Make available written material in alternative formats when specifically requested.  Review face book, twitter and website and how information is presented to parents in other formats. | Use of appropriate font, use of non technical language and picture clues for newsletters etc. | Newsletters etc presented in a friendly and easily accessible manner. | Summer 2019 | Make available written material in alternative formats when specifically requested.  Review and website and how information is presented to parents in other formats. |
| Provide accessible information regarding children’s achievements. Use of pictures and photographs and large print for displays used to inform parents and carers. | Use of larger photographs for display work | Information more accessible to parents with limited reading skills, | Ongoing | Provide accessible information regarding children’s achievements. Use of pictures and photographs and large print for displays used to inform parents and carers. |
| Report annually to the GB about the progress of the Accessibility Plan /Disability Equality scheme | Review annually the plan/scheme = | Minuted approval | Annually | Report annually to the GB about the progress of the Accessibility Plan /Disability Equality scheme reported in HT report |