Much Birch Church of England Primary School

School Accessibility Plan

Much Birch School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

What is disability?

" A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"
Physical and mental impairments can include sensory impairments [such as those affecting sight or hearing] and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday lives.

At Much Birch School we recognise:

- Our duty under the Disability Discrimination Act [1995] as amended by the SENDA [2001]

  As from September 2002 it is unlawful for schools and LEAs to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admission, exclusion, education and associated services.
  This includes - their preparation for entry to school, the curriculum, teaching and learning, classroom organisation, timetabling, grouping of pupils, homework, access to school facilities, activities to supplement the curriculum, school sports, school policies, breaks and lunchtimes, serving of school meals, interaction with peers, assessment arrangements, school discipline and sanctions, school clubs and activities, school trips, school arrangements for working with other agencies, preparation of pupil for next stage of education.

- Schools and LEAs must:

  * Not treat pupils less favourably
  * Take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage

- That the Local Education Authority and school governors have the duty to publish Accessibility Strategies and Plans

Scope of the Plan

This plan covers all three strands of the planning duty as outlined below.

- *Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services.*

  This strand can be divided into two areas –
  1. Improving the physical environment of the school which includes things such as ensuring the adaption of steps, stairs, parking areas, access and exits to the school building including escape routes, internal and external doors, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, floor coverings, furniture, etc.
  2. Physical aids to access education, which includes things such as ICT equipment, specialist desks and chairs, writing slopes, specialist pen and pencils and other portable aids.

  The provision of aids for an individual will be provided through the SEN route whereas improvement of provision for the school population [and future population] will be part of the planning duty.

- *Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.*

  This strand is to help improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. This includes ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support. It has implications for staff deployment, timetabling, planning and staff training at whole school level. Adjustments to allow access for individuals will be dependent on need and will be provided through the SEN framework.

- *Improving the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities [and parents]*

  This strand covers planning to make information from the school, normally provided in writing, available to pupils and parents in their preferred format. This may be Braille, audio, sign language, a foreign language, etc. Help from the LEA to provide this will be accessed whenever necessary.

Other related Policies

Equality for disabled pupils is included as an explicit aim in all of the school's policies and is supported by the school's other policies including:

- Equality
- Behaviour Policy
- Admissions
- SEN
- School Improvement Plan & Self Evaluation documents

Aims

Much Birch School aims to include all pupils, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this include:

- Having a high expectation of all pupils
- Finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music and drama
- Planning out of school activities including all school trips and excursions so that pupils with disabilities can participate
- Setting admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities or treat them unfairly
- Devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities
- Planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities
- Raising the awareness of disability amongst school staff [teaching and non-teaching] through training
- By providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user friendly
- By using language which does not offend in all our literature and making staff and pupils aware of the importance of using clear, understandable language.

Actions to ensure equality for pupils with disabilities

- Our Accessibility Plan will be reviewed annually.
- The SENCo will monitor and further develop good practice.

Monitoring

Much Birch School recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

Presently we monitor:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- SEN Register
- Selection and recruitment of staff
- Governing Body representation
- Parents attending consultation meetings
- Parents' involvement in the life of the school

This plan will be reviewed annually by the school SENCO and SLT.