



Stockport School

Accessibility Strategy

This document focuses mainly on accessibility for people with disabilities; however, the principles in the Equality Act 2010 as outlined below would also be relevant for all characteristics defined as protected characteristics in the Act (race, gender, religion, maternity, gender identification and sexual orientation).

Stockport School is a popular mainstream Local Authority school. It is accessible for students with physical disabilities, and is almost completely accessible for those in wheelchairs. It has no specialist provision, but makes provision for students with SEN and disabilities in accordance with Stockport Local Authority's ethos that schools are as inclusive as possible, and that students with special educational needs and disabilities should be supported to ensure that they make the best possible progress.

Who does the Accessibility Strategy affect and why does it exist?

This plan outlines the proposals of the governing body of Stockport School to increase access for people with disabilities in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act's principles recognise that avoiding discrimination and promoting equality supports the agenda of improving attainment and progression for all. Effective education and acquisition of skills are crucial for opening up opportunities and increasing the chance of a successful life. The school has a duty under the Equality Act as a provider of education and services to students and their families to ensure that it promotes positive attitudes and access for people with disabilities; it also has a duty as an employer in the public sector to do the same. It will carry out this function by ensuring that discrimination does not take place (either directly, indirectly, for reasons arising from disability, by association or by failure to make reasonable adjustments) and ensuring that people with disabilities are not harassed or victimised because of their disabilities or associated issues.

The Act contains provisions which enable schools to take action to tackle the particular disadvantage, different needs or disproportionately low participation of a particular pupil group, provided certain conditions are met. These are known as the positive action provisions and allow schools to take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged student group.

Positive action is intended to be a measure that will allow schools to provide additional benefits to some students to address disadvantage. The Equality Act states that schools and other public sector employers and providers of education must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who have particular protected characteristics and those who do not.

What are the school's aims for improving accessibility for all stakeholders at Stockport School?

The governing body recognises the need to ensure that students can access their school fully and reach the full potential and support that the school will ensure this by:

Aim 1. Increasing the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum and attain success in line with their ability, making reasonable adjustments to ensure that this happens;

Aim 2. Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can take advantage of education and associated services;

Aim 3. Improving information delivery to students with disabilities.

The governing body recognises the need to ensure access to the school, information and events for parents, carers and other family members with disabilities and will:

1. Ensure that information is clear, timely and accessible for all and use creative means of contacting family members to pass on or present information when necessary.
2. Ensure that events are accessible, physically and cognitively, for family members.
3. Ensure that family needs are taken into account when arranging meetings.

The governing body also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and will:

1. Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
2. Ensure that employees with disabilities are supported with special provision to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
3. Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

The plan will be resourced, implemented, and routinely reviewed and revised in consultation with:

- Parents/carers of students
- Employees
- Governors
- External partners

What is the current provision at Stockport School and what are the aims?

Aim 1. Increasing the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum and attain success in line with their ability;

Strengths:

- A. The school has an excellent track record with student attainment and progress for students with Education, Health and Care Plans.
- B. Levels of progress and attainment for students at SEN/D Support is increasing and at present is above national average.
- C. There are regular opportunities for staff training regarding students with disabilities and the school has a continued commitment to providing this. This training is responsive to staff need and student populations.
- D. The school has a strong screening programme to enable identification of students who require additional intervention or access arrangements for formal assessments. Access to assistance for formal examinations is well-planned.
- E. The school creates documentation including SEN/D Support Plans and Pupil Passports for students with SEN/D, created by the school SEN department, which contain needs, strengths, targets and how students can be best supported.
- F. The school holds regular Pupil Progress meetings to discuss any student who might need extra support or different strategies to help them to be included and successful.
- G. Regular reviews take place to monitor progress and plan appropriate intervention for all students, including those with disabilities.
- H. For students who are not making adequate levels of progress, the school has a creative and flexible approach to intervention, including in-class support, support through reading intervention, one-to-one or small group intervention.
- I. The school has created a Student Support Hub that supports students with: reintegration following extended periods of absence; the delivery of adapted timetables and curriculums; a space to regulate. This provision is overseen by the Student Support Hub Team Leaders.
- J. For students requiring SEN/D provision, their support is overseen by a SEN Year Team Leader who works closely with the pastoral Head of Year. This enables swift and purposeful intervention to support student access to their curriculum and the wider school.
- K. For students who are struggling to make progress in several areas of development, despite SEN/D provision, they are supported by the SEND Multi-Year Complex Students Team Leader who works closely with the SEN Year Team Leader, the pastoral Head of Year and the Student Support Hub Team Leader. These students are monitored through a Personalised Inclusion Plan that is regularly reviewed.
- L. Technologies, including the use of Firefly, Ed-Class (online classroom), Reading Pens, computer readers, tablets and other emerging technological products, are used creatively to ensure that students can access the curriculum with increasing enthusiasm, competence and independence.
- M. The school approaches GCSE options creatively, with adjusted options for students dependent on need, enabling students to be successful with their choices and allocation.

- N. The qualification offer is reviewed at departmental and whole school level and new qualification are introduced and delivered to meet student need.
- O. The school plans trips and extra-curricular support carefully, including the daily Homework Club, providing TA support where there is entitlement and need.
- P. Communication with parents and outside agencies is strong, enabling the school to plan to meet students' needs in partnership with others.
- Q. Students with additional needs, especially those with EHCPs, benefit from excellent careers advice and support.

Areas to develop:

- A. The school is committed to providing regular CPD to develop staff ability to make excellent provision for students with disabilities; this commitment needs to continue, and to be responsive to staff development needs and the emerging and changing needs of the cohort.
- B. Increase investment in new technologies to ensure that they are widely available so that students become competent and confident with their usage, as well as ensuring that students are 'trained' in their usage.
- C. We recognise that excellent adaptive, quality first teaching is the key to enabling students to make excellent progress and that provision is not limited to Teaching Assistant or external support. We therefore intend to continually reflect the need for effective adaptation as an integral teaching and learning principle in staff training sessions, external CPD training commissioning, lesson observation judgements and feedback and in whole-school/departmental planning documents; this also needs to be a key principle in all ITT/ ECT training.
- D. To develop to role of SEN Year Team Leads in the effective deployment of LSA to best meet student needs.
- E. Development a review process to evaluate the impact of in class support on student progress to inform future planning.
- F. The teaching staff generally differentiate well, opening up the curriculum for all as a result. Line management must maintain a continued focus on the quality of differentiation and adaptive teaching and work on consistency across the school so that all students have fair access to the curriculum.
- G. Continue to work with hard-to-reach families to improve attendance through regular monitoring, contact and support, referring on when necessary and aiming to prevent small attendance drops from becoming problematic.

Aim 2. Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can take advantage of education and associated services:

Strengths:

- A. Although the school is not barrier-free, it is accessible across the whole curriculum. The school has two disabled toilets, including one with changing facilities. The whole of the ground floor of the school has ramps. There is a lift in the school building, giving access to the upper floor.
- B. Events, including evening events and trips, are planned carefully, with discussion and risk assessments taking place to ensure effective and safe access.
- C. Anti-bullying events are a strong and regular theme of the school's pastoral curriculum, highlighting the need for positive and supportive behaviour in the school. Students with clear physical disabilities are treated respectfully by staff and students.
- D. The school plans trips and extra-curricular support carefully, including the daily Homework Club, providing LSA support where there is entitlement and need.
- E. The support for Young Carers, who may care for family members with disabilities, is excellent.
- F. Student voice and leadership is a strong feature of the school, enabling students to play an active part in shaping the school and their role within it.
- G. Arts events, sport and other extra-curricular activities are inclusive and supported.
- H. The SEAL programme, form time, assemblies, self-esteem days and other such activities create a generally respectful and supportive environment.

Areas to develop:

- A. Fire evacuation procedures for staff and students with physical disabilities need to continue to be clearly communicated to staff, parents and students.
- B. Although all classrooms are accessible, desks are not always appropriate heights for wheelchair users; LA funding is available for this and teaching staff must alert site staff when a change is required.

- C. Review the current corridor accessibility for wheelchair users, particularly in respect to doors.

Aim 3. Improving information delivery to students with disabilities:

Strengths:

- A. The school considers the needs and requirements of students of all abilities and with varying needs when communicating information, both verbally and in writing. Great care is taken in planning lessons, assessments and exams, with planning containing such fine detail as paper colour and font size for students with specific needs. Verbal communication is also considered carefully for students with specific needs and disabilities; important information will be delivered as appropriate on a differentiated basis when necessary.
- B. Effective access arrangement allows for effective access in examination situations; use of technologies such as reading pens and Claroread will open this up further in classroom settings.
- C. The school encourages the use of student voice activities to improve staff knowledge of student view and acting on them when required.
- D. The Careers and Options packages are carefully planned to ensure that information is delivered effectively to students, parents and carers.
- E. Firefly, the school social media, and SchoolComms are used to communicate effectively with students, staff and parents.
- F. Parent/Tutor Consultation Evenings are key events, with all students and parents encouraged to attend, with phone calls to individual families when needed.
- G. The Leading Parent Partnership Award project includes outreach work, communication with parents and parents' workshops.

Areas to develop:

- A. The teaching staff generally differentiate well, opening up the curriculum for all as a result. Line management and Teaching & Learning CPD must maintain a continued focus on the quality of differentiation and work on consistency across the school so that all students have fair access to the curriculum.
- B. Increase investment in new technologies such as the Reading Pens to ensure that they are widely available so that students become competent and confident with their usage, as well as ensuring that students are 'trained' in their usage.
- C. Remembering that parents often receive information that they are expected to communicate to their children, the school needs to ensure that all written communication sent to parents is accurate, readable and accessible. This should include being aware of reading age of documents that are sent out (using the Microsoft Word tool and aiming for a reading age of no more than 11 or 12 years of age) and ensuring that documents are concise enough to be accessed easily. This will ensure that students are able to gain information from their parents, regardless of the parents' literacy level.

Reviewed: - November 2024

Next Review date: – November 2026