

Accessibility Plan

Policy owner (Name):	Jo Roscow, SENDCO
Governing body oversight:	Full Governing Body
Date of approval:	Sep 24
Date of next review:	Sep 27

Aims

1. The aims of this Accessibility Plan are to ensure that Birchwood Community High School continues to work towards increasing the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors to the school. The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:
 - Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
 - Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled individuals to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
 - Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled individuals
2. Our school aims to treat all its students, staff and parents/carers fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all individuals without discrimination of any kind. Our school is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals, able bodied or disabled, and, on a continuous basis, will work towards improving access to the physical environment, to the curriculum and to the provision of information in order to ensure access for all.
3. Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.
4. The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan, e.g. we work closely with the sensory support service to ensure that we are informed of any difficulties that students with Visual or Hearing Impairments have in accessing the school site.

5. Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If there are any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.
6. We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including students, parents/carers, staff and governors of the school.

Legislation and Guidance

This document aims to meet the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act, schools are required to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities so as to prevent a disabled student facing any substantial disadvantage in comparison with nondisabled students. The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day to day activities. Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Aim 1: Curriculum Accessibility

Current Position

- Within all teaching groups, scaffolding and quality first inclusive, adaptive strategies are used to support students with additional needs to access the curriculum and make progress.
- Staff are informed of any additional needs which students have and strategies to support them. This information I provided through briefings, internal communication systems and Edukey/Class Charts.
- Staff implement strategies recommended by external specialists to increase curriculum access for students with additional needs
- We use resources tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum.
- Teaching Assistants are deployed effectively to support students with Education, Health and Care Plans to access the curriculum effectively
- Curriculum progress is tracked for all students, including those with a disability.

- Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students with additional needs.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the needs of all students.
- Following general screening and informed by history of need records, identified students are tested for exam access arrangements at the end of Year 9 or the start of Year 10. The SENDCO has the relevant qualification to do this in house. Exam access arrangements are implemented for specific students in order to increase their access to examinations and assessments.
- The options process during Year 9 ensures that all students have access to all curriculum options for KS4.
- Our school provides smaller teaching groups for the cohort in each year group with the most significant learning needs. These students are taught with highly tailored adaptive strategies within small nurture groups as part of the Parvis Magna provision.
- Since April 2024, the school has also catered for the needs of students with the highest level of SEMH needs by introducing an internal Alternative provision (The Auxilium Centre) which supports students to make progress academically, socially and emotionally through a more flexible curriculum.
- In September 2024, the school opened and Exceptional ASD provision for 16 Key Stage 3 students (in the first instance). The Local Authority manages admissions into this provision for ASD students from across Warrington with EHCPs who need a specialist setting.
- All students have the opportunity to access enrichment activities, after school activities, trips and residential visits.

Action Plan

Aim	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Improve access to the curriculum	Short Term Ensure all staff are regularly trained to employ quality first teaching strategies in the first instance in response to individual needs	Deliver whole staff briefings/CPD sessions to share information about students with additional needs with staff and to highlight key strategies	JRO, SRW and Support Team	Ongoing	Students making expected or better progress. Curriculum snapshots, lesson visits and Book Looks will ensure this is embedded in lessons.

Birchwood Community High School

	Ensure all staff have the relevant training from outside agencies where appropriate to support the specific needs of some of our most vulnerable students. Medium Term To continue improving our reading and literacy offer across all key stages, providing effective interventions for SEND students. Long Term To respond to recommendations in the government's curriculum review which enhance accessibility to the curriculum for disabled students	Plan and deliver bespoke training opportunities with outside agencies when the need arises for individuals or groups of individuals with similar needs Continue using baseline reading tests and analyse standardised scores to implement most appropriate interventions. Sustained evaluation of the impact of new reading lessons, small group and individual interventions. Discuss findings and recommendations from the curriculum review and follow the government's timescale for implementation	JRO JRI, MJS, LGM, JRO, Support Team SLT, HOFS, JRO	Ongoing October 25 Review due to be published Autumn 25. Timescales following this to be confirmed.	Staff are confident using suggested strategies. The Reading Culture across school will have continued to grow with a stronger focus on reading for pleasure. Reading ages for those below chronological age expectancy will have improved. Increased independent access to the curriculum for SEND students. The curriculum will be reviewed in line with national guidelines.
--	--	--	--	--	---

Aim 2: Accessibility to the physical environment of the school

Current Position

- The environment is adapted to the needs of individuals as required. This includes ramps, lifts, increased corridor width in the newer buildings and within the Maths corridor.
- Our school has accessible parking bays, accessible toilets and accessible changing facilities.
- There are high visibility strips to mark stairs and handrails.

Aim	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Improve access to the physical environment of the school	Short Term Ensuring individuals with specific needs, including those who join the school mid-year, have all the appropriate equipment and furniture to support their access to the site.	Purchase specialised equipment as required in response to individual need	JRO	Ongoing – as required	Individuals with physical disabilities have full access to the site.
	Ensuring personal evacuation plans for identified vulnerable individuals are in place	Develop Personal Evacuation Plans for individuals who may require it. Identify which member of staff is responsible for specific individuals in an emergency situation.	JRO in conjunction with the site manager	Ongoing – as required	Completed Personal Evacuation Plans are in place for all identified individuals.

Birchwood Community High School

		The Personal Evacuation Plans are stored with the fire risk assessment and brought to the evacuation point.			
	Ensuring timetables for identified individuals are continually checked to ensure designated classrooms in each subject area are accessible both in size and positioning in the school building to cater for their physical needs.	Update staff regularly about any individuals who have mobility issues and make adaptations to suit their physical needs	JRO, TWI, DHE	Ongoing – as required	All identified individuals are able to access the site fully and are timetabled in classrooms that best meet their needs.
	Medium Term To continually maintain edge identification on steps and handrails, to support individuals with Visual Impairments	Check all areas, both internal and external, to ensure existing identification is maintained all year round.	Site Manager	Ongoing	All Visually Impaired individuals are able to navigate safely and successfully around the school site.
	Long Term To increase accessibility of all toilets	Roll out main corridor toilet format to all areas and consider wheelchair accessible	Site Manager	By Sept 26	A greater number of toilets will be fully accessible.

		toilets for the Science and Design blocks.			
	To increase accessibility of the main corridor	Open up doorways on the first floor of the main building to allow for wheelchair access	Site Manager	By Sept 26	Wheelchair users would not require assistance to open doors on the school site.
	To improve safe and accessible exits from the Science block during evacuations	To build ramps for S1 and S2.	Site Manager	By Sept 26	All individuals with mobility difficulties will be able to evacuate quickly from all rooms in the Science block.

Aim 3: Accessibility to information and guidance

Current Position

- Our school uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible.
- Non- audible fire alarms and radio aids are used for individuals with hearing impairments.
- British Sign Language interpreters are provided for parents/carers with hearing impairments at school events/information evenings.
- There are EAL tutors whose first language is Cantonese and Polish who can translate information and learning materials for students and their parents/carers. They can attend meetings and act as translators as required. They can talk to students about their welfare and any concerns they have in their first language, which can then be passed on to the relevant member of staff and acted on.
- Internal and external signage is clear. Pictorial or symbolic representations are also used.
- All paper resources are printed on buff coloured paper to support individuals with visual stress.

Birchwood Community High School

- Large print resources are provided for individuals with a visual impairment.
- Assistive Technology, such as computer readers/reading pens, are used to support students to understand written information.
- Transition paperwork identifies parent/carer disabilities as well as student disabilities.

Aim	Objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Improve access to information and guidance	Short Term Ensure all correspondence from the school is available in other formats if requested.	Produce letters, school brochures and other information in other formats when requested, with external guidance if needed.	Communications Manager	Ongoing – as required	All parents/carers will have full access to information provided by the school
	Ensure language used in correspondence with parents/carers is clear, direct and straightforward	Check letters, school brochures and other information before they are sent out to parents/carers	SLT	Ongoing	All parents/carers are able to understand information sent home by the school.
	Ensure staff are trained on how to use the new School Information system – Arbor – and that all SEND information from Edukey is transferred	Plan and deliver training sessions on Arbor. Liaise with Edukey and Arbor technical support staff. Communicate and	DHE, JRO	By November 24	All SEND information will be transferred over to Arbor and will be easily accessed by staff/parents/carers/students

Birchwood Community High School

	across. Ensure new system is understood and used by staff/students/parents/carers	explain changes to students/parents/carers			
	Ensure power points delivered during information evenings or staff meetings are dyslexia friendly	Change any white backgrounds to cream and ensure slides are not overloaded with information	Presenters	As and when required.	Parents/carers/staff with dyslexia will be able to read and process information more easily.
	Further Improve quality of communication with parents/carers	Survey parents/carers as to the quality of communication to seek their opinions as to how to improve.	Headteacher	Annually	Actions raised from the survey are implemented.
	Medium Term				
	School website to be made accessible to those students and Parents/Carers with EAL - translation feature to be added to the website and made explicit	Add language functionality to the school website	ICT Manager	By Oct 25	Students and their Parents/Carers will be able to access all information from the school website regardless of their first language
	School website to be made accessible to those students and Parents/Carers for whom reading is a barrier - read	Provide guidance on read aloud feature	ICT Manager	By Oct 25	Students and their Parents/Carers will be able to access all information from the school Website

Birchwood Community High School

	aloud feature to be added and made explicit All communications from the school (texts, emails, letters) to be accessible to students/Parents/Carers with EAL- translation feature to be added and made explicit All communications from the school (texts, emails, letters) to be accessible to students/Parents/Carers for whom reading is a barrier - Read aloud feature to be added and made explicit Long Term If ever the demand arises, assess the need for non-visual guides and hearing induction loops.	Investigate the feasibility of translating all communication and provide guidance to parents/carers Investigate the feasibility of adding Read Aloud feature and provide guidance to parents/carers Install these when necessary	ICT Manager ICT Manager Site Manager in conjunction with JRO	By Oct 25 By Oct 25 As and when required	regardless of their reading ability Students and their Parents/Carers will be able to access all communications from the school regardless of their first language Students and their Parents/Carers will be able to access all communications from the school regardless of their reading ability Individuals with visual, hearing and communication difficulties will have increased access to information provided at school events.
--	---	---	---	---	---