

Accessibility Policy

September 2024



THE JO RICHARDSON

SUCCESS FOR ALL

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

ACHIEVE

Accessibility of information

We believe that this Accessibility Policy is compliant with current legislation and requirements, pays due regard to government law directive, including the Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014) Part 3 which links into the SEN Code of Practice (2015) (and to past legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995, the SEN and Disability Act 2001).

The purpose of this policy is to show how our educational setting intends, over time, to increase accessibility to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information so that all students with a disability can take full advantage of their education and associated opportunities.

Key Aims

The School aims to provide information in an accessible format and will respond to individual needs and requests as they arise. For example, the school will seek support from outside agencies to provide information in simple language, symbols or large print for prospective students or parents who have difficulty with standard forms of printed information.

The school will also make information for parents available in a range of different formats, should the need arise, and be aware of font size and legibility when producing written information, during Progress Evenings and review meetings of children's performance in school; details are confirmed to parents how they can access information.

The school will, if the need arises, aim to provide translation or interpreter services to ensure all parents, carers and students can access information. The school's website has a 'text only' facility to assist those with a visual impairment.

The Accessibility Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Equalities Policy (Including Objectives)
- Health and Safety Policy (including off-site safety)
- Inclusion and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- School Improvement Plan

This Accessibility Policy is divided into four sections:

Section 1: Access to the curriculum - for students

Section 2: Access to pastoral support - includes the principles of past county and national initiatives, including 'Every Child Matters' (ECM) and aspects of the 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' (SEAL) - for staff, parents and students

Section 3: Site accessibility - Improve the physical environment of the school to enable students with disabilities to take better advantage of education, facilities and OHSL opportunities

Section 4: Access to information - for staff, parents, students and the community. This Accessibility Policy details policies and initiatives, how these are monitored, reviewed, and evaluated, and how these evaluations are developed and embedded into school systems and practice.

This Accessibility Policy is an 'umbrella' document; it encompasses existing policies and development plans, implemented and monitored by a range of teachers, the Senior Leadership Team and Governors.

This Accessibility Policy, through detail in individual policies, therefore highlights key whole school aims for each year, summarising the provision within the school.

Section 1: Access to the curriculum

This section of the Accessibility Policy is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team; aspects of the curriculum are also managed by the Assistant Headteacher / Director of Sixth Form.

Students across the Key Stages have an appropriate (adapted) curriculum to fit their needs. The following policies support this aim: School Improvement Plan; Individual Curriculum Development Plans for the Curriculum Policy for Assessment, Able Students Policy, Inclusion and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy (and also an SEN Information Report) and Medical Policy.

Principal features of JRCS are:

Within their teaching teams, Heads of Department and Key Stage Co-ordinators monitor students' progress, linked to a member of the Senior Leadership Team; and usually on an individual basis there are links with Heads of Year to determine appropriate curriculum of specific students.

Children classified as 'disadvantaged' are identified, and their curriculum progress is tracked and supported by Heads of Department, SENCO and the Senior Leadership Team.

At Key Stage 3 students are taught in their mixed ability tutor groups; the composition of the groups is carefully determined at the beginning of Year 7 (from primary schools' data and can include information from parents). Monitoring tutor groups, curriculum development and academic demands lies with the Heads of Year of each year group and Heads of Department (Transition & Year 7; Years 8 & 9; Years 10 & 11).

Progress reviews (teachers' reports, three times each year) are reviewed by the Heads of Year, Key Stage Co-ordinators, tutors and subject leaders; there is a Senior Leadership Team overview of report writing. A range of staff contribute to tracking and documenting students' progress, to allow for appropriate interventions, evaluation and modification, as required.

There are guided choices for Year 9 students choosing KS4 courses: discussions with students, parents, Heads of Year and Heads of Department.

At Key Stage 4 the curriculum is increasingly personalised; students choose three/four options at GCSE, in addition to core subjects (English, Maths, Science, and PE).

Students with medical or SEN needs who are unable to access school full-time are supported by the borough's home tutors or by an alternative provision.

In Year 9 and throughout KS4, students' progress is analysed through school data, teacher assessment and specialist testing to identify if they require access arrangements (exam concessions) for their GCSE examinations.

The Learning Support Unit (LSU) and Student Development Department (SDD), support sections of the curriculum for identified students (usually short-term interventions, but for a very few there can be longer-term interventions) including school-refusers, students returning from school after exclusion or from medical absence, or who are on part-time timetables due to documented medical reasons.

Section 2: Access to pastoral support

The lead teacher monitoring this section of the Accessibility Policy is the member of the Senior Leadership Team working with the Pastoral Team, the SENCO, tutors, School Counsellor, Mental Health Support Team and School Health Nurse. Outside professionals, such as the Educational Psychologist (EP), Early Intervention works or targeted support workers that are allocated through the CAF system, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), who support the school and contribute additionally to this work. Pastoral support enshrines the principles of Every Child Matters and aspects of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) agenda. Students across the Key Stages have access to appropriate pastoral support dependent on their age and specific needs.

The School's various separate policies contribute to supporting these aims:

- Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco and Weapons Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Medical Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Inclusion and SEND Policy

Principal features of JRCS are:

- Designated Child Protection team on site with developed links to Social Services and Local Authority teams;
- Looked After Children are identified and monitored (linked to county professionals and following county guidelines);
- Children classified as 'disadvantaged' are identified and their curriculum progress is tracked by pastoral leaders and the Senior Leadership Team;
- Children who act as 'Young Carers' are identified and monitored (linked to borough professionals);
- The Behaviour Support Service supports individual learning profiles and monitor students' targets to impact on their behaviour, together with the work of the weekly multi-agency Fast Forward meetings;
- Educational Psychologists closely support the work of the school, and of individual students, as required by their needs;
- The school links to the MASH relating to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Team Around the Child/Family (TAC/TAF) initiatives;
- Developed links with primary partnership schools: - early identification of individual students' needs, allowing for effective planning and support for transfer of Year 6 students into Year 7 (for tutor group placement, SEN initiatives, pre-transfer visits);
- Summer School (one week at the end of the Summer holiday) for new Year 7 students supports transfer;
- Access to School Counsellors and the Mental Health Support team for students;
- Sustained and developed links to GPs and local NHS mental health services (CAHMS) closely informs support for specific students / work generally in supporting students;
- Risk assessments identify students who require enhanced monitoring through medical / mobility needs or behaviour issues;
- Pastoral staff, School Counsellors and Mental Health Support Team are able to give information and advice to parents on how to support their child as needed. Counsellors cannot, however, give details of specific conversations without students' permission;
- An Employee Assistance Programme is available to all staff 24/7;
- Staff also have access to counselling services provided by Occupational Health.

Section 3: Site Accessibility

Responsibility for this section of the Accessibility Policy lies jointly with the Deputy Headteacher / SENCO and the Premises Manager, with contributions from a range of professionals supporting the school and from individuals within the school.

Students, staff, parents and visitors to the school have an equality of opportunity to access the curriculum and we aim to make all areas of the site accessible where possible. Where buildings cannot be adapted, changes will be made to the curriculum - typically, this will mean re-rooming to accessible accommodation.

The following policies support these aims:

- Business Continuity Plan
- Equalities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lettings Policy

Principal features of JRCS are:

- The annual audit of the site, using Barking and Dagenham's framework / guidelines, referring to The Access Needs Report and in consultation with occupational therapists;
- Health and safety issues identified and addressed on a continuous basis by a range of people within school - including teachers (activities, classrooms) and Heads of Department 'common areas' (Premises Manager) and the Senior Leadership Team in reviewing these procedures and activities;
- Risk assessments are written principally for two purposes: for activities and for groups of students; and for specific students (as generic for their time in school, and/or for specific activities, or to take into account their specific disability);
- Risk assessments identify evacuation procedures for individual students whose movement is compromised by their disability;
- The medical condition of students affecting health and safety and site accessibility, compiled as a separate document by the Student Services Department, is circulated to staff in school on a need-to-know basis;
- The medical conditions of staff affecting health and safety and site accessibility are shared on a need-to-know basis by the Headteacher and related staff;
- SDD has responsibility for ensuring that identified SEN students access all areas of the site within the health and safety guidelines;
- Outside professionals (for example, Occupational Therapists, the Visual Impairment Team, Hearing Impairment Team, physiotherapists, Autism Outreach Service, Downs Syndrome Service, Speech and Language Service, SEN ICT Service) support the work of the school, and the integration of specific students within mainstream classes;
- The SEN Co-Educators and ARP staff monitor individual students' accessibility to site on a day-to-day basis.

Section 4: Access to information

This section of the Accessibility Policy is monitored by Student Services and ICT Network and Systems Manager with support from the school's administration team. The school liaises with the Local Authority to ensure compliance with Local Authority and government statutes. Our aim is to ensure that students, parents, staff and visitors have access to the information that they need, with due regard to confidentiality.

Purpose of this policy

This policy supports the legislative framework for responding to requests for information under the statutory access regimes established by:

- The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) / GDPR
- The Disability Discrimination Act
- The Equality Act (2010), and other legislation that provides a right of access
- In addition, the School has its own policy on Data Protection and Complaints.

Responses to requests for information

- All school policies and other relevant documents may be downloaded from the school's website.
- Parents may request copies of student record files, including paper and electronic files. A small charge may be levied for photocopying charges.
- Parents may not be given access to records which contain information on other staff/students which would breach our Data Protection Policy.
- All requests for information should be made, preferably in writing, to the School Office Manager.
- Any complaints should be addressed through the procedure in the school's Complaints Policy.

Information provided by the school - students have access to information by:

- The regular reporting on students' progress by written reports from teachers;
- Feedback from their subject teachers (verbal and written) relating to their work completed in class, including at Progress Evenings;
- Reviews from enhanced monitoring through Individual Behaviour Plans, Pastoral Support Plans and the Sixth Form review process.

Parents have access to information by:

- The regular reporting on their child's progress by written reports from teachers;
- Teachers' written comments in students' books / planners / letters and emails to parents and telephone conversations;
- Talking to teachers and support staff at annual subject-based Progress Evenings;
- Open Evening for Year 6 parents (September each year);
- Options Evening (for Year 9 students selecting their KS4 courses);
- KS5 Post-16 Options Evening (for Year 11 students selecting their AS courses);
- Through appointments with teachers (SEN reviews, reviewing Learning profiles, Individual Behaviour Plans, Pastoral Support Plans, the Common Assessment Framework and the Team Around the Child mechanisms);
- The school's website;
- The school prospectus, and the Sixth Form prospectus;
- SEN information to parents: at reviews, and with printed documentation, and from relevant professionals outside school supporting the work of the school.

Visitors / external agencies / individuals have access to information (on a need-to-know basis only) by:

- The school's website;
- Contact with professionals within the school.

Links with Other Policies:

The school's accessibility Policy is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Health and safety policy
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report
- SEND policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Students and the curriculum				
	Target	Strategies	Outcomes	Goals achieved
Short term	Ensure awareness of students with disabilities and their needs 1. Trips 2. New intake	Awareness of the Admissions Team and trip leader's potential issue with access to the school and trip venue	If needed, tours for parents and students of the environment Designated parking All trips to have pre-visit conducted and accessibility check for suitability of the venue	Year teams work closely with trip leaders to ensure ACHIEVE days and other trips are accessible to all.
Short term	Ensure that the admissions process allows all potential students to be fairly reviewed	Ensure the SENCO and key staff are consulted regarding all potential students with a disability to assess any reasonable adjustments required	Appropriate arrangements for students to assess their ability to join the school regardless of their disability	The school has a robust policy for transition groups through admissions and mid-term admissions to ensure all key staff are aware of the students and involved in the interview process.
Short term	Provide handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events in an easy-to-read format or large print	Liaise with specialist teachers to ensure students are provided information in the correct font size and colour. Information regarding students' need shared across the school	Improved outcomes for students and families	The school works closely with a number of agencies
Short term	Ensure information in lessons is clear and teacher's voice can be heard	Teachers to look at seating plans. Information regarding students with hearing/visual impairments shared with teaching staff	All students can see and hear the class teacher	Regular CPD with staff to ensure this objective is met
Medium term	Enable staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of needs of disabled students should they be admitted to the school	Training for staff as appropriate	Staff confidence in providing appropriate teaching and support for disabled students	Success of disabled students in exams
Medium term	Maintain commitment to a well-trained and qualified staff to support and meet the wide variety of needs of the students	Training needs are met – Evac chair, manual handling etc. Funding available to meet training needs	Staff have a qualified team to consult and to help to deliver education to disabled students	Inclusive curriculum across the school
Long term	Use of ICT	Research new technologies to support students with visual, hearing and mobility needs		

Environment

Short term	Provide access to all parts of the school buildings	Current lifts to be regularly maintained. Ramps/adjustments to be considered and provided if required Identify improvements to support students with disabilities to be actioned as appropriate	Students with limited mobility are able to navigate around the school site safely	Equans work closely with the Headteacher to keep the school in a good working order
Medium term	Provide accessible toilet facilities for disabled students, staff and visitors to the school	Identify and improve facilities if need arises	Facilities meet the individual needs	As above
Medium term	Improved visibility around the school	Ensure edge of steps are clearly visible and regularly monitored for wear	Students with a visual impairment are confident to move around the school. Students less likely to slip or fall.	As above