

Hall Orchard Barrow CE Primary School (Academy)
Accessibility Plan
Reviewed March 2024
Adopted March 2024 to July 2027

Introduction

This plan is drawn up in accordance with Equality Act and guidance from the DfE stating that the responsibility to manage an accessibility plan has not changed under the Equality Act but moved to that act from the duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by DfES in July 2002.

Definition of Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as;

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

Schools must draw up an accessibility plan which is aimed at

- Increasing the extent to which pupils with different needs pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable pupils with different needs to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improving the availability of accessible information to pupils with different needs.

Also;

- Schools will also need to have regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school development plan.
- OFSTED inspections may include a school's accessibility plan as part of their review.

Key Objective

Hall Orchard wishes to reduce and, where possible, eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum and to full participation in Hall Orchard community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with different needs.

Description of the Site

Hall Orchard is housed in a variety of buildings built between 1875 and the early 1990's. The building is situated on a slope that falls significantly from the Victorian buildings down to the Key Stage 1 buildings. The school also slopes from the rear bordering on the rear of Beveridge Street to the front bordering the public footpath that separates the school from the school field. There are also two mobile buildings each with two classes. The older mobile buildings classrooms have a flight of steps to enter the building and further flights at the fire escapes.

The external grounds are on three levels. The highest level is at the Victorian end of the school and access to the second level is by a flight of stairs with 5 to 6 steps. This second level is quite small and has a further flight with 3 steps to the lowest level. The lowest level is by far the largest and has a number of sloped areas as described above.

Internally the school has four levels each separated by flights of stairs with 5 to 6 steps per flight. The library located in Key Stage 1 is on two levels separated by similar sized stairs.

Leicestershire County Council assessed the site between 2006 and 2007. The purpose of the assessment was to establish if Hall Orchard could be developed to become a fully accessible school site for the north of Leicestershire. The outcome of the assessment was that the existing buildings in conjunction with the outbuildings such as the boiler house were all too close together and the various angles and slopes meant the site could not be made fully accessible.

Additional Information – February 2016

The school is in the process of extensive building works which will add additional functional educational spaces. All of these spaces whether in new build or additional works to existing build will comply with the Equality Act 2010. The school has used these works to ensure equality of access to four classrooms and areas of the library previously less accessible due to the site history as described above.

Additional Information November 2019

The school has completed two significant phases of building works. The above referenced works were completed in the early summer of 2017. Further works took place from autumn 2018 to late summer 2019. These works developed on existing to reduce areas of historic non-compliance and ensure that new build met equality expectations.

Additional Information March 2024. The school has completed the last phase of major building works. A new four-class extension has been added to the site. This is fully accessible including a lift and accessible toilet provision. This provides access to the middle of the school for those with access needs. These works have further improved accessibility around the school site.

Principles

Hall Orchard has undertaken to ensure all development and change that occurs over the period of this plan is compliant with the DDA and is consistent with Hall Orchard's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the SEND policy.

Hall Orchard recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 which closely mirrors the DDA 1995 (as amended by the SENDA);

- Not to discriminate against those pupils with different needs in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
- Not to treat those pupils with different needs less favourably and in certain cases and situation to treat pupils with different needs pupils and person more favourably.
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting pupils with different needs at a substantial disadvantage.
- To publish an Accessibility Plan.

Hall Orchard recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

Hall Orchard provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum these are;

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Activity

1. Education & related activities

Hall Orchard will continue to seek and follow the advice of partner services including LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers where they are available and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

2. Physical environment

Hall Orchard will take account of the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishment of the site and premises.

3. Provision of information

Hall Orchard where appropriate will make use of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

Accessibility Plan See attached (Appendix 1)

Linked Policies

This plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies, e.g.

- School Development Plan
- Staff Development Plan
- Five Year Development Plan {Maintenance and Grounds}
- SEND policy
- Equal Opportunities Procedures and Practices underpinned by the single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and Academies (including Free Schools), and which extends to all protected characteristics - race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.
- Curriculum Policies
- Finance Planning

Appendix 1

The accessibility plan identifies three areas; the physical environment, communications and the curriculum. The Inclusion Policy supports the plan.

Year	Physical Environment	Communications	Curriculum	Notes	Responsible Person
2012	Audit of space within the school and access to the school (the audit of the spaces in the school is in Appendix 2)	Audit current needs of pupils & parents. Try to ensure owner-ship. Will need to audit additional needs of any new arrivals to school.	Audit the curriculum for access for pupils including the wider curriculum, visits and residential school journeys. Audit the current curriculum policies to ensure that they do not discriminate against pupils with different needs pupils. Audit how far inclusion is integrated within the culture, policy and practice of the school.	Audit should produce a list of actions needed to eliminate existing barriers, including realistic cost estimates. Short, medium and long term priorities should then be agreed.	SBM
			Look at teaching and learning, homework, grouping of pupils, assessment arrangement, & trips. Identify training needs of staff.		
2013	Improve access as necessary for essential curriculum areas including music, ICT & library resources within the resources available.	Improve access to written communication and the delivery of information. Include advice on materials available, support services and reprographics equipment.	Ensure that the curriculum is fully accessible for all pupils. Include ICT equipment, enlarged photocopying, specialist furniture, portable aids.	May involve relocation of shared curriculum resources and new planning for visits and trips.	SBM, Head Ongoing
	Include steps kerbs, paving, parking, entrances, doors, toilets, lighting, acoustics, lifts, signs, floor coverings, & furniture				
2014	Improve access for all areas of school	All information accessible	Ensure that the whole curriculum is fully accessible for all pupils. Look at teaching and learning, homework, grouping of pupils, assessment arrangement, & trips. Identify training needs of staff.	May involve a change to the current residential school journeys and trips	

Year	Physical Environment	Communications	Curriculum	Notes	Responsible Person
2015	<p>Improve access as necessary for essential curriculum areas including music, ICT & library resources within the resources available.</p> <p>Ensure any development as a result of external housing maximises improvements to physical environment</p> <p>Include steps kerbs, paving, parking, entrances, doors, toilets, lighting, acoustics, lifts, signs, floor coverings, & furniture</p>	<p>Improve access to written communication and the delivery of information.</p> <p>Include advice on materials available, support services and reprographics equipment.</p>	<p>Ensure that the curriculum is fully accessible for all pupils.</p> <p>Include ICT equipment, enlarged photocopying, specialist furniture, portable aids.</p>	<p>May involve relocation of shared curriculum resources and new planning for visits and trips.</p> <p>May involve external specialist including architects, and similar</p>	<p>SBM, Head</p> <p>Head, SBM</p>
2016	If the physical environment is changing due to LA and section 106 build ensure maximisation of build improvement	All information accessible	Ensure that the whole curriculum is fully accessible for all pupils.	May involve relocation of shared curriculum resources.	SBM, Head
2017	The physical environment of the school will continue to develop as school number rise.	The school continues to manage the delivery of written and electronic communication and methods of to ensure accessibility	Ensure that the whole curriculum is fully accessible for all pupils.	May involve external specialist including architects, and similar	SBM, Head, Ast Head
2018	Dependant on external factors i.e. house building further new building works will take place allowing an increasing improvement in the external and internal build environment	Ensure as site develops that all uses have equality of access built in to site developments	Ensure that the whole curriculum is fully accessible for all pupils. All new spaces are designed with equality as part of the outcomes required.	May involve external specialist including architects, and similar	SBM, Head, Ast Head

Added in November 2019

Year	Physical Environment	Communications	Curriculum	Notes	Responsible Persons
2019	Further physical development will take place with scoping beginning in 2020. This is in response to additional housing. This in turn will allow the factors identified in 2018 above to be further met in the design of the last major phase of works.	Improvements identified above in 2015/16/17/18 have been met via further upgrades to in particular internal upgrades and external use of parental communication tools.	As the site physically develops with new classrooms and additional spaces for both children and staff these will be accessible both internally and external to all users as part of the design ensuring full curriculum access. All new spaces continue to be designed with equality as part of the outcomes required.	Will involve external specialist in architecture, M&E, structural engineering and QS works. Specialist from the LA. Other external as identified. Internal and external SLT members, the Head Teacher and where applicable the school Governors.	SBM, HT, School Governors

	This will include in design the removal of areas of external steps if possible.				
Year	Physical Environment	Communications	Curriculum	Notes	Responsible Persons
2023-2024	A new four-class block has been completed. This links to the schools intent to ensure all new physical development improves access across the site. These improvements are both external and internal. The Victorian school is now the only area not fully accessible due to the topography of the site see above page 1.	Outcomes referred to above have been included in this latest development. External access has ben improved with access now available 360 degrees. However, this does not meet regulations and requires further improvement. An application is pending with EFSA for a replacement modular structure for the 31-year-old mobile. This in turn will improve external access.	The new classrooms, and support spaces are fully accessible and take into account the needs of all potential school users. This in turn supports curriculum delivery to all pupils.	External professional partners as above will be involved in the construction of the new modular building if funding is approved.	SBM, HT, School Governors

Appendix 2

The audits starting position is the site description (above) and the LA conclusion when they assessed the site 15+ years ago for accessibility issues; the outcome is described above. The audits conclusions presume these two factors are understood and known.

The site has a number of accessibility issues. These are most easily understood when the different ages of the building are reviewed. The school has a Victorian building at one end with a 1970's construction at the far end. Sandwiched between this are two further builds one in the 1980's and one in the 1990's. A number of other structures including the boiler house, a small number of outbuildings and two mobile class structures form the remainder of the school buildings.

In order to ensure these disparate structures meet the needs of children and adults accessing the school remedial action is taken as needs arise. An assessment of every child's needs takes place as they move through the school. The school then make the necessary adjustments. For example in the summer of 2012 a hearing loop was installed to ensure the needs of identified pupils were met.

The school also plan any development to ensure access is available for all. For example also in the summer of 2012 two new seating and play areas were created in the upper playground. These areas backed onto the school wall on each side of the library. Access for the less able was built into the design from the start.

Areas reviewed;

Access/Egress - Doorways

All doors on each area of the site provide egress and access without steps or similar obstruction. The school needs to develop access on each level for specific type of wheelchair users. This will be built into the school buildings development plan.

Update February 2016 the school is in the process of installing a platform lift as part of additional building works which will provide equality of access to year 1 and 2 classrooms and a section of the library.

Update November 2019 the lift has been installed spring 2017. Substantial improvements to door access control and improvements to final access/egress have been implanted in a number of door sets, summer 2019.

Update March 2024 a lift was installed in the most recent building phase. This provides access to the 1990s build previously only accessible by stairs.

Toilets

A review of accessible toilets access is ongoing and is expected to report back at the end of May 2013.

Update February 2016 as part of additional building works the school will provide refitted new toilets in two locations, the Victorian School and the redeveloped former caretaker's house. Both of these locations will provide specific and additional less able toilet facilities.

Update November 2019 new toilets added in works completed spring 2017. Toilets refurbished and decorated spring 2019.

Update March 2024 new toilets were included in the latest build phase to include new accessible toilet.

Classroom Access

The school has close to universal access to all classrooms for all types of ability. The design of the various areas of the school ensures that once in the school access within each level is not restricted. Access from one level to another does have restrictions. Note: March 2024 these restrictions are now limited to the Victorian school block.

Update February 2016 the school is in the process of installing a platform lift as part of additional building works which will provide equality of access to year 1 and 2 classrooms and a section of the library and school hall.

Update November 2019 the lift has been installed spring 2017.

Library Access

The library access needs to be improved to ensure those in all types of wheelchair can access the library from the top and bottom of the KS1 environment.

Update February 2016 the school is in the process of installing a platform lift as part of additional building works which will provide equality of access to year 1 and 2 classrooms and a section of the library and school hall. The current 'music room' within the library is a stepped room with the lower level 1.5m below the upper level and a series of seating steps and central steps from top to bottom. This space will be developed with an internal structure and be all at the same level with appropriate access for all for the upper level of the library.

Update November 2019 the lift has been installed spring 2017. The studio or music room was completed in early spring 2017.

Dinning Assembly Hall Room Access

The school has near universal access to the dining room. When building development permits the school will further extend the access for all wheelchair types.

Update February 2016 - the building development will double the size of the existing school hall. Access to the new space will be universal with double access/egress doors to one side, a set of short steps and platform lift to year 1 and 2 and the school library. The new hall will have a folding wall with a complaint door within the wall to ensure access for all when the wall is closed.

Update November 2019 the hall works and folding wall were completed for the summer term 2017.

ICT Access

The ICT suite is located in the Victorian part of the school. Access is currently universal. The school is presently reviewing the ICT infrastructure and type of ICT provision for the future. The present ICT suite will remain. Additional provision with possible improvements to the wireless network and tablet computers will be developed across the school during the term of this plan.

Update February 2016 Additional wireless functionality is to be included in the building works to further improve access.

Update November 2019 - The ICT suite was converted to a temporary classroom in the summer 2018. ICT is now taught via both laptops and iPads with multi charging points located around school. Significant upgrades to the wireless network and school servers to include associated hardware in conduit i.e. fibre optic cables was completed in the summer 2019.

Update March 2024 during this phase of works fibre optic cable has been included across 90% of the school site.

Ramps and Building Changes

The school will always review the potential to add ramps to improve access. It should be remembered the LA review, as referred to above, concluded that ramps would be very difficult in not impossible in some areas to install due to the building layout and the fall of the ground. As the school has further development work that includes building work the school will review the potential for including ramps or improved access.

Update November 2019 – as part of the scoping exercise, the final major phase of building works will include the expectation of external graded access to the school buildings.

Update March 2024 we now have 360-degree external access without the need to use steps. However, some of this is not suitable for those with differing needs.

Internal Lifts

Update February 2016 the school is installing a platform lift during this build phase to improve access to the identified areas.

Update November 2019 the lift has been installed spring 2017

Update March 2024 as part of the last phase of works as detailed above a lift was installed to all floors.

Conclusion

The school believes that by integrating its approach to accessibility with its site development and building program a continuous improvement to the sites accessibility will be accomplished.

The school will continue to work with pupils their families and other users of the site to ensure any needs are met.

M Harvey, March 2024