



helps children
communicate
REGISTERED CHARITY 210031

| Accessibility Plan | | |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|
| Responsible person – Principal | | |
| Next scheduled review – Spring 2017 | | |
| Date | Reviewed by | Amended (Y/N) |
| Spring 2015 | Janet Dunn | Created |
| Spring 2017 | | |

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

1. Meath School Values

Meath School is committed to providing the highest quality of integrated education, therapy and care for pupils with severe and complex speech, language and communication difficulties, including Aspergers Syndrome.

Meath School works in partnership with a range of professionals to create a safe but challenging learning environment for pupils with SLCN. Whatever the needs of the school community, every effort is made to ensure equality of access to the curriculum and to the accommodation. Pupils learn to value diversity and everyone is equally involved in the life of the school.

2. **The school's Accessibility Plan** covers the main strands of the planning duty as described in the Equality Act 2010, Paragraph 3 and Disability Discrimination (Prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) (England) Regulations, 2005.

3. These are:

- **Physical Environment**

Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which physically disabled children and those with special educational needs are able to benefit from both education and associated services is paramount.

As an outcome of a detailed DDA scrutiny at Meath School there has been a rolling programme to improve the physical environment. All reasonable works have being carried out as a result of the information and data collected during the consultation period, and thereafter.

Any outstanding works are needing significant funding. (e.g. lift to access the residential setting).

Meath School operates partly within a Victorian building and partly within a purpose built single storey education block. The latter plus the ground floor of the Victorian premises are accessible to all pupils and supports the needs of those with mobility and other difficulties.

An assessment of the Victorian building has been undertaken and all that can be achieved in such an environment to ensure physical access has been carried out within a phased programme. Children, staff, families and visitors with sensory/physical disabilities are now supported as much as is possible. E.g. hearing loops for aid wearers, tape markings for visually impaired.

- **Participation in the School's Curriculum**

Meath School continues to improve the type and range of physical aids required by pupils to access the curriculum. Major improvements have been made for IT, including the introduction of interactive white boards, laptops and iPads in each classroom. Augmented and alternative communication aids are available for all children who require them. Their use and the programmes are monitored on a regular basis. E-Safety is a strong focus of the school for all learners and staff. As part of the Plan, detailed scrutiny of IT, Computing and AAC requirements is regularly undertaken and recommendations arising form part of the next action planning.

Meath School has a fully inclusive broad, and balanced curriculum which is modified and/or adapted to suit the needs of individual children but which enables all to access the National Curriculum (at 4 depths of learning), social skills and leisure programmes. Specialist teaching approaches ensure full entitlement to pupils for National Curriculum learning.

Pupils are supported by a range of adults including teachers, care staff, a nurse, therapists and learning support assistants. The deployment of staff varies according to need, as does classroom organisation. Both are reviewed on a regular (at least yearly) basis. There is a nurse employed at the school so that medical needs do not prevent entry to the school.

All pupils have the right to take part in extra-curricular activities and school outings, After School Clubs and Sleepovers with individual and group needs accommodated as fully as possible.

Staff information and training about special educational needs in general, SLCN/Aspergers Syndrome and ASD in particular, are both important aspects of the school's day to day work as they have a significant impact upon the quality of the provision and the delivery of the overall curriculum. The quality of teaching and therapy, within collaborative settings, is monitored regularly to ensure that it is of the highest standard and meets both individual, group and class requirements at all times.

Consultation takes place at least annually with pupils and their families with staff every 2/3 years, and improvements are incorporated into the school development plan as appropriate. Staff are consulted bi-annually.

Staff are able to access a wide range of training opportunities to increase their skills, knowledge and understanding via courses and/or regular in-house training sessions.

- **Delivery of Information**

Information about the school and school events are accessible to all via websites and in hard copy, information is adapted in a relevant format where required, and discussed with individuals as appropriate to ensure that all pupils understand what is happening.

The school provides alternative verbal and written formats for pupil whose needs require, for example, a recognised symbol system, large print, signing, audio tape, information orally or interaction with IT. A like service can be provided for parents and carers as ascertained by the Family Support Worker and supported by an LA (when an interpreter is required for example).

The installation of an induction loop system, finger signs and school signs provide improved access and way finding for all adults and children. Any changes in the type of admission made to the school are reflected in the manner and way information is provided via revision of the policies.

4. Other Policies

The school's policies have been written so as to ensure equality for all pupils. The admission's policy describes the type and range of SEN, in line with the DfE NMSS Approved Arrangement.

All other policies, and in particular:

- teaching and learning
- curriculum
- behaviour (incl. bullying)
- equal opportunities
- exclusion
- Safeguarding (including child protection)
- Medical and health care

describe the reasonable steps being taken to avoid putting any pupil at a substantial disadvantage.

5. School Improvement

School self evaluation is very strong and leads to a shared understanding of key areas of development.

The 3 year School Development Plan focuses upon a range of tasks and activities aimed at removing barriers to learning and participation whilst maintaining the highest quality of provision, and challenge for all pupils.

The Plan is monitored on a termly basis and progress scrupulously evaluated. The plan is fully amended for September each year.

During the coming year, the school's priorities are: evaluating progress from data; developmental marking; e-safety for staff, children and families; enhanced skills around learners with speech sound disorders.

6. Monitoring

The school recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that all pupils are not being disadvantaged. As stated, the quality of teaching and learning is monitored termly, and staff who provide care and therapy are supervised so that pupils benefit from highest quality services. Twice termly unannounced inspections of the care setting are carried out in accordance with the standard 20 of the Residential Special Schools National Minimum Care Standards.

Regular reports are prepared for the Governors (committees and full board) who also monitor the effect of the school's policies, procedures and practices upon the school population group. Regular reports are sent to parents and carers who, in turn, work in close collaboration and partnership with the school.

I CAN's Education Advisor acts in the role of School Improvement Partner monitoring and guiding the work of the school.

I CAN's Quality and Assurance processes also ensure the highest quality provision in SLT.

7. The Future

Meath School will continue to improve the physical, learning and social environments for pupils as well as for visitors to the site wherever possible. It regularly monitors its provision to ensure that it continues to offer a broad range of educational opportunities for all whilst operating within its Approved Arrangement.

The future programme will focus upon removing barriers to learning by facilitating access to the new Primary Curriculum, to school information and to the school and its site. The school will continue to work very closely with the I CAN Directorate and Trustees to ensure that resources are appropriately used.