HASMONEAN MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

1.   BACKGROUND

Under the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act") it is unlawful for schools to discriminate against a student or prospective student by treating them less favourably because of their:

- age (in relation to staff only)
- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

Schools must plan, over time, to increase access to all areas of school life for students with disabilities.

Schools are required to produce an Accessibility Plan (see appendix 1) for:
- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum – this is whole-school level, not just teaching and learning but after hours clubs, leisure and sporting activities and School visits.
- Improving the physical environment to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery of information to disabled students which is provided to students who are not disabled - taking into account views of students and parents.
- The Accessibility Plan must be published on the Schools website to be viewed by parents.

There is an overlap with the Trust's Special Educational Needs Policy. Special educational provision is something additional to or otherwise different from normal provision. The Accessibility Plan goes beyond Special Educational Needs ("SEN"). Its aim is to increase inclusion.

There are two parts to the disability provisions in the new legislation. The 'discrimination' part requires schools to take reasonable steps to prevent a child with a disability being at a disadvantage. These are day-to-day adjustments that must be taken now and schools must ensure that no member of staff discriminates against a student with a disability. The nature of reasonable adjustments are likely to be found in good practice. The second part, the planning, looks to improve access over time.

This is a 3 year plan. The aim is to achieve steady planned progress, not to rebuild, re-equip or re-organise the school within three years.

The school has a duty to implement it and allocate adequate resources to it.

2.   DEFINITIONS OF DISABILITY

The definition of disability under the Act is:

'A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial, long-term, adverse effect on day-to-day activities'.

'Substantial' is defined as 'more than trivial' so the definition covers a large group of children and includes hidden disabilities such as dyslexia and other language and learning difficulties and some behavioural difficulties if, for example, they arise from recognised mental health difficulties, such as ADHD. Some, but not all, of the children will have special educational needs (SEN).

The aim of the Act is to encourage inclusion. This requires us to think of the barriers each area of disability may cause the individual and to take steps to remove these, or reduce their impact.

Everyday activities that people with disabilities may have difficulties with are listed below. Our Plan will consider improving access for all these areas over time.

These are:
- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing, eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger

10% of children nationally have some degree of dyslexia
10% of children nationally have some degree of speech and language difficulty

3.   ARRANGEMENTS PUT IN PLACE TO IMPROVE DISABLED ACCESS

Wheelchair users:
- Teaching Assistants will support mobility needs directly around school as required
- Girls' school lift access to: Science and Sixth form Block
- Boys' school lift access to: English, French, Music and Science Departments as well as the Library
- Girls' school ramps access available to: the main school building as well as the Gymnasium and the Sixth form block
- Boys' school ramps access to: Student Services area which leads to the main school building. Ramps also to the science Block as well as the Gymnasium
- The girls' school has good wheelchair access throughout the buildings

- The boys' school has good wheelchair access in the areas of the building allowed by the nature and condition of its buildings.

Hearing Impaired students:
- Visited regularly by an external specialist teacher who monitors students, assesses their needs and provides advice organised by the SEN team.

Specific and other language and learning difficulties:
- In-class support from TAs as required
- Specific support as identified by SENCO

Examinations:
- Assistant Headteacher, Exams Officer, SSU assesses needs of students for access arrangements; applications, as necessary, made to examining bodies; arrangements implemented.

4.   HOW DOES THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN FIT WITH OUR OTHER PLANS?

This plan is a separate plan but is factored into many aspects of most school policies and plans, for example the Trust's Improvement Plan, the Asset Management Plan, Training plans, SEN plans etc.

The plan is reviewed annually and to support this process the school will:
- Carry out an audit to identify what is in place and where the gaps are (see appendices 1 and 2)
- Identify actions to be taken and write/update the Trust's accessibility plan
- Set targets for improvement
- Consult staff, parents/carers and students
- Publicise the improvements being made
- Implement actions and evaluate the impact on accessibility

5.   AIDS AND EQUIPMENT

The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the accessibility planning duties and the existing SEN provisions, under which local authorities have to provide auxiliary aids to students with a statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care plan.

The duty to provide auxiliary aids also applies to schools. Schools will have to consider whether to provide auxiliary aids as a reasonable adjustment for disabled children. Schools are expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled student when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the student faces in comparison to non-disabled students. There should be no assumption, however, that if an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN regime then it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment.

Questions that SLT and others should ask:-

Increasing access to the curriculum.

Do all teachers and TAs understand the nature of particular disabilities?
- Are they able to adapt their teaching to match particular needs, language ability and learning styles? What sort of training is appropriate?
- Are classroom texts/handouts suitable for particular disabilities?
- Is there a range of reading ages? Is text confusing/too small for some disabilities?
- Are students given copies of notes/details of homework if they find it difficult to copy off the board?
- Are students given visual material to support language and literacy?
- Would ICT increase access to the curriculum?
- How should we prioritise its purchase?
- How should we organise its use?

Improve the physical environment
- What plans have we already got to decorate or refurbish any part of the school building?
- What should we consider when doing so?
- What particular features would benefit students with different disabilities, e.g contrasting colours between walls and doors for a visual impairment, flashing lights on fire alarm bells for a hearing impairment, clear signage including pictures as well as text etc?
- Do we have quiet areas, for example for children who are sometimes overwhelmed in the classroom/playground?
- Do we have changing/washing facilities for children who are incontinent?
- Which areas of the school are not accessible for students with wheelchairs?
- What are our priorities in making them more accessible?
- Are our playgrounds and sports facilities accessible? Can we make them more so?
- Are we planning to replace equipment/ICT? What should we consider when doing so?

Improve access to written information
- What written information do we give to students at the moment?
- Home/school information? Class texts and notes? Notices?
- Is all this information accessible to all our students? How can we make it more so? Do we need any equipment or can we use what we have in a different way? #
- What preferences do our students with disabilities, and their parents, have for the way information is given to them?

Further questions
- Which disabilities might we support in the future?
- How might we increase access to the curriculum, the physical environment and access to written information for children with those disabilities?

See appendix 1.

Accessibility Plan Audit – see appendix 2.

APPENDIX 1 - Hasmonean Multi-Academy Trust Accessibility Action Plan

Action Plan	Strategy	Time Frame	Review	By
Improving Curriculum Access				
Raise whole-school awareness of possible barriers to learning	Disability Awareness Training for teachers, TAs and support staff as needed.	As Needed	Training ongoing sessions with staff.	SLT member responsible for disability
Review of subject areas resources / texts to assess readability	Faculty Review	Annual	All faculties report correct resources in place	SLT member responsible for disability
Audit of differentiation and curriculum access in all subject areas	Training in implications of particular disabilities and strategies	Annual	Differentiation reviewed in all subject areas as part of internal reviews. Specific areas identified as priorities for next year. EHC plans in place that inform strategies, to ensure good access to curriculum in all lessons. Reviewed termly.	SLT responsible for disability
Improving Physical Environment				
Ensure access for visitors and students with a disability is feasible.	Carry out full test for availability of access in the school, clearly identifying areas to improve.	Whenever a disabled visitor or student becomes part of academy community.	Full access available	Resources Manager (or similar)
Ensure décor and signage is clear for students with disabilities e.g. Visual impairment, autism or epilepsy	Take appropriate advice on new signage to be used in building	Annual	Signage in place	Resources Manager (or similar)
Improving access to written information				
Review range of written information provided to students & parents	Research alternative formats. Explore audio formats Develop web-based materials	Annual	Access to written information is appropriate	Resources Manager (or similar)

APPENDIX 2 - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AUDIT - 2019

Section 1: How does your school deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes / No - Comments
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled students?	Yes - Teaching Assistants are trained where appropriate. No – the whole teaching body has not been trained, however advice is shared by Year Leaders and SEN Co-ordinator where appropriate.
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled students?	No – Classrooms can be organised to allow disabled access. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure their classroom is appropriately organised if a disabled student is in their lesson. This is monitored by the DoL and reported on in their SEF (Self Evaluation Form).
Do lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve?	Yes – with the inclusion of withdrawal lessons held in the SSU, and subjects being split into sets, this allows all lessons to provide the opportunity for all students to achieve. This is included in the teachers' standards document and is reviewed through lesson observations. Training to ensure this is part of EFA (Education Funding Agencies).
Are lessons responsive to student diversity?	Yes – with the inclusion of withdrawal lessons held in the SSU, and subjects being split into sets, this allows for all lessons to be responsive to student diversity. This is included in the teachers' standards document and is reviewed through lesson observations. Training to ensure this is part of EFA.
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	Yes – lessons are planned in such a way (depending on the subject) to included individual learning and group activities, be that in pairs, groups and whole class activities. This is included in the teachers' standards document and is reviewed through lesson observations.
Are all students encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	Yes – There is provision for all students.
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled students, for example using	Yes - Staff are informed of individual student needs via the SEND register, how these needs could form a barrier to their learning and what techniques teachers can utilise to overcome them.

lip reading?	
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled students to use equipment in practical work?	Yes - Staff are informed of individual student needs via the SEN register, how these needs could form a barrier to their learning and what techniques teachers can utilise to overcome them.
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled students who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?	Yes - Alternative programs have been designed for disabled students where applicable i.e. PE lessons.
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	Yes – Access arrangements for individual students are included on the SEN register. The SEN Department also provides access to other software/programmes, in liaison with parents and students where appropriate.
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all students irrespective of attainment or impairment?	Yes - All school visits include accessibility planning and individual student needs are taken into account. A school bus was purchased with accessibility access.
Are there high expectations of all students?	Yes – each student is encouraged and expected to achieve the highest standard possible for that student.
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	Yes - Staff are informed of individual student needs via the SEN register, how these needs could form a barrier to their learning and what techniques teachers can utilise to overcome them.

Section 2: Is your school designed to meet the needs of all students?

Question	Yes No
Does the size and layout of areas - including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the main hall, canteen, library, gym and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all students?	Girls' School – Yes Boys' School – The building is on multiple levels, but a lift has been installed to improve access for less able bodied students.
Can students, who use wheelchairs, move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?	Girls' School – Yes, except for stage in the hall, wheelchair users are not able to access the stage. Boys – The building has been made as accessible as possible. Two lifts have been installed (1 at either end of the building) and automatic doors have been installed at all possible places. There are disabled toilets and showers.
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	Girls – Yes, the pathway from the security gates to the main building is separate from the car entrance and car park. Boys – Yes, security guards and members of staff ensure the students and cars do not enter the site by the same gate.
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL students, including students with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?	Security and evacuation systems have recently been updated in both schools to include auditory and visual components.
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?	No
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled students with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?	No
Are areas to which students should have access well lit?	Yes

Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired students such as considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment?	Yes - Staff are informed of individual student needs via the SEN register, how these needs could form a barrier to their learning and what techniques teachers can utilise to overcome them.
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	Yes - where this is appropriate, the SEN Co-ordinator will also give recommendations for individual students.

Section 3: How does your school deliver materials in other formats?

Question	Yes No
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on Audio-tape or in Braille for students and prospective students who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	Yes for current students who require this, but not for prospective students.
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	Yes - Staff are informed of individual student needs via the SEN register, how these needs could form a barrier to their learning and what techniques teachers can utilise to overcome them.
Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	Yes
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	Yes - Staff are informed of individual student needs via the SEN register, how these needs could form a barrier to their learning and what techniques and technologies teachers can utilise to overcome them.

Reviewed by Stone King April 2019
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