

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

PRESTON MANOR SCHOOL

An All-Through Co-operative School

Governors' Committee Responsible: Welfare Committee	
Statutory Provision: Statuary	
Policy Author: Taryn Neale & Guy Brougham	Review Period: 4 Years
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Document Purpose

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of Preston Manor School in relation to Accessibility. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. This policy has been written in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1995), as amended by the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA, 2001).

Definition of Disability

Disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

“A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

The SEN and Disability Act in 2001 extended the DDA 1995 to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled students, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled student less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled students.

Purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

Preston Manor is committed to reducing and eliminating barriers to accessing the curriculum with the key goal that students (and prospective students) with a disability can participate fully in the school community. We have high ambitions for all of our students, including those with a disability, and we aim that all students have the opportunity to engage in every aspect of school life and, in doing so, to ‘develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes’ (COP 2015, 1:34). Preston Manor School is committed to the UN Convention of Rights of the Child (Article 23: A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life in conditions that promote dignity, independence and an active role in the community).

The school recognises and values parents’ knowledge of their child’s disability and its effect on their ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents’ and child’s right to confidentiality.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled students in three areas:

1) Education and related activities

The school will provide all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred

learning styles. We endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework (2000), which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum, including setting suitable learning challenges, responding to students' diverse needs and overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of local authority services, and other external professionals can support the school to ensure equality of access and developmental achievement commensurate with their potential ability.

2) Physical environment

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities, services and fittings.

3) Provision of information

The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the local authority, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

Accessibility Strategy

Alongside the DDA (1995) and SENDA (2002) Preston Manor's Accessibility Strategy has been produced in response to, and in accordance with the:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)

These set out the legal obligations of the school in regard to direct and indirect discrimination and the provision of 'reasonable adjustments including the provision of auxiliary aids and services to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage when compared to their peers. This duty is anticipatory and requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage' (SEND COP 2015, p17).

This statement sets out the ways in which Preston Manor provides access to education for students with a disability.

A person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment has a long-term (a year or more) and/ or substantial (more than minor or trivial) adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities (Equality Act 2010)

This definition of disability in the Equality Act includes children with long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such

conditions do not necessarily have Special Educational Needs (SEN) but the school recognizes that there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those identified with SEN.

Preston Manor's Accessibility Strategy is addressed under five hearings below. The sixth heading covers areas we are currently working on to improve our offer.

- Admissions
- Access to Buildings and Classrooms including evacuation
- Curriculum Access
- Extra-curricular and Enriched Curriculum
- Information for Students and Parents
- Areas for Development

Admissions

The school is committed to the principle that all local children have equal rights of access to mainstream education if this can reasonably be provided. These admissions arrangements are set out in Preston Manor's admissions policy and they are fully compliant with Government legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. The Governors, the school's leadership team, including the SENCO, work with the local authority to ensure that school admissions are compliant with the legislation.

Furthermore, the school strives to create strong links with our primary schools to ensure that students with disabilities are considered and planned for prior to their arrival to Preston Manor. This includes, where possible, supporting equipment, Health Care Plans and specific care information are in place when they first start with us.

Access to the Physical Environment (Buildings and Classrooms)

The school's evacuation procedures will be adapted to meet the specific needs of an individual. Such procedures will be discussed with the student and their parents/carers. Where there are specific adjustments that need to be made, for example, ear defenders or physical adaptations, these will be added to the notes section of the AEN Booklet so all staff are informed. Where necessary, the adjustments can be added to a student's Health Care Plan (HCP) if they have one.

Learning Support Staff are allocated to form groups where there is a student, or a group of students, that need curricular and/ or physical adjustments and support. Staff will have specific duties during an evacuation, for example, physical support in case of a drill or an emergency.

The school will continue to review access to the physical environment for students with disabilities and to make any accommodations that are reasonable and possible.

The following areas have full access with exceptions noted:

Building/ Area	Access and Exceptions
Main/ Jubilee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramp to side door. • Disabled toilet facilities. • Full access to ground floor including across quad to Geography corridor (portable ramps also available). This includes to Maths, Science, Drama, Modern Foreign Languages, the Mentoring Suite and the dining area. • Considerate timetabling will need to be taken to accommodate wheelchair access to Drama, English, Business Classrooms and the LRC.
Speech & Language Base ARP/ New Base/ Compass ASD ARP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access including Sensory Room and toilets • Access to bigger lockers for students with need
Art and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to ground floor Art and Technology rooms • Considerate timetabling will need to be taken to accommodate wheelchair access to IT Classrooms: stairs are too steep to erect a ramp.
CLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access
Gym/ Sports Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access from outside through Gym to Changing Room. Can provide alternative access with portable ramps.
Stairs and Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All internal and external steps are distinctly 'yellow marked' to aid access for students with a visual impairment. Lighting has been checked to ensure it is bright enough where there is no natural light.
Platinum Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access, including access to toilets.
Lower School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access including lifts to first floor.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapted or specialist furniture for specific disabilities enables access to all blocks

Curriculum Access: Teaching, Learning and Assessment

For a more thorough description of Preston Manor's SEN Curricular offer, including timetabled and extra-curricular support, please refer to the school's SEND Policy and the SEND Information Report.

Our aim is that students with disabilities should, as far as possible, have access to a full and broad curriculum similar to that followed by their peers. This is achieved by high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised taking into account of individual access and learning needs. The overarching commitment is that all students achieve the best possible outcomes in terms of academic, personal and social development leading to greater independence and successful transitions to adulthood. We have an ambitious and inclusive community and we take every opportunity to celebrate our diverse population. For example,

our Autism Ambassadors led the celebrations for Autism Awareness Week and our lead Citizenship teacher prepared a series of mini-lessons to highlight Deaf Awareness Week.

Learning opportunities are guided by student choice and parental support. Where appropriate, personalised learning targets are set termly by the student's keyworker and the outcomes are evaluated by all of the child's teaching staff at each formal data point during the academic year. All staff are able to raise concerns, or suggest intervention, through the whole school referral process, The Pastoral Gateway. All referrals sent through the Pastoral Gateway are raised in the Student Intervention Group, a team of Pastoral and SEN Managers who discuss each referral and decides the outcome. Where there is a need, the group will seek out further information and/ or assessment, including from external specialists. Support is provided in a variety of formats through the school's graduated response strategy, in line with the SEND COP.

Where there is a need for physical assistance to help remove the barrier to learning, like a laptop, the school will provide these on a needs basis. We also work with various agencies, like Brent's Visual Impairment Service or Brent's Occupational Therapist Service, to ensure that students have any specialist equipment that they may need. We accommodate specialist services where there is a training need for the students, like long cane training or travel training. Furniture, seating arrangements and the classroom can be altered to facilitate access and learning (please note, the location of specialist equipment may preclude some possibilities).

Led by the Learning Support Department, the school will assess a student's need for support and exam access arrangements in line with JCQ regulations. This will involve liaison with teaching staff to ensure that assessments are accessible and appropriate measures are put in place to reduce the barriers to learning by provision of smaller accommodation, scribe, word-processor, reader, prompt, rest breaks and/ or additional time.

Meeting Students' Specific Educational Needs

Effective information sharing is the foundation of how we ensure our students' specific needs are understood and catered for by staff. The Additional Education Booklet is the vehicle the school uses to disseminate this information. Specific data and descriptions of needs as well as strategies used to meet these needs are included in the book, and it is updated termly. Provision is mapped and costed on SIMs for any students accessing SEND support and a report can be provided to parents/ carers and other stakeholders upon request.

Preston Manor is aware that not all disabilities are visible and we seize every opportunity to raise awareness and support our school community in relation to our SEMH needs. We have a large counselling service, led by Brent Centre for Young People. This service offers support to all of our students but also for our parents and our staff. We also have a stepped-provision of formal mental health therapy access, which happens in school as well as through Brent CAHMS. We boast a large mentoring offer, with trained staff and peer mentors. Furthermore, 19 members of staff have been trained in the Youth Mental Health First Aid course and can act as first responders for mental health issues.

Where there is additional circular adaptations needed, students' learning pathways are personalised to their interests and ability. Interventions are run alongside the whole-school curriculum offer and all students are able to dip in and out as and when they need it. For some students, they may require, for example, a time-limited Mindfulness group while, for

others, they may need access to our full KS4 SEN Curriculum Offer. Our circular offer, for all areas of need, are responsive and personalised to individual circumstances. For a full list of our SEND provision offer, please refer to the school's SEND Information Report.

Extra-Curricular and Enriched Curriculum

Students at Preston Manor School have always been encouraged to participate fully in a wide range of extra-curricular activities offered consistent with a duty of care for their health, safety and wellbeing. This includes access to clubs and activities before, during and after school, excursions and trips, Music, Drama, Sports and Outdoor Education.

The suitability of any event and the needs for additional support can be discussed fully with the parents and involved staff in advance and will be incorporated into the general risk assessment as appropriate.

Information for Students and Parents

Children and families are routinely involved in reviewing provision for the child whether it is in our regular parental meetings (both subject and form-led), Annual Reviews for those with EHCPs, in reviewing a Health Care Plan, parent forums and/ or ad-hoc/ responsive meetings. The school holds termly Parent Forums and acknowledges the importance of working in partnership to develop effective practice and provision.

Large print format materials can be made available. The services of a language interpreter and a sign language interpreter can be accessed via the school or Brent SENDIASS to facilitate parental interviews. The school is also happy to facilitate virtual meetings where appropriate.

If either a student or parents have difficulty accessing information normally provided in writing by the school such as worksheets, homework or newsletters then the school will be happy to consider alternative forms of communication and/ or provision.

The following policy documents are relevant to the general issue of accessibility:

- Admissions Policy
- SEN Policy
- SEN Information Report
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Behaviour for Learning, Anti-Bullying and School Medicine's Policy
- Brent Local Authority Local Offer
- Brent SENDIASS website

Areas for Development

- Extend provision mapping to cover all practice where the school is making curricular and or extra-curricular adjustments to a student's timetable
- Extend the AEN Booklet to include those students with a disability and/ or a Health Care Plan that are not identified as SEN and, therefore, are not monitored on the SEN register.

- Extend staff training on the impact of different disabilities on learning and how quality first teaching, curricular adjustment and/ or how technology can support student progress, engagement and participation.

Access to this plan

This plan is published on our school website and printed copy can be made available upon request to:

- Any current or prospective parent
- Any member of staff or applicant to a post at the school
- Ofsted, the local authority and any other QA body who supports the school

This plan will inform aspects of the overall school's development plan and other staff developmental groups.