

Physis- a Greek word meaning the natural energy for growth, change and development.



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# Disability Access Policy



**Physis Heathgates  
Academy**

*Physis Quantum is a specialist provider of exciting and innovative services to  
Children and Young People with special educational needs.*



## **The Disability Access Policy and Plan**

### **Introduction**

Although Physis Heathgates Academy is yet to admit a physically disabled pupil, it is our intention to remove, as far as we can, those barriers which make it hard for children and adults with a disability to take part in the day to day life of our school and benefit from the educational experiences and services we provide.

We aim to ensure that our school is a welcoming place that understands and responds effectively to children and adults with disabilities and we recognise the importance of a review and planning procedure associated with continuous development and improvement.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'*

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years' providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability

- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- This duty is anticipatory – it 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.
- Schools are allowed to treat disabled children / young people more favourably than non-disabled children / young people, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with children / young people without disabilities
- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.

The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

School governing bodies and proprietors must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

### **The Responsible Body**

The responsible body (Proprietor via Head Teacher) must prepare—

- an accessibility plan;
- further such plans at such times as may be prescribed.

An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period—

- increasing the extent to which disabled children / young people can participate in the school's curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled children / young people are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by the school; and
- improving the delivery to disabled children / young people—  
(i) within a reasonable time, and

(ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents,

of information which is provided in writing for children / young people who are not disabled.

- An accessibility plan must be in writing.
- During the period to which the plan relates, the responsible body must keep its accessibility plan under review and, if necessary, revise it.
- It is the duty of the responsible body to implement its accessibility plan.

Schools have had a duty to produce an accessibility plan since September 2002. These initial plans should have been in place by April 2003.

**The Statutory Policies for Schools (Sept 2014)** states that it is a requirement that maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools, sixth-form colleges, further education colleges and Pupil Referral Units must review their accessibility plan every three years. It also states that approval should be by the governing body however, they are free to delegate the approval right to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the head teacher.

### **The School's Context**

We are an Independent School for children aged 10-18 years of age who have either been victims of or who are at high risk of Child Sexual Exploitation

In the years we had no young people identified as having a disability under the given definition.

### **Formulating our Accessibility Plan**

Our accessibility plan has been developed as follows:

- Access audit and review of current activities completed
- Actions to eliminate barriers identified (with short-term, medium term and long term targets).
- Consultation with school staff and governors
- The Plan's contents checked.
- Publication of the plan (via the website)
- Implementation of the plan and allocated adequate resources.
- Evaluation of the plan with the accessibility plan under on-going review and revision as necessary).

In addition to this we will;

- continually review the environment of the school, the way we plan, prepare and deliver curriculum and the information we provide for children / young people so that we can improve the access for both individuals and groups;
- work to provide an atmosphere where all children / young people feel safe and valued;
- promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with a disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.
- examine those parts of our activities which may have limited access for children / young people with a disability and see if it is possible to provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.

### **Accessing the School's Accessibility Plan**

***The Disability Access Plan is available on the website and can be found at the end of this document.***

***Copies in bold/enlarged print can be requested from the Head Teacher's office***

### **Other School Policies & Documentation**

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

- Curriculum
- Health & Safety
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- School Development Plan

## Physis Heathgates Academy Disability Access Plan 2015-16

	Objective	Action	People involved	Timeframe
Short Term	<p>Improve site access to meet diverse needs of pupils.</p> <p>To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled children and young people can take advantage of education services</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hardcore paths and ramps to be in place to enable good access for all pupils/adults, including those with wheelchairs</li> <li>2. Identify the children who will require access arrangements – at the time of writing no children are physically disabled</li> </ol>	<p>Head Teacher SLT</p> <p>Head Teacher SLT</p>	<p>September 16</p> <p>Sept 16</p>
<p>1 and 2 completed –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Step into school slightly too high – portable ramp required ( Targeted for Feb 2018)</li> </ul>				
Medium Term	<p>To promote positive attitudes to disability</p> <p>To increase the extent to which disabled children/young people can participate in the school curriculum</p> <p>To develop and share good practice.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. -Audit school for positive images of people with different abilities/disabilities</li> <li>2. -Consider highlighting achievements of pupils with disabilities via Current News Assemblies and the reading of First News</li> </ol> <p>As and when the school admits a disabled pupil</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Discuss during training days and staff meetings</li> </ol>	<p>EH</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT and staff</p>	2016
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Displayed in school and included in assemblies</li> <li>2. Regular reading of First News via assemblies</li> <li>3. Disability Awareness training session planned for May 17<sup>th</sup> 2017</li> </ol>		
Long Term	Increase site access to meet the needs of all children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-1. Evaluate/audit the school grounds and buildings to ensure good access for all people</li> <li>- 2. Address issues that arise from this audit</li> </ol>	HT	May 2016

	To increase the extent to which disabled children/young people can participate in the school curriculum	-3. Audit ways in which information is presented to children in school. Is it user friendly?		
	To ensure clear disability access planning	As required	HT	
		4. HT to conduct evaluation and a school audit to inform disability and access planning for coming academic year.	HT	By next review
1. Completed 2. Completed 3. Via assemblies and 1:1 meetings with HT 4. See below				

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**Physis Heathgates Academy Disability Access Plan 2016-17**

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>People involved</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Short term	Improve site access to meet diverse needs of pupils.  To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled children and young people can take advantage of education services	Increase area between kitchen worktops	AR and AP	Feb 2017
Medium Term	Improve disability awareness of both students and teachers	May 17 <sup>th</sup> staff meeting  Ongoing information given to children via assemblies	EH and AP	Feb 2017 – July 2017

		Suitable displays		
Long Term	Improve disability awareness of both students and teachers	SENCO (MW) to create suitable programme during one of the project weeks	MW	August 2017



