



Adopted by Full Governors on 30.01.2020 Item 31b

# WHITLEY BAY HIGH SCHOOL

## ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

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	This policy will be reviewed 3 yearly
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# Whitley Bay High School

## Accessibility Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Whitley Bay High School is committed to providing premises that are fit for all educational purposes and give access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all students, irrespective of special educational need or disability. This reflects the strategic aims and objectives of the school.
- 1.2 The Governing Body supports the principles and, as a maintained school, will work jointly with the Local Authority to implement agreed objectives to meet targets for improving access to education.

### 2. Key Objectives

- Reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum, ensuring full participation for current and prospective students with a special educational need or disability. This includes facilitating access to offsite activities.
- Manage and improve the physical environment of the school buildings and grounds to enable disabled students to take greater advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

### 3. Accessibility Policy

- 3.1 The Accessibility Policy addresses and recognises the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Policy operates alongside the school's SEN and Equality policies and is consistent in terms of principles and approaches to resourcing.
- 3.2 The school maintains an Accessibility Action Plan which sets out steps the school will take to improve its physical environment in terms of access and ease of use by a wide range of users, including those with disabilities. The Accessibility Audit and Action Plan is co-ordinated by the School Business Leader, assisted by the Site Manager.
- 3.3 The Accessibility Action Plan includes recommendations for required remedial actions and ongoing monitoring and control measures. The content is based on information and access at the time of the Accessibility Audit. The Accessibility Audit is undertaken as a walkthrough audit / inspection of the building by a consultant from Direct Access Consultancy Ltd. Recommendations are made upon the basis of evidence seen.
- 3.4 The Accessibility Action Plan, arising from the Audit, may include works that the school are unable to undertake immediately due to the availability of capital funding or fabric, infrastructure or layout of the building. Where fully desired works are not immediately achievable, the school will make reasonable adjustments where this is deemed possible. Opportunities are taken to address items in the Accessibility Action Plan when making infrastructure improvements to other areas of the site.
- 3.5 Students identified as having a higher level of accessibility need meet with the School Business Leader, health professionals and other staff within school, to discuss reasonable

adjustments, individual/bespoke requirements (e.g. welfare arrangements, modifications to aid movement around school buildings, specialist furniture and/or equipment etc.) This may be supplemented with a tour of the site visiting timetabled rooms and break/lunchtime areas. This is reviewed on an annual basis (September) in line with timetable changes.

- 3.6 The Accessibility Audit and Action Plan will be undertaken every 3 years and updated to take account of improvements made, future resource availability and those objectives set out within the School Development Plan.

#### 4. Accessibility Audit Process

- 4.1 The audit of school buildings informing the Accessibility Action Plan comprises:

- Approach, routes & street furniture
- Car parking
- External ramps
- External steps
- Entrances
- Reception areas and lobbies
- Corridors and internal surfaces
- Internal doors
- Internal ramps
- Internal stairs
- Lifts / platform lifts
- WCs: general provision
- WCs: Wheelchair users
- Facilities
- Way finding
- Lighting and acoustics
- Means of escape
- Building management

The range of recommendations include small non-structural adjustments to major structural alternations. The Action Plan provides an indication of priorities and costs.

#### 5. Priorities

- 5.1 Priorities are identified using a variety of factors including:

- Compliance with building regulations
- School policy and objectives
- Current use of the building
- Availability of the resources to support recommendations (including cost)
- Refurbishment / site development plans
- Maintenance programmes

- 5.2 Priority ratings are as follows:

- **Priority A** – where there are potential health and safety risks or where failure to implement changes would be highly likely to attract legal implications. Immediate action is recommended to put changes into effect.
- **Priority B** – where action is recommended within 12 months to alleviate access problems or make improvements that will have a considerable impact.
- **Priority C** – where action is recommended within 12 – 24 months to improve access.
- **Priority D** – where the recommendation involves excessive costs or should be implemented as part of a long term plan.

- 5.3 Budget costs are included in the Action Plan using the following format:

- **N** – None
- **M** - Minimal
- **OG** – Ongoing Maintenance
- **ST** – Structural Change
- **EX** – Major Structural Change

#### 6. Links

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

- Equality and Diversity (includes curriculum policies) and Equality Duty Action Plan.
- Health and Safety.
- Special Needs.
- Child Protection.
- School Development Plan.
- Personalised risk assessments.
- Hire of Premises Policy (Community Groups).