

# Red Balloon - Norwich

## Accessibility Plan

### 3 year access plan – annually reviewable



**Date of Plan: July 2021**

**Date for review: July 2022**

#### **Nature of the current school cohort:**

None of our current students use a wheelchair or have significant physical disability or sensory impairment. A number have mental health difficulties including heightened anxiety, depression and psychotic disorders. Some pupils have mobility issues such as hyper-mobility.

None of our current staff have physical or sensory disabilities.

#### **Nature of the school (to include available accommodation):**

The school caters for up to 20 secondary age students who have either self excluded from school or have been referred because they have met extreme difficulty in relating to their mainstream peers. The school operates within a semi-detached house with a small garden. There are three floors of available accommodation. There is ground floor access for wheelchair users (a ramp provides access to the front door), but the cost of making any further parts of the building directly accessible remain prohibitive.

There are 14 members of staff, some of whom work part-time.

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## 5. Accessibility Plan

### 1.Aims

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of our school to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students

Our school aims to treat all its students fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all students and staff across the school community without discrimination of any kind.

The plan for the school will be made available on the school website, and paper copies are available on request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

We have included and considered a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including students, parents/carers, staff, visitors and Trustees.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2020 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage

that a disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

### **3. Monitoring arrangements**

This document will be reviewed every 3 years by the Head of Centre but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

An accessibility audit will be carried out on an annual basis by the Head of Centre, Health and Safety Officer and Trustee.

### **4. Links with other policies**

Other Red Balloon Norwich policies that should be read in conjunction with this one:

- Health and Safety
- Disability and Discrimination
- Equality and Diversity

### **Audit of existing strengths and weaknesses:**

#### **Are all staff aware of their responsibilities under equalities legislation?**

Yes - via policy documents and induction process and specifically the 'Equality and Diversity' (EduCare) training carried out every year for all staff.

#### **Where students have an identified disability, is there evidence that this impacts upon?**

- attendance – NO (apart for the need to attend appointments during school hours);
- access to the curriculum – NO;
- access to areas of the centre – NO;
- access to any clubs, visits or activities – NO;
- their achievements – NO.

#### **Have existing disabled students or staff been consulted re this plan; if they have how have their views been implemented?**

Students are consulted through regular one-to-one discussions with the Head of Centre and their mentor about their needs, challenges and progress. As a result we have identified designated 'quiet spaces' for students to go when they are feeling overwhelmed. We offer six weeks reduced timetables if students with poor mental health are struggling to attend. We assess and request, each year, appropriate access arrangements for public examinations. All our students have a designated laptop.

## 5. Accessibility Plan

**In light of the above how can the Centre:**

**Improve access for all to the physical environment?**

**Short term**

Action	Who	When by	Resources required	Anticipated outcomes
'Access Walk' around the building to identify any simple alterations (e.g. brighter lighting, grab rails) that might be made to improve access to the building for people with sensory impairments or other disabilities.	Head of Centre together with trustees.	July 2022.	Funding and affordable modifications to be identified.	Any significant alterations to be made during the summer closure period.  Improved lighting in the basement hallway.  Possible addition of a handrail from ground floor to basement - but stairs quite narrow already  Disabled access to the front of the building to be replaced

**Long term**

Action	Who	When by	Resources required	Anticipated outcomes
<p>Improve wheelchair access to rear of building,</p> <p>Explore the possibility of alternative premises that could provide wheelchair access whilst maintaining a domestic feel.</p>	Trustees.	<p>August 2023.</p> <p>September 2022</p>	<p>Funds</p> <p>Professional advice;</p> <p>Major financial implications.</p>	<p>Ramp at back gate (approx 100mm)</p> <p>Ramp at rear (fire exit) door (150mm)</p> <p>Ramp to rear hallway (100mm)</p> <p>Door threshold at rear (fire exit)</p> <p>Possible move – but extremely unlikely given cost implications.</p>

#### Improve access to all learning (including 'out of school') activities on offer?

##### Short term

Action	Who	When by	Resources required	Anticipated outcomes
<p>Ensure staff have a bank of strategies to support learning across all SEND needs</p> <p>Audit whether any students / staff / parents / others have their access to learning restricted due to disability.</p>	<p>SENDCo</p> <p>Head of Centre plus nominated Trustee.</p>	<p>July 2022</p> <p>July 2022</p>	<p>None</p> <p>Questionnaires/ interviews.</p>	<p>Staff will confidently differentiate lessons to suit individual needs to ensure students are able to fully access the curriculum</p> <p>Depending upon outcome, revise medium/long term plans to address any issues.</p>

##### Long term

Action	Who	When by	Resources required	Anticipated outcomes
Training of staff (if required) in response to needs of the new cohort in Sept 21 and beyond.	All staff as required.	Ongoing as our school population is transient.	Training –budget; New teaching resources; Information sharing with other educational establishments and Local Authority.	All staff have access to additional training where necessary, and information shared in order to meet the needs of all our students.

### Improve access of all to learning or other information that may currently be provided solely in written form?

#### Short term

Action	Who	When by	Resources required	Anticipated outcomes
Investigate ‘text to speech’ software.  Investigate assistive reading technology for use in GCSE English Language	Head of Centre.	July 2022	Time to investigate;  Funding to purchase software if deemed appropriate.	Possible acquisition of software, if required by pupil or staff.

#### Long term

Action	Who	When by	Resources required	Anticipated outcomes
Staff training re. accessibility in IT (adjusting resolution /	A selection of staff across subject areas.	Rolling programme during 2021/22 and 2022/23.	Trainer (if not in house) - might be appropriate workshop for annual	Improved skills for working with students with a range of disabilities.

colours / size / tagging / voice recognition software).			conference – requires broader discussion with other centres.	
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**Document completed by:**

Heather Jolly (**Head of Centre**)

*H Jolly* (**on behalf of Trustees**)

**Date: July 2021**

This plan will be reviewed if necessary when a new student or member of staff starts at the centre. It will be formally reviewed on an annual basis.

**Evaluation:**

All of our students are able to access all areas of the curriculum within the building or garden.

- For students who have a difficulty with stairs we arrange for them to be able to access stairs at times when it is quiet – ie just before or just after lesson breaks. This difficulty may be due to break/sprain/fatigue etc
- For students who have a problem with noise as a sensory issue, they are allowed to wear earphones and listen to music to wipe out white noise.
- For students who have a problem with noise at break times or during lunch alternative arrangements are made to enable them to socialise in a quiet space.
- For students who have allergies touching certain things in Science for example, gloves are supplied
- Lighting in some areas has been improved – particularly in the lower ground floor where there is very little natural light.
- The extension has good wheelchair access should this be necessary. Ramps have been purchased to enable wheelchairs access to downstairs classrooms
- Coloured overlays or paper have been purchased as required
- Computers have been adjusted with background colour, increased font size and students have been taught how to do this for themselves
- Examination Access Arrangements are requested each year and granted as appropriate.
- A variety of pieces of equipment have been purchased to enable students with ADHD to be able to exercise/fiddle with and consequently improve concentration.