



Accessibility Policy

Introduction

Stour Valley Community School welcomes its general responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) to ensure that the school does not discriminate against a student or prospective student by treating them less favourably because of a 'protected characteristic' as listed below;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

This policy sets out the steps that the Local Governing Body will make to result in improved accessibility to the curriculum, physical environment, and information for disabled people. It operates alongside the school's SEND policy and is consistent with it in terms of principles and approaches to resourcing.

School Ethos, Vision and Values

We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled students, staff and all those receiving services from the school. This commitment includes providing premises that are suitable and sufficient for all educational purposes and give access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all students, irrespective of special need or disability. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life. Our admissions policy does not discriminate against disabled students.

At Stour Valley Community School we aim to ensure that all our students, whatever their ability, reach the highest level of achievement possible. The achievement of all students will be monitored and this data used to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. The School is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunities, and strives to create a caring community which demonstrates respect for one another, along with understanding and tolerance.

Definition of Unlawful behaviour

The Equality Act (2010) defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour, which will not be tolerated at Stour Valley Community School;

Direct Discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a "provision, criterion or practice" is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic.

Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act - it is "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person".

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done in connection with the Act.

Special Provisions for Disability

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. In particular it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that schools are allowed to treat disabled students more favourably than non-disabled students, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with students without disabilities.

With this in mind, Stour Valley Community School aims to;

- avoid treating disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- ensure access to educational opportunities for disabled students.

The Accessibility Plan

The Stour Valley Community School Accessibility Plan aims to;

- ensure disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- ensure the physical environment of the school enables disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;

The School has a responsibility to provide a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of students. We aim to meet this responsibly by:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to students' diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

We value the presence of every child, irrespective of need. We are sensitive and proactive about devising ways in which a child with any disability can undertake virtually all, if not all, of the same activities and curriculum as other students. Students with learning difficulties are given suitable additional help following consultation. This plan outlines the ongoing review and evaluation process and our aims to improve our facilities and access arrangements.

Delivering the Plan

Training will be provided for any staff requesting support in dealing with students or staff who have protected characteristics. A whole school budget is available for training and is accessed through performance management and as need arises.

Delivery of the Plan will be monitored by the Local Governing Body. This policy will be reviewed annually and updated to take account of improvements made, future resource availability and the changing needs of current and potential students and staff in the school.

Where possible, partnerships will be developed with other education providers, primary schools, SEND Advisers, specialist staff, paediatricians and staff from relevant county council education departments.

Assessing the Impact of the Plan

Improving accessibility is the desired outcome from this policy. Conducting impact assessments should lead to improved performance in relation to individuals with protected characteristics.

Accessibility impact assessments enable the School to identify the impact of its current activities and to identify and remove or reduce barriers to equality, and / or to maximise positive impact. This is achieved by making suitable modifications to eliminate or reduce negative impact or create or increase positive impact, or to clarify its justification for not so doing. Stour Valley Community School will seek to ensure that new policies, including changes and reviews of existing policies, are assessed in light of this policy and that equality is given due consideration.

It is important to remember that the focus of impact assessments should be on outcomes and improvements, not on process. The process should be whatever is required to identify impacts, actual or potential, positive or negative, and to plan for and implement any changes required.

Any complaints about this policy should be raised through the Stour Valley Community School Complaints Policy.

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Ratified by Local Governing Body | SVCS LGB |
| Date | 05 March 2024 |

Accessibility Plan 2022-2025

Aims and Objectives

| Aim | Current good practice | Objectives | Actions to be taken | Person responsible | Date for completion |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Ensure access to the curriculum for students with a disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adjustable height working areas - inclusive PE activities - bespoke travel and mobility arrangements for visits - exam access testing for all viable candidates - chairs, stools, foot rests, writing slopes purchased on an individual needs basis - reader pens, laptops available at all times for student use - SENCo is exam access trained | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wider range of equipment to be available in practical learning areas • Staff to be more aware of strategies to support students with specific learning difficulties | <p>Monitor needs as appropriate. Update as necessary.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the individual needs of students with ASD.</p> | <p>RCH</p> <p>RCH</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>May 2023</p> |
| Ensure access to the physical environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lifts to provide access to all areas of the main building - fully accessible Reception area - wide corridors - fully accessible disabled toilets - changes of flooring/door frames differentiated by paint colours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access onto the stage • Create accessible entrance to the Humanities Block • Review fire escape routes for less able students and staff | <p>Consider options for stage access</p> <p>Review options for Humanities Block access</p> <p>Review fire escape arrangements for disabled and less mobile students and staff</p> | <p>MWR/SRO/KCU</p> <p>JCR/SRO/KCU</p> <p>RCH/KCU/SRO</p> | <p>Sep 2024</p> <p>July 2023</p> <p>Sept 2022</p> |

Access Audit

| Feature | Description | Objectives | Person responsible | Date for completion |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Parking bays | Disabled parking for staff Parking nearest the building reserved for disabled visitors | Identify and mark a new bay for Disabled Visitors | KCU/SRO | Sept 2022 |
| External Entrances | Fully accessible outer door All external pathways have dropped kerbs and are level | None at this time | - | - |
| Reception area | Internal door from lobby is very wide and without a floor level door frame. The internal door opens outwards and is manual: Assistance available if necessary | None at this time | - | - |
| Corridor access | Corridors are wide and well lit. | None at this time | - | - |
| Lifts | There are flat bed lifts for stair sections and a lift between floors. | None at this time | - | - |
| Ramps | Access/exit ramps are all in good order. | Create access ramp to Humanities Block | KCU/SRO | Sept 2024 |
| Toilets | There are accessible toilets on both floors of the building. | None at this time | - | - |
| Internal signage | Room numbering was changed in 2015 to be sequential. Signage is clear and effective. | None at this time | - | - |
| Emergency escape routes | Escape routes are accessible, with Evac chairs at the ends of the upstairs corridor. | Create access ramp to Humanities Block | KCU/SRO | July 2023 |