

Accessibility Policy

Clarity Independent School

**Bridge Barn Farm
Woodhill Road
Sandon
CM2 7SG**

Clarity Independent School is committed to safeguarding...

"Our school is committed to our whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do, and underpins all systems, processes and policies...We promote an environment where children and young people feel empowered to raise concerns and report incidents and we work hard in partnership with pupils, parents and caregivers to keep children safe."

Clarity Safeguarding Policy September 2024

This is version [6.0]

Written: March 2019

Updated: December 2024

Updated by: Richard Clow

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Background

As a special school primarily for children with moderate learning difficulties, Clarity Independent School is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its pupils, employees and any others involved in the school community, with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

This Accessibility Policy pays due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Equality Duty which was introduced into the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in 2005. It sets out:

- A general duty to promote disability equality.
- A requirement for schools to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme showing how they are meeting the general duty.

Our aims as a school are to:

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

Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements of [schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism (ASD), speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Social Emotional and Mental Health issues (SEMH). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

- mobility



- ability to attend school consistently
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- speech, hearing or eyesight
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- perception of risk of physical danger.

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. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

Disability and Special Educational Needs

The Education Act 2011 says that *'a child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her'*. Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or otherwise different from provision that is normally available in the area.

Purpose

The purpose of our disability equality scheme is to show how the school is meeting the duty to promote disability equality for disabled students, staff, parents and members of the public.

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage. Schools should:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability – related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage disabled people's participation in public life

Recruitment, Development and Retention of Disabled Employees

We continue to gather information at the point of recruitment, through a confidential equal opportunities form, alongside the application form (which the selection panel does not have access to, to promote equality) and a health questionnaire about disability and fit for work check once the person has been offered the role. All information is in line with policies on confidentiality and equal opportunities. Such information will be used to inform policies where necessary.

Staff Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Leadership Team to ensure that school development targets relating to accessibility are actualised through a process of monitoring. Curriculum leaders work with the Leadership Team to develop a curriculum that is accessible to all pupils on the roll. Information from documentation and adaptations for individuals by Class Teachers and Keyworkers, with the support of the Leadership Team, are made to support learning and emotional regulation.

Education Opportunities and Achievements of Disabled Pupils

Monitoring of different groups of disability is undertaken in order to ensure all pupils have equal access to facilities within the school. This is in line with self-evaluation principles as we look to investigate any possible differences in achievement or progress in these groups. An example of this is an analysis of progress of pupils affected by Autistic Spectrum Disorder and other groups/sub-groups of disability to ensure they are not being disadvantaged.

The use of school data analysis systems allows us to investigate any possible differences in any sub-group of pupils within the school and formulate changes to the school procedures as necessary. This can also take the form of positive discrimination.

Personalised Learning

The development of personalised curriculum monitoring and assessment enables the school to ensure any group or individual is not discriminated against. The progress of all pupils is monitored carefully, and additional support and input is put into place for anyone who needs it. Such additional support is monitored for its impact on progress. This is evidenced through One Plan reviews, Occupational Health Therapist (OT) reports, Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) reports, formal assessment and specialist assessments.

Please see Appendix for a map of how the delivery of our curriculum is differentiated to accommodate a range of learning styles.

Physical Environment

The use of the physical environment is identified on the school development plan. At Clarity, the physical environment reflects the needs of the pupils with smaller classrooms each with their own breakout rooms where pupils can work in a separate space to support learning or as a safe sensory space to regulate themselves. Pupils have access to ergonomically safe equipment to promote good physical health. Pupils with mobility issues are supported with access ramps and the use of large bathroom facilities. All pupils have access to various sensory resources whenever they need them to support their physical and emotional needs. All new buildings will conform to necessary DDA requirements.

Eliminating Harassment

This school will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment. Pupils are encouraged to treat each other with respect and consideration regardless of race, gender, sexuality or disability. Harassment/bullying of any member of the school community is not tolerated and pupils are encouraged to discuss any incidents immediately. Steps to aid positive relationships are integral part of the day to day work within this school and form part of discussions regularly. Any harassment should be reported to staff.

Harassment/bullying of any member of the school community including staff and visitors to the school is totally unacceptable and must not be permitted or condoned. Any recipient of harassment has the right to complain about it. Staff grievances and complaints should be raised swiftly after the event so that evidence can be examined. Any harassment towards staff or visitors to the school should be reported to the Head Teacher.

Promoting Positive Attitudes Towards Disabled People

It is a major part of the ethos of the school that positive self-image is encouraged for all. The school's behaviour curriculum is based on the principles and ethos of the Therapeutic Thinking approach. This emphasises the importance of promoting positive experiences for all pupils. Personal, social and emotional aspects of education, promoting positive values, self-confidence and self-esteem is an integral part of daily routine. The curriculum also promotes tolerance and understanding of diversity in the school and wider society. Pupils' achievements are celebrated to promote positive attitudes to self and others.

Encouraging Disabled People's Participation in Public Life

The views of pupils are always gathered. Steps to take into account people's disabilities will be taken wherever this is reasonable, and adjustments will be made accordingly for staff or pupils, for example the use of assisted technology such as iPads to aid communication for those pupils with limited verbal language. This will be part of the action plan regarding the implementation of any specific steps for individuals as and when they occur. This will be on



an individual basis and be part of any personalised learning programme for pupils and personalised working practice regime for individual members of staff.

Publications

A list of policies is published on the school website. Copies of the policy are available from the school office for those who request one.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Risk Assessment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Equality Policy
- Exam Management Policy
- SEND Policy and SEND Report
- Complaints Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- School Development Plan
- Accessibility Plan
- Accessibility Audit
- Asthma Policy

Reviewing and Revising the Policy

The policy will be reviewed within the school processes for self-evaluation. Any recognised need to make reasonable adjustments will be made to the school's practice, procedures, grounds, resources, staffing as appropriate.

Overall responsibility for Accessibility in **Clarity Independent School** rests with the Head Teacher: Debbie Hanson, Head Teacher

Appendix 1: How the delivery of our curriculum is differentiated to accommodate a wide range of learning styles.



Unique approaches to curriculum delivery



The approaches we use to deliver our curriculum broadly fit into the following 5 areas, although curriculum delivery is also differentiated within these areas, to ensure children receive the best education to meet *their* potential. Pupils may require increased focus of one or more of the key approaches below and each individual student's needs will be reviewed regularly. Ongoing adjustments will be made as the children develop and needs change.

Sensory



A calming environment is created, based around the child's individual sensory needs or sensitivities they may have. Working with advice from Occupational Therapists, resources and equipment are sourced to accommodate individual needs. Lesson activities allow more / different handling of physical materials to demonstrate pictorial or conceptual ideas. Activities may involve more / different hands-on approaches, enhance sensory experiences through listening, tasting, touching, more visual learning etc. This approach may be suitable to support students with, for example, sensory processing disorder by:

- Enhancing their learning through sensory activity
- Raising their tolerance levels to difference senses
- Promoting their well-being
- Encouraging them to explore new information
- Promoting a more holistic understanding



Clarity SEN Consultancy Ltd. Company Number: 11567895 DfE Number: 881/6073. URN: 146 804
 Bridge Farm Barn (Opposite Mayes Lane), Woodhill Road, Sandon, CM2 7SG Tel: 01245 408 606
 Email: admin@clarity.essex.sch.uk Web: www.clarity.essex.sch.uk

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Nurture

We provide an increased nurturing environment, focusing on support, encouragement and gentle instruction. We deliver strategic and specific praise for small steps to support developing confidence and self-esteem coupled with counselling / mentoring. This approach may be suitable to support students struggling with, for example, mental health difficulties or reduced self-esteem to:

- ☐ Raise their belief that they are valuable, special, unique and that they belong ☐
- ☐ Challenge negative self-talk and ideas ☐
- ☐ Reduce their anxieties ☐
- ☐ Teach self-regulation and how to feel calm ☐
- ☐ Experience lower stress and have a mind that is engaged and ready to learn ☐



Focus

Our focus approach is specially designed to build skills to sustain attention and equip all students with techniques and knowledge to better manage tasks as well as themselves. Class position, peer groups, stimuli, resources and exercises help children who may be struggling with, for example, ADHD to have greater:

- ☐ Attention and sustaining focus on tasks ☐
- ☐ Self-control ☐
- ☐ Self-regulation ☐
- ☐ Anger management ☐
- ☐ Resisting impulsivity ☐
- ☐ Energy release, deep pressure, push pull activities and exercise ☐



Communication and Language

The communication and language approach focuses on language, body language and conversation skills, comprehension and inference. Students who may be struggling with, for example, autism or speech and language difficulties etc. They are supported with speech and language therapy where appropriate, and other activities such as role-play and researched programmes e.g.:

- ☐ Self-regulation Programme of Awareness and Resilience in Kids (SPARK)
- ☐ Conversation strategies, Talk Boost and Talk for Teenagers.
- ☐ Early language and communication project 2017 for developing language skills through comprehension
- ☐ The Inference Training Programme for comprehension skills



Coordination

This group focuses on coordination, body control, tactile learning and using more physical resources. Working with advice from Occupational Therapists, pupils will develop skills to help them to focus on different tasks, to adapt to new information as well as organizing their work processes and themselves. Students will be taught through a variety of ways, such as:

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- Tactile learning, lots of physical resources ?
- More physical equipment provided ?
- Big-picture work ?
- Large scale (and outside) learning using physical learning and kinaesthetic approaches ?

Many of our children benefit from a combined provision, using several of the approaches above therapeutically.

Our Therapy Offer

At Clarity, we support our academic curriculum through a rich selection of therapies and interventions including:

- SALT therapy review every half term with a qualified Speech and Language Therapist to develop a programme of interventions to be delivered in school by the SENCO, keyworkers and teaching staff, as prescribed for timetabled intervention sessions, as well as being embedded into lessons and daily activities. Also, our SENDCO delivers Talk For Teenagers; a social communication programme.
- Well-being counselling / coaching once / twice weekly, individual / group sessions for as long as the child needs it, until they leave school.
- Occupational Therapy, half termly reviews with a qualified Sensory Integration Occupational Therapist. Therapeutic regulation strategies are delivered throughout lessons and activities during every school day, and individual OT targeted exercises are delivered weekly to specific pupils, by keyworkers and teaching staff in timetabled intervention sessions.
- Dyslexia tuition is delivered by a Dyslexia Specialist Teacher, through one to one or small group targeted intervention sessions.
- Swimming lessons are taught weekly during the summer term.
- Bushcraft is delivered by Essex Outdoors at Danbury Country Park fortnightly throughout the year, and exciting outdoor activities, such as Archery, High Ropes, Rock Climbing or Zip Wire on the fortnights in between.
- Individual guitar lessons are supplied by Essex Music Services weekly, and are also part of our offer to every child attending Clarity. Children also have the included option of learning piano or drums.
- Football coaching is delivered weekly by Chelmsford City Football Club (CCFC).
- CCFC also blend this physical training into special nutrition classes, teaching children to balance healthy eating with physical exercise to become healthy, successful citizens.
- We also believe that giving the children plenty of opportunity for frequent, fun, educational trips is an essential part of their social emotional development, and as such are included as part of our all-inclusive offer.