



**Ark Pioneer  
Academy**

## **Accessibility Plan (Policy)**

**2022-23**

## PURPOSE

This policy sets out how we will provide a fully accessible environment and curriculum for our pupils and wider community.

|                      |   |                    |                 |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| Date of last review: | August 2022   | Author:            | Principal       |
| Date of next review: | August 2023   | Owner:             | Head of Estates |
| Type of policy:      | <input type="checkbox"/> Network-wide<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school | Approval:          | Management Team |
| School:              | Ark Pioneer Academy   | Key Contact Name:  | Governance Team |
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## ARK MODEL

| Component  | Element            |
|--|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Leadership & Planning<br><input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, Reporting & Data<br><input type="checkbox"/> Governance & Accountabilities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Teaching & Learning<br><input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum & Assessment<br><input type="checkbox"/> Culture, Ethos & Wellbeing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Pathways & Enrichment<br><input type="checkbox"/> Parents & Community<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance, IT & Estates<br><input type="checkbox"/> Our People | Audit & Compliance |

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## 1. Introduction

Ark Pioneer Academy is committed to providing curriculum provision and a school environment that is accessible to all children, enabling them to achieve their very best. Our goal is to remove all barriers so that every child can enjoy and benefit from the full breadth of the opportunities our school provides.

This includes the removal of barriers for any person with difficulty/difficulties in:

- Physical co-ordination
- Mobility
- Sensory difficulty
- Ability to lift, carry or move heavy objects
- Continence
- Speech, hearing or vision impairment
- Memory or ability to learn, concentrate or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger

Alongside this, we are fully committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion within our school.

Overall, the Accessibility Policy contains our actions to:

- Ensure access to the physical environment of the school meet the requirements of all pupils, staff and parents, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Ensure our curriculum is accessible to all of our pupils including those with a disability – we are committed to expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in our enrichment programme or school trips. It also includes the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
- Ensure the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities is clear and accessible.

An Action Plan relating to the three key aspects of accessibility is included below. This plans will be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis and or when appropriate. A new Accessibility Plan will be drawn up every three years. We acknowledge that it is necessary to raise awareness of issues related to accessibility and to provide appropriate training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination.

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

- Academy Improvement Plan
- Behaviour Policy
- Coping with a school Emergency Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Equality Policy
- Lettings Policy & Community Use Agreement
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEN Policy
- SEN Information Report
- Teaching and Learning Policy

## 2. Definition of Disability

According to the Equality Act 2010, a person is a disabled person if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has '*a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*'. A person may not have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment, it is only the effect that is relevant.

- a. Physical impairment may include:-
  - a. Arthritis
  - b. Asthma
  - c. Blindness or sight impairment (not corrected by glasses/lenses)
  - d. Cancer, from the point of diagnosis
  - e. Diabetes
  - f. Epilepsy
  - g. Hearing impairment
  - h. HIV, from the point of diagnosis
  - i. Loss of limbs or limited use of limbs
  - j. Mobility or co-ordination impairment
  - k. Multiple sclerosis, from the point of diagnosis
  - l. Speech impairment

Note: Severe disfigurement, such as scarring, is included in the definition if there is any long term adverse effect described above, even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement

- b. Mental impairment may include:-
  - a. Autism
  - b. Depression
  - c. Down's syndrome
  - d. Dyslexia
  - e. Schizophrenia

There are a number of 'tests' applied when deciding if the characteristic of disability is appropriate:

- Does the effect of the impairment make it more difficult and/or time-consuming for a person to carry out an activity, compared to someone who does not have the impairment, causing more than minor or trivial inconvenience?
- Are the activities referenced above 'normal day-to-day activities' at work or at home?
- Has the condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication or the effect of aids, assistance or adaptations such as wheelchairs, walking sticks, assistance dogs or software? The exception here is sight impairment, where the effect of glasses/lenses is taken into account.

## Definition of Special Education Needs

- A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- A child or young person has a learning difficulty if they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children and young people of the same age.
- Many, although not all, disabled children have difficulty accessing education and may have a special educational need requiring particular provision to support them.

### **3. Our Physical Environment**

We are incredibly lucky to have a brand new state of the art building to house our school.

Ark Pioneer Academy buildings are all DDA compliant with accessibility for all users, having space in which people can easily move, interact and use the physical features.

#### **External spaces:**

- School entrance for has step-free access and an automatic pedestrian gate for visitors
- Disabled parking spaces on site will be kept free for genuine need
- The school has an accessible entrance foyer with a disabled user operated button for the doors
- Our playground and all external facilities are entirely accessible by a wheelchair due to ramps and paths
- There are two water fountains located outside

#### **Shared internal spaces:**

- There is access to seating in the reception foyer and an accessible toilet
- There are accessible toilets on every floor of the building and in the gym area there is an additional specialist shower facility and disabled toilet
- All floors are accessible by lift
- There are three water fountains spaces throughout the ground floor
- Signage around the school adheres to current Health and Safety regulations
- Lighting is suitable for purpose in all rooms with blinds in most rooms to allow for adjustable lighting

#### **Classrooms:**

- All rooms will be kept clutter free, floor space will be clear to enable access and manoeuvrability
- There adjustable height tables to allow comfort and space in classroom different settings
- Toilet facilities are available close to each classroom, with signage is in place to signpost users

#### **Addressing issues arising in the physical environment:**

- The evacuation procedures are displayed around the school; pupils will be trained on routines for a fire drill in the first half term and there will be a fire drill every term
- Staff will be briefed on procedures for lockdown annually
- There is a high staff to pupil ratio to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities under an emergency evacuation
- The premises team will monitor the general internal condition of the school on a daily basis, also monitoring Health and Safety issues and completing statutory building checks
- The school staff note will any maintenance items via request on the Ark Pioneer premises request sheet - these are attended to promptly and contractors are brought in for issues not within the remit of the premises team
- The school is aware of the affect that noises e.g. lights buzzing, can affect the ability of the children to work and concentrate - this is kept to a minimum and the premises staff undertake repairs as soon as possible
- There is a schedule of regular evaluation of the school site for accessibility
- In addition we will do an evaluation of the physical environment of the school on an annual basis (Principal & Site team)

## 4. Our Curriculum Provision & Quality of Teaching

At Ark Pioneer Academy, we have high expectations of all pupils and high aspirations for their achievement in education and their life after school. Our pupils will study a traditional curriculum with an academic focus from Key Stage 3 through to our Sixth Form offer. We believe this will provide pupils with a solid foundation for further education, empowering them to follow the career path of their choice and giving them a real chance to go to university. We will provide any additional specialist provision necessary to enable all pupils with learning difficulties to access our curriculum and to support their educational development.

- Our teachers work closely with the SENCO and pupils support team to ensure that pupils are enabled to access all curriculum opportunities
- We commit extra curriculum time to English and mathematics in every year group, allowing our pupils to quickly develop literacy and numeracy skills to a very high level and increasing their chances of being successful
- Pupils who enter at below average levels of attainment are supported to catch up, so they can access, and be successful in, our curriculum
- All pupils take part in music, drama and physical activities as part of the access to the curriculum – staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by our pupils to use equipment in practical sessions
- Our pupils have access to chromebooks in lesson where needed
- School trips are accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment
- Special considerations are put in place for pupils taking part in tests e.g. rest breaks, a word processor, an adult reader, an oral language modifier or a scribe, as appropriate

For further detail on our curriculum offer, see the Ark Pioneer '*Curriculum Policy*'.

Ark Pioneer teachers and support staff are flexible, adapting their teaching approaches to enable all of our pupils to learn effectively in their classrooms.

- Teachers have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils through our Staff Induction programme, termly INSET days, network training days, individual courses and our weekly CPD programme
- Teachers constantly seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation, including presenting work in different ways using a variety of equipment
- Teachers enable the pupils to show their interest, knowledge and skills through the most appropriate means
- Visual timetables are created where appropriate to ensure pupils are aware of the routines required throughout the day
- Our Self-Discipline pillar focusses on developing a calm, focussed learning environment where pupils are explicitly taught key routines needed through the day
- Detailed pupil information is given to all relevant staff to support planning
- Teachers feed into the review of targets for inclusion on pupils' profiles, pupil passports and support plans

For further detail on our curriculum offer, see the Ark Pioneer '*Teaching & Learning Policy*'

## **5. Community Access**

Ark Pioneer Academy also hires the facilities to non-educational and community bodies. This is an important income stream and provides a strong link with the local community.

As a new build school, we comply with all of the regulations relating to the provision of non-educational services to the public by providing access to all users.

The provision of non-educational services may include activities such as:

- Governors meetings
- Services offered to parents, such as meetings to present the annual report, admission and exclusion hearings or appeals
- Use of school sports facilities by the local community
- Use of school accommodation or classroom spaces by members of the public
- After school clubs or activity clubs run by private hirers

For further detail, see '*Ark Pioneer Lettings Policy*' & '*Ark Pioneer Community Use Agreement*'.



## 6. Future Adjustments

The *Equality Act* states that schools are not expected to change their premises, but they are expected to make long-term proactive plans for improving access to their buildings.

Ark Pioneer Academy continues to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that disabled pupils, parents or visitors attending the school are not discriminated against. Making reasonable adjustments includes:

- Changes to school practices or procedures
- Changes to physical features of the building and or addition of
- Provision of extra support and aids, including as specialist teachers and/or equipment
- Changes to how learners are assessed

Appendix 1 shows our current *Accessibility Plan* focussed on three key objectives for the coming year.

We will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this plan on a regular basis. As part of this monitoring process, we will review whether Ark Pioneer's education provision and other services are both accessible and effective. In each case, we will take appropriate action to improve the provision and overall accessibility.

Appendix 1: Accessibility Plan 2022-23

| Target  | Action   | Who                                     | Timescale  | Monitoring/<br>Review   | Comments |
|---|--|---|--|---|----------|
| <p><b>New staff joining in our fourth year, pupils and parents have a clear understanding of our Accessibility Policy and the legal obligations Ark Pioneer’s provision will meet</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility arrangements will be discussed with individual families during their secondary transition visit/call by Principal/senior staff</li> <li>• Accessibility Policy posted on the website for all parents and pupils</li> <li>• Accessibility training will be provided to all staff during their induction</li> <li>• Specific training provided to team members supporting with toileting, physio, specific medical needs (including for example epilepsy, allergies and diabetes support)</li> <li>• Clear, up-to-date information about pupils with disabilities to be shared with all staff during staff induction regarding appropriate support and/or necessary access arrangements provided including use of hoist, walking frame &amp; physiotherapy</li> </ul> | <p>SLT</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>SENCo</p>      | <p>Summer Term 2022</p> <p>Sept 2022</p> <p>Oct 2022</p> <p>On-going</p> | <p>Feedback from Home Visits shared with SLT &amp; staff</p> <p>Monitor any questions to <a href="mailto:info@arkpioneer.org">info@arkpioneer.org</a></p> <p>Staff training feedback survey</p> |          |
| <p><b>Any pupils, staff and community users with a disability can access our premises</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual audit of school premises and environment conducted, taking into account the specific needs of all current pupils and users of the building and considering the needs of prospective pupils or users of the building</li> <li>• Lift key provided &amp; chaperone where any visitor (e.g. to open event) can access the building fully</li> <li>• Plans in place for any new pupils joining in 23 to ensure school is accessible eg microphone provision</li> </ul>   | <p>Premises Manager &amp; Principal</p> | <p>Autumn Term 2022 &amp; March 2023</p>                                 | <p>Environmental Audit saved on SP; Issues flagged to RD</p>  |          |
| <p><b>All written information shared by Ark Pioneer is accessible</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signpost on website and in school that all school publications are available in other formats</li> <li>• Weekly emails to parents also saved on website for future access; checks with parents regarding accessibility</li> <li>• As publications arise, ensure they are available in different formats for those that require it</li> <li>• Sign language interpreter provided for any deaf visitors to school</li> </ul>  | <p>Principal &amp; EA</p>               | <p>On-going</p>  | <p>Review with senior team, EA &amp; HoY termly</p>   |          |

