

Stepping Stones School Policy

At Stepping Stones we believe in providing students with a caring, fun environment where they can truly benefit from a bespoke curriculum, technologically innovative teaching practices and the chance to grow and develop into confident, independent young men and women.

Policy Title	Accessibility Policy
First Published	May 2004
Last Date of Review	July 2018
Next Review by Date	August 2021
Reviewed By	Headteacher
For publication on website	Yes / No

Rationale

Our definition of access: There are many practical and theoretical barriers to free access to any service. We believe that all children have a fundamental right to enjoy the service we provide. Access is made possible when physical, social, financial, psychological and emotional barriers are removed.

Our Commitment to Accessibility

Our commitment to accessibility extends beyond our potential student base to embrace staff, volunteers, parents, visitors and work experience candidates. It is a fundamental principle that all people are welcome and are valued regardless of their gender, age, disability, ethnic origin, language, religion or sexual orientation. We seek to build accessibility into everything we do to develop and improve our service. Staff training will include work on such development, so that no-one coming into contact with Stepping Stones feels in any way marginalised or isolated.

To eliminate barriers and ensure equality of access we will consider the following issues of accessibility:-

- **Physical** – to enable those with disabilities to reach every part of our buildings, through the provision of ramps and stairlifts where appropriate. At least one toilet and one shower will be accessible to wheelchair users, such areas being equipped with emergency alarms.
- **Sensory**- to enable those with a visual or a hearing impairment to benefit fully from our educational service. Particular attention is paid to lighting and to signage; many staff have experience with radio hearing aids and hearing loops. We also recognise that many children and adults have communication difficulties; we seek to provide an environment and an expertise which enable people to express themselves fully. Where possible Soundfield infrastructure is in place.
- **Intellectual**- intrinsic to our educational philosophy is our awareness that people learn at different speeds and in different ways, responding to a range of teaching styles. Access to our curriculum is open; all students will be fully assessed and physical and other adjustments made to our provision in the light of that individual assessment.
- **Cultural**- to consider the needs of people for whom English is not the first language.
- **Emotional/attitudinal** – Stepping Stones will offer a welcoming, nurturing environment, which will be predicated on the notion that all people have self-worth and are valued.
- **Financial**- no student will be denied access to our educational services and our extra-curricular activities due to financial pressures.

School Buildings

Our premises, a former United Reform church in Tower Road and the Undershaw site, are both listed buildings. There are some limitations, therefore, on architectural and structural changes which we can make. The installation, for instance, of a vertical lift, was not possible in Tower Road, but our upper floors may be accessed by platform stair lifts. Undershaw site has access to all floors with a vertical

lift. All doorways are wide enough for easy wheelchair access and walking frames for those making use of this type of movement equipment.

We have facilities for nursing mothers and separate toilet facilities for adults and students.

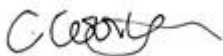
Staff have work and leisure accommodation. All staff have access to the internet and a PC (laptop or desktop). All students are provided with access to laptops therefore giving maximum access to the taught curriculum.

Recruitment Procedures

We actively seek to recruit people with disabilities and special educational needs; appropriately qualified candidates for advertised positions who fall into these categories will always be interviewed. All our recruitment takes place without discrimination of any sort and is based on statutory policies.

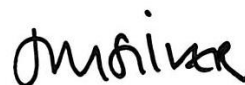
We will evaluate all our services and projects to ensure they meet our broad objectives and we will consult users and non-users on all new developments.

Claire Cookson
Chair of Governors



Date 1st September 2020

Jacqueline Silver
Headteacher



Date 1st September 2020

This policy will be reviewed annually