WALTON HALL ACADEMY

Disability Equality Scheme

and

Diversity Policy

2015-2018

WALTON HALL ACADEMY

Shaw Education Trust
We believe, you achieve
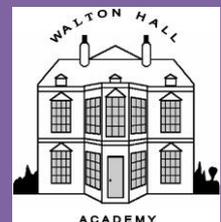
1A: The purpose and direction of the academy's plan: vision and values

Context

The legal and local framework for this policy is:
• Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended in 2000)
• Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended in 2005)
 • Children Act 2004
 • Equality Act 2010
• Education and Inspections Act 2006
 • Duty to Promote Community Cohesion, Education and Inspections Act 2006

Vision and values

(1) As an Academy

The Walton Hall statement of vision and values sets purpose and direction for the plan and provides a framework for evaluation.

Walton Hall Academy is part of the Shaw Education Trust, Multi Academy Trust along with Blackfriars Academy, in Newcastle under Lyme and The Coppice Academy, Newcastle under Lyme.

Walton Hall Academy is located on the outskirts of the picturesque rural village of Eccleshall. The Academy has numerous acres of grounds, a mixture of well-maintained old and new buildings dating from to present day. The academy offers Education for day students and also some residential places. Students are aged 11 years to 19years (Ks3 – Ks5). We are a generic special academy with provision for students with moderate to complex learning needs, autism, behaviour and emotional difficulties. All students within the academy have a Statement of Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan which details their individual needs. Staff are skilled in providing an appropriate programme of study integrated with any additional needs such as sensory; medical and physical needs.

The wider community is as an integral part of curriculum planning for all students. Walton Hall Academy is part of a Multi Academy Trust along with The Coppice Academy and Blackfriars Academy. We work under the umbrella of The Shaw Education Trust and closely with all its feeder schools, local FE colleges, other secondary schools and local employers.

Students will be allocated to a class based on age; ability; need and emotional needs. Each class has a teacher who has a pastoral role and they are supported by a teaching assistant. Where individual needs are more complex additional support would be allocated.

As part of the transition process parents and carers will be given an opportunity to meet staff who will be supporting their son or daughter.

The academy is effectively supported and monitored by the Academy Council whose members are drawn from a wide range of interests and services including the commercial sector, parents and staff. The Academy Council meets bi-annually and academy specific management boards meet termly. The Chair of the Academy council along with the Chief Executive Officer have representation on the Shaw Trust Board.

The academy is monitored by HMI Ofsted Inspectors. In house data and monitoring systems ensure we are providing a challenging education system for all students. This is shared with parents on a regular basis.

Our school ethos states: Walton Hall Academy is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. Our broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all pupils to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors, stakeholders and members of the wider community

(2) As a place of employment

As a place of employment Walton Hall Academy will strive to meet the needs of all employees and to support their full inclusion into the workplace. Reasonable adjustments will be made when accessibility needs are identified through an audit. Walton Hall Academy also provides tailored work related learning experiences for some of its students.

(3) As a community resource

As an academy we strive to provide a community resource that is completely accessible to all our stakeholders.

(4) Purpose

The purpose of the Walton Hall Academy disability equality scheme and accessibility plan will be to assess and evaluate present provision. The resulting information gained through audit will facilitate the removal of all barriers.

(5) Wider community

Walton Hall Academy works hard to ensure that our students can, with the support of the academy, access the wider community for work experience placements, vocational learning opportunities, visits etc.

1B: Information from student data and academy audit

(1) Key starting points for the Walton Hall Academy plan has been the assessment of:

- The nature of the academy's community:
- An audit of students, staff, parents/carers, MAT Academy Council and other relevant stakeholders as appropriate.

Ongoing internal work and improvements across the academy ensures that all corridors and floors are non-slip and level, ensuring safety for all but in particular those will mobility and sensory difficulties. A significant amount of work has been undertaken and mobility difficulties can now be accommodated across the academy site. However, due to the 'listed status' of some of our buildings it is more difficult to make all areas accessible to everyone. Where this is the case, every reasonable adjustment has been made to address the accessibility issues i.e. ramps, alternative points of entry, widened pathways etc.
The Action Plan reflects further improvements identified within the SIP.

(3) The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) amended in September 2002 to extend to every aspect of education. The SEN and Disability Act 2002(SENDA) makes discrimination against disabled individuals unlawful in respect of their access to education.

For the purpose of this act an individual with a disability is:
One who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (at least12 months) adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. The Act uses a wide definition of disability and may include those with;
- Physical or mobility impairment
- Visual impairments
- Hearing impairments
- Developmental difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autistic
- spectrum disorders
- Medical conditions
- Mental health difficulties.

The Act makes it unlawful for the Academy Council to discriminate against a student with a disability. Discrimination can take place in two ways: treating a student **less favourably** for a reason relating to its disability and/or failing to **make reasonable adjustments** to ensure disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

The Act applies to all activities/facilities provided for students and is anticipatory. It covers education and associated services such as
- Preparation for entry into the academy
- The curriculum and teaching and learning
- Classroom organization and timetabling
- Groupings of students
- Homework and access to academy facilities
- Enrichment activities to supplement the curriculum, including
- residential activities
- Academy policies
- Breaks and lunchtimes and interactions with peers
- Assessment and exam arrangements
- Academy discipline and sanctions and exclusion procedures
- Academy arrangements for working with other agencies
- Preparation of students for transition to the next phase of education.

This list is not definitive. Governors are expected to meet all challenges as they become apparent. Staff at Walton Hall Academy are highly experienced and motivated to provide quality education for all our students. Continuing Professional Development plays a role in ensuring that all staff are given the opportunity to gain ongoing knowledge and expertise relating to disability issues and their duty to provide reasonable adjustments.

The physical environment of the academy enables those with a physical disability to access the majority of all of the site, but as previously stated due to the 'listed status' of some of our buildings it is more difficult to make all areas accessible to everyone. Where this is the case, every reasonable adjustment has been made to address the accessibility issue i.e. ramps, alternative points of entry, widened pathways etc. Further developments will be highlighted in the Accessibility Action Plan.

The curriculum of Walton Hall Academy is developed to enable those with a disability to access all areas of the curriculum. Further developments will be highlighted in the accessibility action plan. All Walton Hall Academy policies, practices and procedures relating to anti-bullying and harassment, enrichment activities, timetabling, personal care procedures and administration are developed, written and evaluated with regard to the special needs of the students and other stakeholders.

Information about Walton Hall Academy is provided in a written format via the academy brochure, newsletters and student reports. Information is also available on the academy website. Alternative formats are available on request e.g. audio; symbol, translations.

Walton Hall Academy Improvement Plan is a working document in which we strive to meet the needs of our present and future stakeholders. Relevant sections will be included in the accessibility action plan.

1C: Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

Walton Hall Academy Disability Equality and Accessibility Plan have been informed by the involvement of and consultation with:

- Students via our Student Voice group which has representation from each class in the academy
- Parents/carers
- Staff
- Governors
- External partners including SaLT, Local authority, physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Academy Nurse and Careers Service.

2. Developing the DES/AP

2A: Increasing the extent to which Walton Academy students can participate in the academy curriculum.

This consultation looked to evaluate:

- The impact the delivered curriculum has upon students with disabilities.
- The effectiveness of short term planning in identifying the range of reasonable adjustments being made
- The appropriate deployment of adult and peer support
- How the curriculum supports awareness of and positive attitudes towards, disability.
- Effective access to specialist advice and support.

This information has been used to develop the three year rolling programme which will be updated regularly.

At Walton Hall we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

We aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and achieve
- provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;
- prepare children for life in a diverse society in which children are able to see their
- place in the local, regional, national and international community;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age;
- plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity;

- actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
- make inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.

To achieve these aims we will:
- involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
- publish and share our policies and impact assessments with the whole community;
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to pupils' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity;
- have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others.

2B: Improving the physical environment of Walton Hall Academy.

Attention was paid to:
- Safety of all entrances
- Improvements to lighting, signage, colour contrast, the acoustic environment, floor coverings.
- Improvements to toilets and changing room facilities
- Changes to the layout of the playground and other common areas
- The provision of particular furniture, ramps and equipment to improve access.

2C: Improving the delivery to disabled stakeholders of information that is provided in writing.

Attention was paid to:
- handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, academy websites, letters, brochure, information about academy events etc., through the use of large print, in simplified language, audio-tape, CD and DVD access, sign language, symbol system, read aloud software etc. other formats will be made available on request

Identifying the appropriate format must take account of:
- The impairments: increasing access to information may be improved for particular groups of students by particular approaches.
- Preferences expressed by students or their parents/carers.

This information has been used to develop the three year rolling programme which will be regularly updated.

3. Making it happen

3A: Management, coordination and implementation.

Leadership, Management and Governance

Walton Hall Academy is committed to:
- being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity across all aspects of school life and the wider community;

- encouraging, supporting and enabling all pupils and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution;
- working in partnership with families, the local authority (LA) and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination ensuring that our **Equality and Diversity Policy** is followed.

Responsibilities

The Academy Council: It is the responsibility of the Academy Council to:
- ensure that the academy complies with equality legislation;
- meet requirements to publish equality schemes;
- ensure that the policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans;
- scrutinize the recording and reporting procedures at least annually;
- follow the LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups;
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary;
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Academy Council ;
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats;
- to be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy;
- be pro-active in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups;

The Academy Principal

It is the responsibility of the Principal to:
- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development;
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with LA guidance;
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's equality and diversity policy;
- produce a report on progress for governors at timely intervals and at least annually;
- ensure target-setting processes identify appropriate, challenging targets set in relation to identifiable groups as well as individual pupils / cohorts.

All Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to:
- be vigilant in all areas of the academy for any type of harassment and bullying;
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences;
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the culture of the academy;
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age and sexual orientation;
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole academy ethos which reflects our diverse society;

- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

There will be a systematic review of the impact of all policies and procedures on equality and diversity to address any areas of inequality e.g.: achievement and attainment will be analysed to ensure progress for all, especially in relation to any identified disadvantaged groups; attendance and exclusion data will be reviewed to ensure no over-representation of any one group.)

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The progress of each student is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs, looked-after status.

In addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality assurance procedures ensure the school meets its duty to positively promote diversity. (e.g. lesson observations record evidence of differentiation and texts are reviewed to ensure appropriateness and inclusivity.)

The data collected is used to inform further academy planning, target-setting and decision-making.

Disability, Equality Scheme Action Plan of Walton Hall Academy will be reviewed and revised annually by SLT/ Middle Leaders and Staff members who will meet with representatives of the stakeholders.

Findings of the review will be presented to the Principal and Governors of Walton Hall Academy who will plan for any further reasonable adjustments.

3B: Publishing the Academy plan.

The updated Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan will be available to all stakeholders through the academy web site. Printed copies will be available to stakeholders upon request.

AMENDED MARCH 2017

RATIFIED BY ACADEMY COUNCIL…………………………….

DATE……………………………………………………………