



# Safe Start Accessibility Policy

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1	Introduction

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Safe Start aims to provide high quality play, youth and education facilities for children and young people in our City. We are committed to delivering accessible services in an environment that promotes a sense of community and provides young people with experiences that assist them in making positive life choices

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Safe Start has three key duties towards children with disabilities and young people under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat people with disabilities less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to plan to increase access to play and education for people/children with disabilities

This plan sets out the proposals of the Board of Trustees to promote access to education and play for children with disabilities and young people in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- promoting the extent to which children with disabilities can participate in the projects;
- improving the environment of our centres to increase the extent to which children with disabilities/young people can take advantage of play, education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to children with disabilities of information, which is provided in writing for people without a disability.

The overall objective of this policy is aimed at reducing and, where possible, eliminating any barriers to accessing and participating fully in the services provided by Safe Start.

## **Definition of Disability**

Disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010: "A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

# 2. PRINCIPLES OF THIS POLICY

Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with Safe Start aims and Equality Policy. Safe Start recognises its duty under the Equality Act 2010

- Not to discriminate against children and young people with disabilities in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of play, education and associated services
- Not to treat children and young people with disabilities less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting those with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage
- To publish an accessibility plan

Safe Start recognises and values parents'/carers' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents'/carers' and child's right to confidentiality. Safe Start provides all students attending SS School with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles.

### **3. KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

ALL staff and volunteers at Safe Start are required as part of this policy to:

- Foster confidence and independence for children/young people within a stimulating, secure and happy environment.
- Provide opportunities which allow the development of an individual's full intellectual, physical and emotional potential.
- Adapt activities to enable children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to take part
- Ensure that other staff are aware of each individual child's needs to give consistency of care
- Explore the provision of specialist equipment if this is required.
- Encourage children's confidence and independence
- Look at ways in which other children's awareness might be raised. For example, positive images of disabilities in books and toys.
- Consider any risks to individuals as outlined in the Safe Start's Health and Safety policy.

Safe Start acknowledge the need for ongoing awareness raising and training for staff and volunteers in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter. With this in mind the Board of Trustees will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of and receive suitable training to allow the effective implementation of this policy.

### **4. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

Safe Start will take account of the needs of service users and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishment of individual sites and facilities.

The physical environment includes things such as:

- steps,
- stairways,
- kerbs,
- exterior surfaces and paving,
- parking areas,
- building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes),
- internal and external doors,
- gates,
- toilets and washing facilities,
- lighting,
- ventilation,
- lifts,
- floor coverings,
- signs
- furniture.

Aids to physical access include:

- ramps,
- handrails,
- lifts,
- widened doorways,
- electromagnetic doors,
- adapted toilets and washing facilities,
- adjustable lighting,
- blinds,
- induction loops
- way-finding systems.

Physical aids to access education also cover things such as:

- ICT equipment,
- enlarged computer screens and keyboards,
- concept keyboards,
- switches,
- specialist desks and chairs
- portable aids for children with motor coordination and poor hand/eye skills, such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

## **5. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Special Needs provision is a very important aspect of our Independent School. At Safe Start we aim to ensure that individuals with special needs receive the appropriate support. If required additional funding will be sought to allow provision of additional Support Workers.

When a child is identified as having a special education need an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be drawn up, with the involvement of the home school, to target their learning. We aim to recognise the particular difficulties the child is experiencing and develop strategies, using the IEP, to help provide additional time and support.

Programmes of work are discussed for each individual on the SEN register and time set aside to work on their targets. This is overseen by the Curriculum Lead (Teaching & Curriculum) whose role it is to liaise with teachers, key workers and partner agencies to provide the time, resources and training necessary that ensures inclusion in classroom activities.

## **6. STAFF WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

It is highly likely that staff members will declare to an employer an additional need. For example, dyslexia, dyspraxia, visual, auditory or a physical need e.g. walking difficulty. SS will take an initial assessment and produce a plan which itemises agreed resources and/or working arrangements to support the employee to fulfil their working role as far as is reasonably practicable.