

## **Accessibility Policy and Plan Education My Life Matter CIC (EMLM) 2019**

**Policy agreed: October 2019 Review date: October 2020**

### **Vision Statement:**

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against learners because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education’s guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan must be reviewed every three years and approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Head at EMLM the Plan will form part of the Premises, Resources, Fund-Raising and Marketing section of the School Development Plan and will be monitored by the headteacher and evaluated by the relevant Governors’ committee. The current Plan will be appended to this document.

At EMLM we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all learners can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that learners should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

1) The EMLM Accessibility Plan has been developed and drawn up based upon information supplied by the Local Authority, and consultations with learners, carers / guardians, staff and governors of the school. Other, outside agencies and specialists have also been consulted. The document will be used to advise other school planning documents and policies and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes. The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three-year period ahead of the next review date.

2) The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school’s Equality Objectives and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school’s activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.

3) EMLM is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all learners, staff, carers/ guardians and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

4) EMLM Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled learners, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to: -

- Increase access to the curriculum for learners with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that learners with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied learners; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these learners in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;

- Improve the delivery of written information to learners, staff, carers/ guardians and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

5) EMLM Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information.

6) Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

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

- Asset Management Plan
- Behavior Management Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Critical Incident Support Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Equality Plan
- School Prospectus
- School Improvement Plan
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Staff Development Policy

8) The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the governing body. It may not be feasible to undertake all the works during the life of this accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

9) Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all governors' committees will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010.

10) The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

11) The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through the Governor Finance and Premises Committee

12) The school will work in partnership with the Local Authority in developing and implementing this Accessibility Plan.

13) The Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

Our Aims are:

- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment
- Improve the delivery of written information to learners and families

Our objectives are detailed in the Action Plan below

### 3. **Current good practice**

We aim to ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new carers/ guardians and carers. For carers/ guardians of learners already at the school, we collect information on disability as part of a survey of carers/ guardians' views, or in conjunction with a letter home about a carers/ guardians' evening.

#### *Physical Environment*

Disabled learners participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extra-curricular activities present particular challenges, for example: lunch and break times for learners with social/interaction impairments, after-school clubs for learners with physical impairments, school trips for learners with medical needs; There are some parts of the school to which disabled learners have limited or no access at the moment. The aim is to reduce this over the next three years, allowing for full access by 2022.

#### *Curriculum*

There are areas of the curriculum to which disabled learners have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for learners with a physical impairment, technology for learners with a visual impairment, some aspects of the curriculum for learners with learning difficulties. Other issues affect the participation of disabled learners, for example: bullying, peer relationships, policies on the administration of medicines, the provision of personal care, the presence or lack of role models or images of disabled people, in effect, all the school's policies and procedures, written and unwritten. Information

Different forms of communication are made available to enable all disabled learners to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is planned, with a range of different formats available for disabled learners, carers/ guardians and staff.

### 4. **Access Audit**

The school is a one storey building with wide corridors to the front and narrow corridors to the rear. There is a large open area for teaching and learning and group activities. The hall is on the is accessible to all.

On-site car parking for staff and visitor includes **2 dedicated disabled parking bays**. All entrances to the school are either flat or ramped and all have wide doors fitted. The main entrance features a secure lobby, this being fully accessible to wheelchair users. There are disabled toilet facilities available.

The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked, this includes refuge areas for wheelchair users.

### 5. **Management, coordination and implementation**

- We will consult with experts when new situations regarding learners with disabilities are experienced.
- The Governors and Senior Leadership Team will work closely with the Local Authority and Lewisham Virtual Schools

### 6. **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis with minor changes made as appropriate. A full review will be carried out every 2 years