

Review date: September 2020 Next review: August 2021

THE VILLAGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL, BELSIZE PARK

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY and ACTION PLAN

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

This Policy has been reviewed and approved by: Director of Operations

Review date: September 2020

Policy actioned from: September 2020 – August 2021

Next review date: August 2021

Please note: 'School' refers to The Village Preparatory School; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

Please note: This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Accessibility Planning Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Disability Policy.

Introduction

Accessibility planning is an integral part of the school's annual planning cycle. The section entitled SEN and Disability has replaced SENDA after the introduction of the *Equality Act 2010* and forms part of the whole school development plan while remaining as a permanent agenda item in the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) meetings, ensuring it is a focus of attention.

With effect from September 2019, the school's first three-year plan for accessibility will begin. The coherence of the plan and its influence upon other developments will be monitored by the SLT on an annual basis.

The Accessibility Plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duties within the *Equality Act 2010*, which replaced the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, as amended by the *SEN and Disability Act 2001* and 2005 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "*Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils*", issued by DfES in July 2002, on the HCC schools self-audit questionnaire of January 2002, on the guidance contained in *What Equality Law Means For You As An Education Provider: Schools What Equality Law Means For You As a Service Provider*, issued by the *Equality and Human Right Commission 2010* and on the guidance contained in *Equality Act 2010: What Do I Need to Know? Disability Quick Start Guide* published by the *Equality and Diversity Forum 2010*. This Plan will, over a prescribed period (within the school's three-year plan), aim to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can a) participate in the school's curriculum; b) take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school; and c) receive information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled. Adequate resources will be allocated for the implementation of this plan.

Definition of Disability

Disability is defined as follows by the *Equality Act 2010*:

A person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day- to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive Conditions Considered to be a Disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are Specifically Excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

Objective

To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

Principles

The school recognises its duties under the *Equality Act 2010*:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admission and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services;
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably;
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty) in matters of admission and education;
- To have and regularly to update an Accessibility Plan which meets the statutory requirements by being in writing and covering the three strands over time of:
 1. increased access to the curriculum for children with disabilities
 2. improvements to the physical environment to increase access to education and associated services at school
 3. improvements to the provision of information for disabled pupils where it is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on her ability to carry out normal activities and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles, and endorses the key principles, which underpin an inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Management

The Accessibility Plan is reviewed on an annual basis as part of the regular cycle of review.

The meetings of the school's SLT (Senior Leadership Team) monitor progress with regard to the plan.

In formulating the plan, the SLT may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

The SLT's terms of reference are:

- To review the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled;
- To make decisions with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects, to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities, by means of reasonable adjustments and to implement, evaluate, and continue to review the effectiveness of any measures taken;
- To continue to review the School's Disability Policy;
- To continue to review the School's Accessibility Action Plan.

Learning and Teaching

The school has:

- Appropriately trained SEND staff equipped to deal with the range of mild or moderate learning difficulties experienced by children who, with our support, can benefit from the curriculum we follow;
- a strong and successful record of supporting children with a range of SEND needs by planning with parents and children, seeking advice from appropriate professionals and training staff with regard to any child's specific needs;
- Students are assessed for SEND upon admission and other times when a need is identified.

The school has a procedure for dealing with accessibility in advance of a child's arrival or, in the case of the emergence of a disability, the following procedures are in place:

Pre-Admission

A lot of planning will take place before the child arrives at school. This will include:

- Information gathering from parents, the child's current school or nursery and relevant external agencies;
- Writing an individual accessibility plan tailored to the needs of the child. This will involve meeting with parents and meeting with the child to discuss their preferences. It may also involve meeting with external agencies who specialise in dealing with that particular disability, who can offer support to the school when planning the appropriate provision for the child;
- Providing adequate training for staff, who will be responsible for that child, so that they feel confident to carry out the care plan;
- Providing the correct resources for the child so that she has as much access to the curriculum as is reasonably practicable.

After Admission

- Managing and recording the pastoral care of the child through the school's pastoral system and fostering the child's social and emotional development, with appropriate documentation;
- Reviewing the care plan with the parents and child at appropriate intervals so that planning can be put in place for the following term;
- Communicating with future schools with regard to the child's needs.

If the onset of disability occurs during a child's time with us, all of the above will be put in place.

Training

The overall planning of staff training is undertaken by the SENDCO and the Head.

Training has been given to the whole staff (full-time and part-time) on SEND and Disability on a two-year cycle.

Training has been given on a whole staff basis with regard to learning styles, learning differences, learning difficulties and multi-sensory teaching over an extended period.

Training has been given on a 'need-to-know' basis with regard to e.g. epilepsy, anaphylaxis, colostomy management, cystic fibrosis and other conditions.

Training will continue to be tailored to provision for and understanding of specific conditions as appropriate.

Pastoral Care

The overall management of pastoral care is the responsibility of the Head, the Deputy Head, the Head of EYFS and Class Teachers. Pastoral Care is an agenda item at each meeting of the SLT and forms part of the annual development plan.

A Health and Safety Committee, comprising the Head, Bursar, Facilities Manager (or equivalent) and appropriate members of staff, meets termly to consider all matters of Health and Safety.

Arrangements for Health and Safety on trips and visits are scrutinised and approved by the Head.

Physical Environment

The Bursar is responsible for the school's physical environment, supported by the Facilities Manager and/ or Maintenance staff.

The school recognises that environmental adjustments cannot readily be made in response to the arrival of a child with a disability and that, therefore, longer-term planning is needed to ensure that environmental factors are improved including access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is where the Action Plan becomes a part of the policy.

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The plan below sets out the action Chatsworth Schools and The Village Prep School are taking as positive steps to promote equality and eradicate discrimination for all.

Disability Policy Review

The responsibility of review is the Senior Leadership Team consisting of: -

- The Head
- Deputy Head/ DSL
- Head of EYFS/ KS1
- SENDCO
- Bursar

The terms of reference are:

- to review the school's policies, procedures and facilities, as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled, and to prepare an audit of current provision;
- to make recommendations with a view to improving accessibility of the school's education to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities, by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future by preparing an Accessibility Plan;
- to review such plans and policies as necessary every three years;
- an audit of current provision.

Admissions

Admission to the school is on a non-selective basis. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with physical disabilities provided that our site can cope with them.

The school's policy is to enrol pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware.

The school asks parents if special needs should be taken into consideration. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as considered appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

The life of the school is enhanced by inclusive policies but equal importance must be given to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

Delivery of the Curriculum

INSET

We train teachers on developing inclusive training approaches towards teaching.

Classroom Arrangements

Freestanding tables and chairs in most classrooms mean that furniture could be rearranged easily to accommodate disabled students. Where appropriate for learning needs, the school encourages the use of freestanding laptops. The majority of rooms are fitted with blinds or curtains, which might

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be of benefit to students with visual impairment. Lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve, e.g. provision may be made for dyslexic and dyspraxic students to use laptops in lessons and for tests.

Delivering Material in other Formats

ICT and photocopying facilities are available to produce large print information.

In future, the school would consider installing a 'Loop System' for impaired hearing pupils. This will be within three months after the admission of a pupil with impaired hearing.

Visits

School visits are open to all, provided the appropriate medical practitioner declares any individual with a medical condition is well enough to travel. However, in the future, the school might need to consider the transport and accommodation needs of a wheelchair user.

Policies

Details of the Equal Opportunities policy, including disability, are published in the in the staff handbook.

School Design

Access to Buildings

Access for pupils with disabilities needs to be considered, along with the costs required for any changes that have to be made. These should be discussed in SLT meetings and become part of the Accessibility Plan.

Emergency Evacuation

Within the structure of the current premises, there are a number of modifications, which may be possible in order to increase accessibility for disabled pupils and parents.

- training of some staff to support disabled people.
- fire alarms and bells would need the addition of visible signals to meet the needs of any deaf pupils.

Interpretation

In this policy, the term "senior manager" means a School Head and his designated deputies.

This policy applies to all employees in all Schools (save for Schools with their own procedure which shall prevail) and other work environments within Chatsworth Schools

This policy applies within all companies, which are wholly owned subsidiaries of Chatsworth Schools Ltd, a company registered in England, registered number 11552579.

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The registered office of all companies is Crimea Office, The Great Tew Estate, Great Tew, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 4AH. Any enquiries regarding the application of this policy should be addressed to the Director of Operations at the above address.

Key Action Areas	Timescale
<p>Building Access: -</p>	
<p>Curriculum: -</p> <p>The school aims to employ a full-time support assistant in line with the recommendation of the EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)</p>	
<p>The school aims to improve communication between CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and CS by designating the appropriate person to attend case meetings of pupils.</p> <p>The school aims to further recognise diversity in our school culture by delivering tailored diversity events (such as assemblies and theme days, etc.) for under-represented groups within the school, so that all pupils feel valued and included in our school community.</p> <p>The school aims to continue to improve the way by which all pupils, including those that are disabled, participate in developing school policies, for example, reviewing the pupil representatives on the 'school council' at the end of each year.</p>	

Accessibility Plan 2019 – 2022 (Model)

A. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum

Target	Action	Person Responsible	Resources	Time frame	Outcomes to include monitoring arrangements and progress	Achieved
To manage the care of a child with Asperger's Syndrome	Liaise with parents and local authority to ensure successful EHCP (Education, Health, Care Plan) application.	SENDCO school nurse & Head of School	Use of 1:1 TA (Teaching Assistant) time SENDCO time	Reviewed termly	The child is able to cope independently with school life, both socially and also academically.	
To provide sloping boards to support pupils with poor muscle tone and upper body strength.	SEND department to assess long-term needs of children and provide boards where necessary	Facilities and Compliance Manager	Boards	Reviewed termly	Pupils have improved access to the curriculum	
To provide access to laptops to pupils who will benefit by having increased access to the curriculum	SEND department to assess long-term needs of children and provide laptops where necessary (or parents to purchase laptops). Run touch-typing lessons for children to learn to type at a suitable speed to	Head of ICT	Laptops Software for Touch Typing Dragon Dictate	Reviewed termly	Pupils with learning needs are able to demonstrate their understanding effectively. Pupils who need to use laptops are able to touch type at a speed that is faster than their writing speed.	

	enable them to use a laptop in lessons.					
To review the range of learning resources that is accessible for students with different disabilities.	Heads of Department to review resources in their curriculum areas collaborating with the Special Needs Co-ordinator	SENDCO & Heads of Department	Time/Training	Annual and as necessary for individual pupils	Students with disabilities have increased access to curriculum materials.	
To provide a Reader for tests where children have an identified phonological learning need.	SEND Co-ordinator and Director of Studies to plan for the availability of a Reader for tests where needed.	SENDCO & Director of Studies	Possible cost of TA / Intern time	Annual and as necessary for individual pupils	Students with phonological learning needs are able to access written tests and perform at the level of which they are capable	
To enable children with dyslexia or weak working memory to remember instructions and access the curriculum effectively	Teachers provide written instructions / hand-outs of information. Students permitted to take photographs of the whiteboard in lessons. Use predictive text programme to aid with typing on laptops. Provide access to laptops.	SENDCO, class teachers, TAs	Class teachers TAs, Software	Termly reviews of strategies for children	Students with dyslexia or weak working memory are supported to retain information and access the tasks in class independently.	

<p>To provide access to the curriculum for pupils diagnosed with Irlen's syndrome.</p>	<p>Internally assess children presenting with reading / tracking difficulties. Provide coloured overlays where needed. For severe difficulties, children will be referred on for prescription glasses.</p>	<p>SENDCO, school nurse & class teachers</p>	<p>Cost of one coloured overlay for each child who needs it.</p>	<p>Reviewed termly</p>	<p>Children with visual processing sensitivity are able to read more easily and without strain.</p>	
<p>To ensure that pupils with medical conditions that lead to a high level of absence from school can make good progress and can catch up.</p>	<p>Write care plans for pupils with severe medical conditions, such as severe asthma or ME, to include provision of catch-up work, where relevant, for absence or a reduced timetable. Liaise with outside agencies and parents to understand the provision needed.</p>	<p>SENDCO & Head of School</p>	<p>SENDCO time Leadership Team</p>	<p>Termly review of care plans</p>	<p>Children with medical needs are able to access the curriculum and make good progress despite absence from school.</p>	
<p>To enable children with learning needs to make good progress and attain in line with their underlying ability.</p>	<p>Provide individual lessons with specialised members of staff. Review the attainment for all SEND pupils. Provide</p>	<p>SENDCO, Head of Departments & class teachers</p>	<p>SENDCO time Leadership Team Dedicated INSET time</p>	<p>Termly progress reviews.</p>	<p>The progress across the curriculum of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently on the school roll</p>	

	group spelling support using individualised computer programmes. Provide group curriculum support				matches or is improving towards that of other pupils with the same starting points.	
For children with weak working memory to know and be able to use a range of strategies to support their working memory in a range of contexts.	Plan for the provision of group teaching of strategies to support children with weak working memory. Train all staff in the strategies being taught to children.	SENDCO, Head of Departments & class teachers	SENDCO time Leadership Team	Plan to include in budget 2018-19	Children with weak working memory know and use a range of strategies independently to help with their memory.	
To increase the confidence and skills of all staff in noticing and supporting pupils with learning needs	Develop a plan of training for all staff in supporting and noticing the needs of pupils with SEND.	SENDCO, Head of Departments & class teachers	SENDCO time Leadership Team	Annual review	Staff are confident to identify and support children with learning needs and disability.	
To liaise with external assessors to ensure that pupils are assessed where needed and that provision is made for exam access arrangements.	Arrange assessments. Ensure we have enough qualified assessors. Make provision for exam access arrangements, e.g. extra time, lap top use, readers.	SENDCO & Exams Officer	SENDCO Exams Officer	Termly Review	Pupils are able to access exams and teachers have the best understanding of how to support pupils with their learning.	



B. Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled:

Target	Action	Person Responsible	Resources	Time frame	Outcomes	Achieved
To review and adjust revision and curricular materials to improve the accessibility for all the children	Develop a responsive-web based version of revision materials that is accessible for all children. Maintain on-line revision materials while the development progresses.	SENDCO, Heads of Department & class teachers	Appoint a Director of Teaching & Learning with responsibility for this development		Responsive-Web based version of revision materials.	
To plan study skills evenings for parents of targeted year groups to help them understand our revision and study skills programme.	Director of Teaching & Learning to liaise with relevant teachers to plan event	SENDCO & Director of Teaching and Learning	Director of Teaching & Learning time		Successful events take place and become regular embedded events as part of school annual calendar.	
To provide information to parents about Special Needs provision.	Individual needs policy to be updated annually and to be kept on the school website	SENDCO	SENDCO	Annually	Up to date policy live on website	

<p>To provide information to parents about the external help available to them.</p>	<p>List available of Speech and Language Therapists, Sound Therapists, Optometrists, Audiologists, and Educational Psychologists.</p>	<p>SENDCO</p>	<p>SENDCO</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Parents have access to the information necessary to ensure full access to the curriculum for their children.</p>	
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C. Improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school:

Target	Action	Person Responsible	Resources	Time frame	Outcomes	Achieved
Example: Provide designated disabled parking	Incorporate into master plan redevelopment project	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Facilities and Compliance Manager to ensure correct ratio of disabled spaces are incorporated into the transport plan		Improve access to all school sites	
Provide designated disabled parking at all school sites	Allocate and demarcate from existing provision at both sites	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Bursar & Facilities Managers to establish		Improve access to Innes House and Temple site	
Improve signage	Install clear and, where needed, illuminated signage to identify school entrances and access route better	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Bursar & Facilities managers to establish		Clear signage directing pupils, staff and visitors around each site	

Reduce external trip hazards	Ensure external pathways and steps are accessible to all and hazards are clearly marked	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Bursar & Facilities managers to incorporate into weekly tours of inspection and rolling maintenance programme		Pathways and steps are free from hazards and maintained as part of routine maintenance programme	
Access ramps	Ensure all wheelchair access ramps are serviceable and meet the 1:15 gradient	Facilities and Compliance Manager	Bursar & Facilities Managers to assess and build into holiday works programme. Facilities and Compliance Manager to ensure new builds meet the requirement.		Access ramps are serviceable and compliant	
Differentiate doors and corridors	When re-decorating corridors and doors ensure high contrast between walls and doors to assist visually impaired	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Facilities Manager to incorporate into rolling maintenance programme and to ensure new buildings meet requirement		Doors and corridors easily differentiated	

Hearing induction loop	Install hearing induction loops at reception offices for hearing impaired	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Facilities and Compliance Manager to incorporate into master plan		Improve environment for hearing impaired visitors	
Stairs	Ensure all stair nosings are secure and hand rails are fitted where required	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Bursar & Facilities managers to incorporate into weekly tours of inspection and rolling maintenance programme		Minimise risk on stairs	
Disabled WC facilities	Ensure existing and future facilities meet DDA requirements	Facilities and Compliance Manager & Bursar	Facilities Manager to incorporate into rolling maintenance programme and to ensure new buildings meet requirement		To provide appropriate facilities for pupils, staff and visitors	

