



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY and ACTION PLAN

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

Policy and Plan template reviewed by: Jonathan Ritchie – Director of Estates and Facilities

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Reviewer's Signature:



Please note: 'School' refers to Chatsworth Schools; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.
This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Accessibility Policy and Action Plan

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

Accessibility Policy

Introduction

Accessibility planning is an integral part of the school's annual planning cycle. The Accessibility Plan, created in accordance with the planning duties of the Equality Act 2010 (as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and 2005 (SENDA)), 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.

Original legislation required the plan to cover a fixed 3-year period, as determined by the government. However, recent DfE guidance allows schools to choose any 3-year period. The school's plan covers the 3-year period as specified in its title. The school has adopted the format of planning for a rolling 3-year period; a new year is added at each annual review and the details of the completed year, annotated to record what has been achieved, are archived and made available on request to any appropriate inspection body. The coherence of the plan and its influence upon other developments is monitored by the SLT on an annual basis.

The Accessibility Plan draws on the guidance set out in:

- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- "What Equality Law Means For You As An Education Provider" (2014)
- "Equality Act 2010: What Do I Need to Know? Disability Quick Start Guide" (2011).

Over its 3-year period, the plan aims to:

- a) increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;
- b) improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school;
- c) improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Adequate resources will be allocated for the implementation of this plan.

Definitions of Disability and Special Educational Needs

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; for example it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task;
- '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.

The definition of Special Educational Needs in the Children and Families Act 2014 includes pupils with significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age, or a disability which means that a pupil cannot make full use of the general educational facilities provided for pupils of his or her age in mainstream schools. Not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa.

The SEND Code of Practice makes it clear that the definition of disability includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long term health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

Progressive Conditions Considered to be a Disability

A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. 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 of the Accessibility Policy and Plan

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, as noted in the introduction, above.

The SEND Code identifies a clear focus on the participation of children and young people and their parents in decision-making at individual and strategic levels. The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/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

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 in each of its educational settings each 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 admission or, in the case of the emergence of a disability, the following procedures are in place:

Pre-Admission

A lot of planning takes 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 and/or education 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 plan.
- Providing the correct resources for the child so that he/she has as much access to the curriculum as is reasonably practicable.

After Admission

Planning and undertakings will include:

- 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 plan with the parents and child and, where relevant external agencies, 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 SENCO and Head. Training is given to the whole staff (full-time and part-time) on SEND and Disability on at least a two-year cycle. Training is undertaken on a whole staff basis with regard to learning styles, learning differences, learning difficulties and multi-sensory teaching over an extended period.

Training is undertaken on a 'need-to-know' basis with regard to, for example, asthma, 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

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 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 and Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

Physical Environment

The Head has overall responsibility for the school's physical environment.

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.

The plan below sets out the action being taken by the school as positive steps to promote equality and eradicate discrimination for all.

Disability Policy Review

The responsibility of review is the Senior Leadership Team.

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 at least every three years.
- an audit of current provision

Admissions

Admission to the school is on a non-selective basis (no written assessments are taken). 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, provided that the school can accommodate their needs within the parameters of reasonable adjustments.

The school asks parents of prospective pupils 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

Through INSET, staff meetings and other initiatives, such as online learning, we train classroom staff on developing inclusive approaches towards teaching.

Classroom Arrangements

Freestanding tables and chairs in most classrooms mean that furniture can be rearranged easily to accommodate disabled students. Where appropriate for learning needs, the school encourages the use of laptops or other portable devices. The majority of rooms are fitted with blinds, which might be of benefit to students with visual impairment. Lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve. For example, provision may be made for dyslexic and dyspraxic students to use laptops in lessons and for tests. The school keeps detailed records of pupils' needs and the range of support provided, which it uses to make application for extra provision in public and formal examinations.

Delivering Material in other Formats

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

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, 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 staff handbook. This policy and plan should also be read in conjunction with the SEND and Inclusion Policy.

School Design: Access to Buildings

Reasonable adjustments have been made to all areas of the school, but some may well require further changes to accommodate individual new students – this will be assessed at the time of application.

Emergency Evacuation

If a pupil with a disability is admitted to the school, relevant staff will be provided with training to support the pupil's emergency evacuation. Within the structure of the current premises, a number of modifications may be possible in order to increase accessibility for disabled pupils and parents.

Should it be beneficial for a pupil with a disability, the school will create a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), consulting, as relevant, with the pupil's medical practitioner and the emergency services.

In planning for emergency evacuation, if appropriate, the school will consider, for example:

- equipping fire alarms and bells with additional visible signals to meet the needs of any deaf pupils.

- acquiring an 'evac-chair' or similar equipment to facilitate the emergency evacuation of a pupil with mobility difficulties.

Interpretation

In this policy, the term "senior manager" means the School Head and their 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.

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 Information at the above address.

Key Action Areas – Sample Document

The following table provides a summary of the school's priority areas for action.

Key Action Areas	Timescale
a) increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;	
<p>The school aims to employ a part-time support assistant in line with the recommendation of the Education Psychologists report and NHS recommendations.</p> <p>The school aims to improve communication between CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and CS by designating the appropriate Head of Section 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 communication with both parents and the voice of the pupils in updating the use of school specialised interventions and curriculum development.</p>	<p>Autumn Term 1</p> <p>Annual DEI showcase November 2024</p> <p>Spring 2025</p>
b) improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school;	
<p>To create a sensory room in the current Sanctuary as a therapeutic space for those with ASD (autism spectrum disorder), sensory difficulties and those with additional needs.</p> <p>The school aims to support staff in developing their classrooms with an 'inclusive lens' to ensure that it is not over stimulating and a support, calm environment for those with SEND as well as neurotypical peers.</p>	<p>Autumn 2024</p> <p>Summer 2025</p>
c) improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.	

<p>The school aims to create an additional space on the school website for parents as a reference point/starting area for readily available resources in the local area and as a school to support those with potential, undiagnosed need.</p>	Autumn 2024
<p>Staff intent to develop a 'teaching for SEND is teaching for all' outlook on learning, weaved throughout the lesson planning, classroom environment, representations and INSET/CPD sessions.</p>	Summer 2025

Accessibility Plan 2024-2027

***Note:** In the Resources & Cost Estimate column, the following code is used: £ = £0 to £50, ££ = £51 to £500, £££ = £501 to £5000, ££££ = over £5000.

SECTION 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 for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
To manage the care of a child with Speech and Language Delay and ASD.	<p>Liaise with parents and local authority to ensure successful EHCP (Education, Health, Care Plan) application.</p> <p>Provide teaching staff support through CPD and training to provide consistent support.</p>	SENCO & Head	SENCO	<p>Use of 1:1 TA (Teaching Assistant) time £</p> <p>SENCO time ££</p>	<p>Summer '26</p> <p>*Note – 2-year cycle to ensure embedding of target.</p>	The child can cope independently with school life, both socially and academically.	
Ensure all pupils, regardless of SEND status, are making progress.	Learning walks, formal observations, book looks and progress conversations with SLT and all teachers ensure any pupils not making expected progress are flagged and additional intervention put in place to support pupils.	SENCO, Assessment Lead, SLT	Head	SENCO time ££	Summer '25	<p>Through formative and summative assessment all teaching staff monitor progress throughout the academic year.</p> <p>All pupils not making expected progress are identified. Appropriate intervention is put in place to bridge the gap.</p>	
High quality differentiated teaching and learning	Ensure all staff have the relevant training and resources from internal and outside agencies where appropriate to support the specific	SENCO, Assessment Lead, SLT	Head	EEF '5 steps to quality teaching' (no cost)		Staff have the right skills and knowledge to support pupils with SEND and this is evident via lesson observation and	

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
is provided for all learners.	<p>needs of some of our most vulnerable pupils.</p> <p>Plan and deliver bespoke training opportunities internally and with outside agencies and via SEND specialists as and when the need arises.</p> <p>Learning walks and books looks.</p> <p>Additional time and support for newly appointed staff and ECT with SENCO.</p>			Staff INSET/CPD training annually run by SENCO. ££		learning walks. Pupils are making progress	
All pupils have subject specific targets to work towards so that progress is evident.	<p>Target setting opportunities are timetabled in each term with subject teachers based on pupil progress meetings and individual pupil passports for those on the SEND register.</p> <p>Target setting format improved to aid effectiveness.</p>	SENCO, class teachers, assessment lead.	Headteacher	Time added into curriculum lessons to facilitate target setting. New template to be created and approved by SLT		<p>Three target setting rotations occur throughout the academic year. Targets are reviewed and progress towards the targets are evident.</p> <p>Targets are specific for each pupil and relevant to each curriculum subject.</p>	
To create an inclusive classroom setting, where pupil's instructions and organisation is supported by the teacher.	All teaching staff to use 'chunking' to support simpler instructions and ease of retention for the pupils.	SENCO, class teachers, TAs	Headteacher	Class teachers TAs, Software		Students with dyslexia or weak working memory are supported to retain information and access the tasks in class independently.	

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
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.	SENCO and Headteacher	Headteacher	SENCO		Pupils can access exams and teachers have the best understanding of how to support pupils with their learning.	

SECTION B: 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 benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school:

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
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	
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	

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
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 nosing's are secure and handrails 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	

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
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	

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

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
To adapt all planning (specialist subjects included) to stretch and scaffold the learning for pupils, especially those with SEND.	Audit current planning. Development of collaborative planning and moderation across the school. Regular monitoring and feedback.	SENCO, Headteacher & class teachers	Headteacher	Teacher PPA time for planning. SENCO/SLT to audit and monitor with feedback.	<i>Summer term '25</i>	Enhance learning experiences for all pupils, particularly those with SEND. Increased teacher confidence and competence in differentiating and scaffolding learning. Improved pupil engagement and achievement.	
To enhance accessibility of written information for disabled pupils.	Audit current materials. Implement UDL (universal Design for Learning). Integrate use of assistive technologies,	SENCO, class teachers & headteacher.	Headteacher	SENCO time.	2 year cycle. <i>curriculum changes and embedding within curriculum</i>	Improved accessibility of written materials for disabled pupils. Increased use of accessible formats and assistive technology by staff and pupils. Enhanced learning experiences for disabled pupils.	
To improve digital accessibility for disabled pupils.	Audit use of digital platforms. Upgrade digital tools (cost dependent) Provide staff training on digital accessibility.	SENCO, Computing Lead & Headteacher	Headteacher	SENCO, Chatsworth IT and school IT support. Staff training £	2 year cycle. <i>curriculum changes and embedding within curriculum</i>	Enhances accessibility of digital resources for disabled pupils. Increased awareness and skills among staff regarding digital accessibility. Better engagement and academic performance from disabled pupils.	

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Person Responsible for Sign-off	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
To inform and support parents of disabled pupils by improving their access to, and understanding of, relevant school information.	<p>Identify parent need (conduct survey and hold focus groups)</p> <p>Develop accessible communication channels.</p> <p>Create clear and concise information for all on the website.</p> <p>Provide training and workshops for parents with a 'focus' e.g. wellbeing/pastoral/dyslexia information evenings.</p>	SENCO, Headteacher and SLT.	Headteacher	SENCO time, 'workshop' evenings.	Summer '25	<p>Improved understanding and engagement of parents in their child's education.</p> <p>Enhanced support for parents in accessing and utilising school information.</p> <p>Positive feedback from parents regarding the accessibility and usefulness of information provided.</p> <p>Develop positive relationships with parents regarding pupil wellbeing and given support.</p>	

