



Accessibility Plan

An accessibility plan must show how school access is to be improved for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities in a given timeframe. It must anticipate the need to make reasonable adjustments where ever practicable.

Accessibility Plan 2023-2024

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to show how Oakham Shires School intends, over time, to increase accessibility to the physical environment, the curriculum, written information and the general school community, so that all pupils with a disability can take full advantage of their education and associated opportunities.

Definition of disability

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; this includes learning difficulties, learning disabilities and Autism.

Key Aims

To increase and eventually ensure for pupils with a disability that they have:

- total access to our school environment, curriculum and information;
- full participation in the school community.

Principles

Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with our school's aims and equal opportunities policy and SEN information report.

Our staff recognise their duty under the Equality Act 2010:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions 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
- To publish an accessibility plan

In performing their duties governors have regard to the Equality Act 2010:

- Our school recognises and values the young person's knowledge/parents' knowledge of their child's disability;
- recognises the effect their disability has on his/her ability to carry out activities;
- respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality
- The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that is differentiated, personalised and age and stage appropriate.

Improving access to the physical environment of the school

This includes improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

As a school we provide:

- Ramps into all school buildings
- Clutter free environments
- Disabled toilet and showering facilities in the external school building
- Accessible toilet in the main school building
- Physical spaces designed to support the sensory needs of Autistic people
 - Low arousal colour scheme
 - Carpeted stairways
 - Only essential wall displays
 - Well ventilated spaces

- Temperature controlled environments
- Distraction free classroom layout
- Background noises eliminated where possible, for example silent clocks.
- Communal areas designed to provide proprioceptive support
- Supportive lighting
- All school signage is provided with visual support
- Adapted furniture designed to meet individual pupil's physical needs
- Accessible outdoor spaces and recreational equipment
- Calm, low sensory areas available within both school buildings

Increasing Access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum

This includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.

- We offer a personalised and differentiated curriculum for all pupils
- The curriculum is reviewed to make sure it meets the needs of all pupils
- Resources are provided to support access to the curriculum e.g desk slants, overlays, enlarged copies of learning material
- Visuals are incorporated into all communication and learning materials used within our school
- Suitable furniture is provided to allow pupils with a physical need to fully engage with the curriculum
- Educational visits are planned to ensure accessibility for all pupils
- Our school delivers a robust PSHE programme which educates pupils to promote understanding of disability and diversity, promoting inclusivity. Where appropriate, training available to staff is extended to pupils wishing to have a greater understanding of their peers e.g. epilepsy training.

Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.

- All school signage is provided with visual support
- Social stories are used to support pupils' comprehension of information delivered to them
- All policies and information provided by us as a school is available as a hard copy upon request.
- Our website has an autism friendly feature allowing the colour mode to be changed from vibrant to calm.
- Communication with families is available in a range of modes and forms for example via telephone, e-mail, Teams, face to face.
- Communication is offered at different times of the day, recognising families different demands.

Improving access to the wider school community

- Plans and discussions held are sensitive to the needs and limitations pupils may have
- A range of tools are used to ensure the pupil voice is listened to and acted on including the company's Ask, Accept, Develop programme
- Social stories are used to support pupils with changes and to overcome potential barriers to communication.
- Robust transition planning to ensure a pupil has a smooth transition into our school community
- Transitions from setting to setting are carefully planned to ensure the needs of all pupils involved are met.
- Targeted individual and small group sessions are implemented to support self-esteem, confidence and social skills.
- Robust anti-bullying policies and procedures in place including reparation of relationships after an incident.
- Robust staff training programme which is reviewed and repeated to ensure the most up to date information and practices are in place

Financial Planning and control

The headteacher, SLT and the finance committee will review the financial implications of the accessibility plan as part of the normal budget review process.

Action Plan

Access to the Physical Environment				
Accessibility Outcome	Action to achieve outcome	Who is responsible	Timeframe	Comments
To enable all staff, pupils and visitors to access the school premises independently	Purchase and install automated gates	Facilities Manager	Long term	To be included in the 5 year rolling CAPEX plan
To provide a safe car park surface to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls and to enable wheelchair users to independently traverse the car park to the building	Re-surface the car park	Facilities Manager	Medium term	Funding for the project to be sort in the 2024/25 Capex plan
Enable wheelchair users to independently access the building	Eliminate the small step up from the car park surface to the ramp	Facilities Manager	Medium term	To be completed as part of the car park re-surfacing project
Allow independent movement through school for wheelchair users	Add push buttons to doors	Facilities Manager	Medium term	Funding for the project to be sort in the 2024/25 Capex plan
Allow independent access to all areas of the school building	Installation of a lift to the first floor	Facilities Manager	Long term	To be included in the 5 year rolling CAPEX plan
To ensure all visitors to the school who have mobility impairments can park in a suitably located	Increase the number of disabled parking spaces. Ensure these are clearly signposted for visitors	Facilities Manager	Medium term	To be completed as part of the car park re-surfacing project

parking space				
To ensure wheelchair users can gain access to the building independently	Install power assisted front door to the reception area	Facilities Manager	Medium term	To be included in the 5 year rolling CAPEX plan
To ensure all hearing impaired staff, pupils and visitors are alerted to a fire alarm	Visible as well as audible fire alarm required	Facilities Manager	Short term	Options to be reviewed and agreed upon and work to be scheduled
Access to the Curriculum				
Accessibility Outcome	Action to achieve outcome	Who is responsible	Timeframe	Comments
Ensure all pupils have suitable tools to engage with the curriculum	Assess the suitability of existing furniture for new pupils	Education Lead	By the end of Autumn Term 1 2023	
Ensure that all disabilities are represented in our learning materials to ensure pupils have a rounded understanding of the diverse world we live in	Complete an audit of inclusive teaching materials and approaches	Education Lead	By the end of Autumn Term 1 2023	
Ensure smaller pupils and wheelchair users can fully engage in Food Tech classes	Install a lower level counter top and sink with lever action tap in the Life Skills room on the ground floor of the main school building	Facilities Manager	By the end of Autumn Term 1 2023	
To ensure all pupils,	Explore how we can	Education Lead	By the end of Autumn	

regardless of their abilities and disabilities, can access sporting activities	widen accessibility for pupils in sport		Term 2 2023	
Access to the wider school community				
Accessibility Outcome	Action to achieve outcome	Who is responsible	Timeframe	Comments
Enhance peer to peer communication and the pupil voice building understanding of a democratic system of decision making	Fully develop the fledgling school council	Education Lead and Therapy Assistant	Ongoing over the 2023-24 school year	The school council was floated in late 2022/23 academic year. This needs to be built on and fully embedded within the school
Provide consistent accessible information for all events organised by the school	Provide event attendees with accessible information relating to both the site and the event itself.	Administrative Staff	Ongoing	Sign posting within the school and all events needs to be standardised and consistently applied.