



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.

POLICY AMENDMENT PAGE

Date	Key Amendments	Version Number	Reviewed by
11/01/2018	Policy Approved – Fit for use by schools.	v1.1	RG
01/09/2019	Annual Endorsement	v2.0	RNB
01/09/2020	Annual Endorsement	v3.0	RNB
16/03/2021	Policy review and update	v3.1	RNB
01/09/2021	Annual Endorsement	v4.0	RNB
01/09/2022	Annual Endorsement	v5.0	RNB
25/06/2023	Annual Endorsement	v6.0	CS
01/09/2024	Annual Endorsement	v7.0	JR

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 SENDCO 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.

The text in the table is for example only and should be edited or replaced to reflect the school’s priorities.

Key Action Areas	Timescale
<p>a) increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school’s 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 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 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>	
<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>	
<p>c) improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.</p>	

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Accessibility Plan 2021 - 2024

The text in the tables is for example only and should be retained, adapted or replaced to ensure that the plan is individualised to the needs of the school. In the “Time Frame” column, the school should aim to add a timescale which is finite and measurable, in order to facilitate the action point being signed off as achieved. As far as possible, timescales such as “ongoing” or “termly” should be avoided. If an overarching timescale of “ongoing” is appropriate, this should be broken down into interim milestones which are measurable and can be signed off as achieved.

***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 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		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	SEND department to assess long-term needs of children	Facilities and Compliance Manager		Boards		Pupils have improved access to the 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
upper body strength.	and provide boards where necessary						
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 enable them to use a laptop in lessons.	Head of ICT		Laptops Software for Touch Typing Dragon Dictate		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.	
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		Students with disabilities have increased access to curriculum materials.	

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 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		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		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 provide access to the curriculum for pupils diagnosed with Irlen's syndrome.	Internally assess children presenting with reading / tracking difficulties. Provide coloured overlays where needed. For severe difficulties, children will be referred on for prescription glasses.	SENDCO, school nurse & class teachers		Cost of one coloured overlay for each child who needs it.		Children with visual processing sensitivity are able to read more easily and without strain.	
To ensure that pupils with medical conditions that lead to a high level of absence from school make good progress and can catch up.	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	SENDCO & Head of School		SENDCO time Leadership Team		Children with medical needs are able to access the curriculum and make good progress despite absence from 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
	parents to understand the provision needed.						
To enable children with learning needs to make good progress and attain in line with their underlying ability.	Provide individual lessons with specialised members of staff. Review the attainment for all SEND pupils. Provide group spelling support using individualised computer programmes. Provide group curriculum support	SENDCO, Head of Departments & class teachers		SENDCO time Leadership Team Dedicated INSET time		The progress across the curriculum of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently on the school roll 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	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		Children with weak working memory know and use a range of strategies independently to help with their memory.	

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
a range of contexts.							
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		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		Pupils are able to 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	
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	Facilities and		Bursar & Facilities Managers to assess		Access ramps are serviceable and compliant	

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
	serviceable and meet the 1:15 gradient	Compliance Manager		and build into holiday works programme. Facilities and Compliance Manager to ensure new builds meet the requirement.			
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		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
				maintenance programme			
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 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.	

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 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		Up to date policy live on website	
To provide information to parents about the external help available to them.	List available of Speech and Language Therapists, Sound Therapists, Optometrists, Audiologists, and Educational Psychologists.	SENDCO		SENDCO		Parents have access to the information necessary to ensure full access to the curriculum for their children.	

