



Oaklands School

Accessibility Plan 2023 to 2026

Main School & EYFS

This Accessibility Plan has been drawn up in consultation with the Principal and staff of the School and covers the period from April 2023 to March 2026. The plan will be kept under review during this period and will be revised as necessary.

We are committed to providing a fully-accessible environment that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

Statement of Intent

Oaklands School plans, over time, to review and increase the accessibility for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school. The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

- improve access to the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils, staff and other members of the school community with a disability, medical condition or other access needs can access educational and associated services.
- increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are equally prepared for life as all other pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school, such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
- improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events both printed and web based.

Background

The School is committed to making reasonable adjustments to allow disabled pupils to access educational provision at the School. The main building occupies a large Victorian house with several outside buildings. These are the Upper Kindergarten (used as a nursery teaching room), opened in 1996 and the Studio (used for Music, Art and Design Technology), which was opened in January 2004. The main building was extended in 1986 to provide three reception classrooms and again in 1998 to provide two year one classrooms and two small Music rooms.

In 2010 Oak House was first used for classroom purposes and, since its 2012 extension, now houses the Lower Kindergarten, Resources Room and Oak-Tree Group Admin offices. The entrance to the main school via the main gate in Albion Hill was levelled in 2013 and is suitable for people in wheelchairs. The 'bottom' gate into the school grounds situated in the High Road provides wheelchair access to the Upper Kindergarten, Science Room and Studio and to the School Fields. In addition, a slope has also been installed next to the Studio, providing access to the area outside the main building and to the Reception classrooms.

The Main Office, Waiting Room and Medical Room can be accessed via the ramped main entrance provided in 2014. The School Hall can only be accessed by going down a small number of steps. All other classrooms can only be reached via the main staircase. There is no lift and doorways are narrow. The Medical Room toilet can accommodate wheelchair users.

The Reception classrooms, toilets and Kitchens are accessible via the new entrance and extension building provided in 2018. The entrance is largely on one level, with two steps up to the Reception rooms.

Accessibility Plan

The school's Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information:

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, adapting the curriculum as necessary. This includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits. It also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe.
- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the site, adding specialist facilities as necessary, including improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe.
- Where needed, adapt the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include adaptations to hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

It is acknowledged that there will be the need for ongoing awareness training for all staff in the matter of disability discrimination and the potential need to inform attitudes on this matter.

The Accessibility Plan can be read with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Equal Opportunities Policies
- Health and Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Pupils' individual needs

Welcoming and Preparing for Disabled Pupils

Where it is practicable to make reasonable adjustments to enable a prospective pupil to take up a place at the School and to satisfy the current admissions criteria, the School is committed to providing those reasonable adjustments.

In order to meet the needs of disabled pupils, the School requires full information. The School will ask all applicants for admission to the School to disclose whether they have received any learning support, have had an educational psychologist's report or have any disability or other condition of which the School should be aware. See the Admissions Policy and SEND Policy for further details.

In assessing the pupil or prospective pupil, the School may need to take advice and require assessments as appropriate. The School will be sensitive to any issues of confidentiality.

Through planning for individual need, we aim to provide as inclusive an approach as practically possible. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, however all reasonable adjustments are made to support as full an involvement as possible. We seek advice and support from the relevant professionals in order to ensure that we have made adequate and reasonable adjustments.

Different forms of communication are made available as needs are identified to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is provided in a range of different formats available for disabled pupils, parents and staff as needed.

Budgeting

The school recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments in order to facilitate the arrival, and continuation, of pupils. The allocation of budgeting for reasonable adjustments will be considered by the Group Managing Principal and Group Bursar when costings have been sourced for adjustments such as hearing loop equipment, auxiliary aids or general resources.

Accessibility Working Party

The Accessibility Working Party is chaired by the Group Managing Principal and includes the Group Bursar, the Headmistress, the Group Operations Manager and the SENDCo.

Review

This Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually by the Group Managing Principal and Headmistress at the end of each period.

SEND

Please refer to the SEND Policy for details of the School's Accessibility Plans for pupils with SEND and who need adjustments made due to other social, health or welfare needs.

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe	Success Criteria
Short Term	Ensure new staff have sufficient knowledge and understanding of needs of disabled pupils	Training of new staff through induction process	Staff more confident in providing appropriate teaching and support for disabled pupils	Ongoing	Flexible approach to disabled pupils Increase in access to the curriculum
	Enable new pupils to access entrance assessments and existing pupils to access ongoing assessments	Provide larger font sizes for visual impaired; scribes for dyspraxic (etc) pupils and more time to complete assessments	All pupils able to access assessments	Ongoing	Increased access to assessments by external and internal pupils
	Auxiliary aids to support disabled pupils available as appropriate, eg portable hearing loops for pupils with hearing impairments	Sources for auxiliary aids identified and if appropriate, charging policy agreed with parents	Appropriate auxiliary aids available for pupils on admission to school, reviewed and updated as necessary	Depending on the individual needs of each pupil – In place by the time the pupil starts at school	Full access to the curriculum for disabled pupils
	Liaise with pre-school providers to prepare for the intake of new pupils	Identify pupils who may need adapted or additional provision	Better start for new pupils with staff fully aware of any needs	Ongoing	Better access arrangement for those who need them
	Suitable lessons responsive to pupil diversity	Analyse time spent working individually, in pairs, groups and whole class to see whether the format is suitable for disabled pupils	Additional time allowed for e.g. practical work or lip reading, if necessary	By start of each academic year	Lessons provide suitable achievable challenges for all pupils' needs
	Lesson plans differentiated sufficiently to allow access to the curriculum for all pupils	Suitable resources adapted for all pupils	Observations show that lessons cater for the needs of all pupils	Ongoing	All pupils able to access lessons
Medium Term	Where possible, improve layout of classrooms to accommodate needs of disabled pupils	After an audit, decide which classrooms would benefit from changes in layout	Improved classroom environment for disabled pupils	Ongoing	Classroom layout and equipment is suitable for the needs of all pupils
Long Term	Provide access to computer technology suitable for pupils with disabilities	Research computer technology available and do an audit of which pupils would benefit	Wider range of computer technology available	By September 2025	Learning of disabled pupils is enhanced using computer technology
	Aim to remove all barriers to learning and participation	Audit of improvements made so far + revise plan for next three years	Strategy set for following three years	Ongoing	Equal opportunities for learning for disabled pupils

Improving the Physical Environment of the School to Increase Access to Education by Disabled Pupils

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe	Goals to be Achieved
Short Term	Establish whether safe routes around the school site and entry to ground floor rooms are possible for wheelchair users	Audit current facilities including the provision of signs	Obstacles to movement around the school grounds removed and access established to ground floor classrooms.	By December 2024	Improved access to school site and buildings
	Health and Safety procedures to incorporate the needs of disabled pupils, as necessary	Review and revise health and safety procedures as required	Procedures meet requirements of DRC code	Ongoing	Health and Safety of disabled pupils maximised
	Ensure that all stairwells have handrails on both sides at a suitable height	Audit needs of pupils/parents/staff with physical disabilities	Easier to access each level	By December 2024	Improved access to school buildings
	Ensure all stairs have nosings on edges to help visually impaired users	Audit stair nosings and install/replace where necessary	Improved access for visually impaired users	By December 2024	Improved access to school buildings
Medium Term	Provide suitable décor, lighting and signage for pupils with visual impairment	Audit current facilities and improve as necessary	Suitable décor, lighting and signage for visually impaired pupils	By Summer 2025	Improved facilities for visually impaired pupils
	Take steps to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils	Audit current problem areas e.g. acoustics and noisy equipment	Reduced background noise for hearing impaired pupils	By Summer 2025	Improved facilities for hearing impaired pupils
	Purchase/make portable ramps to gain access over high steps	Maintenance Dept to investigate and report back	Wheelchair users to be able to access all lower parts of the site	When required	Improved facilities for disabled pupils and visitors
	School furniture, equipment and ICT resources more accessible for disabled pupils	Planned use of resources on rolling programme. School to take notice of good practice in other schools	When furniture, equipment and ICT resources replaced, needs of disabled pupils catered for as finances allow	Ongoing	Accessibility to facilities improved
Long Term	Provide accessible toilet facilities for disabled pupils or visitors in new buildings	Identify location of appropriate facility	Minimum of one accessible toilet	At costing of new buildings	Improved facilities for disabled pupils and visitors
	Provide access to upper storey classrooms in new buildings	At design stage investigate and budget for disabled self-propelled lift	Disabled pupils/visitors able to access	At costing of new buildings	Improved access to facilities for disabled pupils and visitors

Improving the Delivery of Information to Disabled Pupils

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Timeframe	Goals to be Achieved
Short Term	Establish availability of written materials in alternative formats, as necessary	Use larger fonts, different colours, different colour paper, symbols etc. Train staff if necessary.	If needed, the School could provide written information in alternative formats	By December 2024	Delivery of written information to disabled pupils is improved
	Present information to groups in a way which is user friendly for those with disabilities	Research ways of presenting information e.g. reading aloud instructions on the board and describing diagrams Train staff, if necessary	Information presented in a suitable way for disabled pupils	By December 2024	Delivery of information improved
	Examine methods of communication with relevant parties to ensure they are up-to-date and accessible	Use different methods of communication eg in print, online, via social media, by text, in person	Information presented in a suitable way for disabled pupils	By December 2024	Better accessibility of communication
Medium Term	Ensure staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist pupils/visitors with disabilities	Research technology and practice. Train staff if necessary	If necessary, suitable technology provided to meet the needs of disabled pupils	Ongoing	Suitable technology provided and appropriate practice introduced to meet the need of disabled pupils
Long Term	Ongoing review of facilities such as ICT to provide written information.	Rolling programme to provide necessary technology	Ongoing improvement of delivery of written information	Ongoing	Ongoing improvement in provision of written information.
	Explore possibility of providing sets of information in Braille	Research how to produce Braille documents and how effective this might be	Ongoing improvement of delivery of written information	By Summer 2025	Ongoing improvement in provision of written information.
	Explore possibility of providing portable hearing loops for children/visitors who are hard of hearing	Research hearing loops and use in classrooms	Pupils who are hard of hearing able to access information	By Summer 2025	Ongoing improvement in provision of written information.