



Vermont School Accessibility Plan

Date Reviewed	Reviewed by	Next Review Date
10th Jan 2023	L Mckeown	Jan 25

Document Purpose

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of Vermont School in relation to Accessibility. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. This policy is drawn up in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by the DCSF.

Vermont School caters for pupils with EHC plans linked with SEMH predominantly, though other special educational needs are apparent in some pupils. As a 'special school' its resources are focussed to ensure equality of access for all pupils regardless of disability with individual needs assessed and resourced in order to ensure developmental progression in all areas.

Audience

This policy, having been presented to and agreed upon by the whole staff and Governing Body is distributed for the information of:

- All teaching staff
- All teaching assistants
- All support staff

A copy of the policy is available:

- In the Head Teacher's Office
- On the school website

This is available for:

- School governors
- External Professionals
- OFSTED
- Parents
- Visiting teachers
- Other interested adults (social and psychological services etc)

Definition of Disability

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

"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."

Key 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

- Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the school's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEN policy;
- The school recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA)
 - 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

In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the SEN Code of Practice (January 2015).

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 in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum, including:-

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Achieving the Objectives

This section outlines the main activities, which the school undertakes, and is planning to undertake, to achieve the key objective outlined above.

a) Education & related activities

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, and other external professionals that can support the school to ensure equality of access and developmental achievement commensurate with their potential ability.

b) Physical environment

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities, services and fittings.

c) Provision of information

The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

Accessibility Plan- Identifying Barriers to Access

Organisational	Completed	In Progress	Under Discussion	Not yet Addressed
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment? <i>(As part of a developmental programme differentiated to meet individual need)</i>	Y			
Preparation for entry into school. <i>(Admissions Policy- within the resources of the School and School Prospectus)</i>	Y			
Grouping of pupils <i>(by year group and ability with EHCs and differentiated lesson plans in place plus individual support e.g. literacy, social and emotional as relevant)</i>	Y			
School discipline and sanctions <i>(reference Behaviour Policy)</i>	Y			
Exclusion procedures <i>(reference Exclusions Policy)</i>	Y			
School activities <i>(full access as relevant as part of a developmental programme differentiated to meet individual need)</i>	Y			
The school's arrangements for working with other agencies <i>(Local Offer; Annual reviews; Attendance and Behaviour Management policies etc.)</i>	Y			

Attitudinal	Completed	In Progress	Under Discussion	Not yet Addressed
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils? <i>(Identified via EHC plan; Training is needs led; Risk assessments/Positive Handling Plans also guide training)</i>	Y			
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using visual aids? <i>(Individual developmental progression identified in EHC Plan e.g. Teaching strategies and resources; Individual education plan guided by EHC Plan targets)</i>	Y			
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work? <i>(As above)</i>	Y			
Are there high expectations of all pupils? <i>(All pupils are base lined with SMART targets set for the pupil to achieve within their potential development and targets set using Target Tracker)</i>	Y			
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation? <i>(reference Equal Opportunities Policy)</i>	Y			
Access to the curriculum. <i>(As above with differentiation if necessary)</i>	Y			
School policies, e.g. anti-bullying, SEN policies, health and safety. <i>(All in place with annual review)</i>	Y			
Interaction with peers. <i>(Part of EHC Plan with targets for improvement evaluated at annual review; Skills Cards; Marlyn Curriculum; PATHS sessions)</i>	Y			

Physical access	Completed	In Progress	Under Discussion	Not yet Addressed
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils? <i>(Resources component in scheme of work and lesson plan; there has been an increase in sensory spaces around school, although provision in class is limited due to space)</i>		Y		
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities: classrooms, the assembly/ dining hall, library and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds – allow access for all pupils? <i>(Mainly single storey building, however steps into hall/library area which can be overcome by using outside door into library area; Issues – no facilities for wheelchair users at all including disabled toilets and special features; no holdbacks on internal doors – doors magnetised – magnetic openers are too high for wheelchair users; Doorways too narrow for wheelchairs; no accessibility to Modular building for wheelchair users)</i>				Y School aware but unable to address
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers? <i>(Issue - internal doors; general wheelchair access – see above)</i>				Y
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed? <i>(Issue - signage needs upgrading, parking needs upgrading with designated disabled space - lack of room so disabled drivers advised to park either at the front of school, or around near to entrance by Snug as this has the most room and accessibility for the hall)</i>				Y
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?	Y			
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings? <i>(Tactile buttons?)</i>				Y
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy? <i>(Any issues identified through EHC Plan)</i>			Y	
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit? <i>(Automatic lighting in place/new lighting across school 2022)</i>	Y			
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics and noisy equipment? <i>(identified via EHC plan when need arises and appropriate funding sought; Issue – classrooms not carpeted – this would aid in noise reduction)</i>			Y	
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately? <i>(as a Special school all resources are provided and organised to reflect whole school need; however, issue with some broken furniture)</i>			Y	
Access to school facilities. <i>(equality for opportunity approaches reference Equal Opportunity policy)</i>			Y	
Activities to support the curriculum, e.g. Army/Pets at Home visiting school; School trips to Marwell, Lepe Beach; Football Tournaments etc. <i>(extension activities as identified in SIP to support curriculum, individual needs addressed using out of school provision)</i>	Y			
School sports. <i>(Sports Coaches provide a general overview; REAL PE; Swimming weekly at local pool -200m away -identified in curriculum planning and evidenced as part of PE curriculum programme)</i>	Y			
How the school deals with emergency procedures. <i>(Regular documented checks and practice e.g. fire drill; Site supervisor check; Health and Safety policy; First Aid Guidelines etc.)</i>	Y			

Breaks and lunchtimes. <i>(Whole school system including rotas. Individual pupil needs identified via EHC plan)</i>	Y			
The serving of school meals. <i>(Food brought from school across the road – Southampton City Caterers have provision for special dietary requirements; Tesco order/Magic Breakfast used to provide food throughout day – dietary requirements taken account of)</i>	Y			

Curriculum Access	Completed	In Progress	Under Discussion	Not yet Addressed
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve? <i>(Differentiated Lesson Plans with linked IEPs/Targets set through Target Tracker; Pupils can achieve socially and emotionally as well as academically and this is celebrated with equal merit)</i>	Y			
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity? <i>(as above)</i>	Y			
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class? <i>(reference teaching and learning policy)</i>	Y			
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities? <i>(see International Primary curriculum programme - broad and balanced curriculum entitlement)</i>	Y			
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education? <i>(Individual differentiated programmes identified via EHC/Pathways assessments take account of children's environmental restrictions)</i>	Y			
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities? <i>(within limits of funding and school technology system; or where necessary, as identified and funded in EHC plan)</i>			Y	
Teaching and learning <i>(reference Teaching and Learning policy)</i>	Y			
Classroom organisation. <i>(Individually assessed and represented in lesson plan following guidance in EHC; advice sought from outside agencies such as Autism Hampshire; Issue – environment not always conducive to needs of children)</i>			Y	
Timetabling <i>(reference Teaching and Learning Policy/ Equal Opportunities policy and Statutory guidance)</i>	Y			
Assessment and test arrangements. <i>(Individual needs identified via EHC plan, and personalised; 25% extra given for children with EHC plans)</i>	Y			
Preparation of pupils for the next phase of education <i>(needs addressed and curriculum personalised to maximise engagement with next phase; school visits arranged and school link staff visit children in current setting; new school staff invited to atteY6 Annual Reviews/Children's Social Care meetings, Issue – Often placements aren't agreed by LA until too late so transition visits are not possible)</i>		Y		

Information Access	Completed	In Progress	Under Discussion	Not yet Addressed
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information? <i>(Strategies and resources to meet need identified in EHC plan; Able to produce in other languages through Google Translate; Able to produce in large print. Would need support to produce in Braille)</i>	Y			
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way, which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams? <i>(As above)</i>	Y			
Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats? <i>(??)</i>				Y
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities? <i>(identified via EHC plan and professional development as required with support.)</i>	Y			
School announcements <i>(Staff pigeon holes, notice boards as part of school's information systems including daily staff debrief and INSET days)</i>	Y			
Access to information <i>(through schools planned Information systems as above; school website displays most relevant information – rest is available on request)</i>	Y			

Accessibility Plan - Key Recommendations

	Recommendations
Physical Access	Disabled access to be placed into at least one toilet area; Holdbacks on internal doors/magnetic openers to be moved to wheelchair access height; Doors to be widened to allow for wheelchair access; Ramps required for wheelchair access to building – both at front of building and to playground; Wheelchair access/exits to classrooms – ramps and wider doors; External lighting – review Need for sensory rooms/areas within classrooms; Access to hall (through library area) to be better signed; Internal and external signage (colour combination for visually impaired; Braille signage; disabled car parking space identified) Visual fire alarm system; Carpets to minimise noise around school; Furniture – replace broken furniture
Curriculum Access	Use of ICT for disabled pupils (concept keyboards, voice recognition software?); Learning environment to be adapted to allow for sensory needs of pupils with ASC; Continue working with LA on receiving information about children's placements sooner.
Information Access	Greater use of technology to assist people with disabilities; Consider use 'translation' software rather than just 'Google Translate'.

NB with potential move to the St Monica's site, it is unlikely that most of these adaptations will be made.

Access Plan - Physical Access

Time scale	Targets	Activities	Outcome	By when	By whom	Success Criteria
Short Term	Need for sensory rooms/areas within classrooms;	*Consult with Sensory Specialists; *Investigate possibility of grant for funding;	*Items required for room are sourced and fitted; *Grant sourced to pay for adaptations;	Unlikely to happen now in view of anticipated move to St Monica's.	Headteacher Class teachers;	Classrooms have a quiet, darkened area for children
	Disabled parking space identified	Discuss which space most appropriate.	Disabled car parking space identified.	If known in advance spaces can be blocked off for use.	Headteacher; Site Manager;	Disabled space available for staff and visitors where needed
Medium Term	Ramps required for wheelchair access to building.	Source ramps	Purchase and install ramps.	Could look into the cost of a portable ramp - July 2023	Site Manager/Head Teacher	Wheelchair access to building allowed.
	Carpets to minimise noise around school;	*Consultation on appropriate flooring and price; *Consult with Resources committee for permission; *Decide on a schedule for installation	Classroom areas (at least) are carpeted	Ongoing on a rolling programme	Head Teacher; Site Manager; Business Manager; Governor's Resource Committee	Classrooms are quieter environments
Long Term	Disabled access to be placed into at least one toilet area;	*Consult with Cedar school Headteacher for advice on which toilet area is most suitable;	One toilet within school identified and company sourced to conduct work.	Unlikely now with the proposed move to St Monica's	Headteacher; Site Manager	One toilet within school has disabled access;

		*Investigate companies which will be most cost effective				
	Holdbacks on internal doors/magnetic openers to be moved to wheelchair access height;	*Consultation with Educational Psychology on 'Keyless doors'. *Consultation with LA on possibility of modifications to building;	LA provide funding towards adaptations of building	Would need to investigate if LA willing to fund. Sept 23	Headteacher; Business Manager; Site Manager	School is completely accessible for pupil and visitors with physical disabilities

Access Plan - Curriculum Access

Time scale	Targets	Activities	Outcome	By when	By whom	Success Criteria
Short Term	Classroom environments support children's complex needs	Advice sought from external agencies (eg Autism Hampshire) to provide advice for resources and environments	Classrooms reflect the complex needs of the children and supports their development);	Sept 23	Deputy Headteacher; Class Teachers	Despite their limitations, environments are supportive of children's sensory needs.
Medium Term	Use of ICT for disabled pupils (concept keyboards, voice recognition software?)	methods of engaging pupils using ICT	Pupils have access to motivating software	Dec 2023 - looking into Big Lottery Fund grant for ICT. These ideas could be included.	Head teacher	Pupils engage with curriculum more readily and make rapid progress.
	Children know well in advance of their placement after Vermont so that effective transition can take place.	*Liaison with parents through annual reviews of where they want their children to attend; *Close liaison with the Local Authority from the February	* School placements are decided soon enough for transition activities to be scheduled.	Annually	Headteacher; SENCO	Children are able to undertake a robust transition process whichever school they are attending

		issue date of placements to ensure placement is suitable;				
Long Term						

Access Plan – Information Access

Time scale	Targets	Activities	Outcome	By when	By whom	Success Criteria
Short Term						
Medium Term	Use of technology to assist people with disabilities.	Source and cost appropriate technology.	Appropriate technology purchased	As required determined by pupils' need	SENCO	Visitors, staff and pupils have access to appropriate technology to assist.
Long Term						