



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2021– 2024 v1.2

Town Close School is committed to improving access for disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors.

This Accessibility Plan sets out how, over time, the school is going to:

- Increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils;
- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase access for disabled pupils; and
- Make written information more accessible to disabled pupils by providing information in a range of different ways.

The definition of disability in the Equalities Act, 2010 is as follows: “A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

PART I – OVERVIEW

Accessibility Plan – Objectives

The three objectives of the Accessibility Plan are to set out a strategy for:

- a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum;
- b) monitoring and where appropriate, improving, the physical environment of the School to improve the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided by the School; and
- c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Ongoing Commitment

Town Close is committed to an ongoing and proactive approach in addressing its duties including:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and provision of education and associated services;
- Not to treat disabled people less favourably;

- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a disadvantage; and
- To publish this Accessibility Plan and to make pupils, teachers, parents and governors aware of the ongoing commitment the School has to breaking down barriers to persons of disability.

The Plan will be monitored through the Bursar's Office. There will be a full review of the Plan on a six monthly basis during the lifetime of the Plan (ie three years), reporting the implementation of the Plan to the Headmaster. The Plan will be renewed on a three yearly cycle.

Parental involvement

Town Close places enormous value on a parent's knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out normal activities. The School remains consistently mindful of, and respects, both the parents' and children's right to confidentiality.

The School's Curriculum

Town Close aims to provide all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles. The School endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum 2000 framework, and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (0-25), 2015 which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum including:

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

The current position

When planning and undertaking improvements and refurbishments of the site, the School takes account of the needs of pupils and visitors who have physical difficulties or sensory impairments. This includes improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and more accessible facilities and fittings.

The School has made significant changes to the accessibility of its site and surrounding grounds along with access to the curriculum the school delivers. Examples include:

- Lift installed in Pre Prep to accommodate a wheelchair user;
- Lifts installed in Dearnaley building and sports hall;
- Hearing Induction loops in the Read Hall;
- Concrete ramps (within the limits of listed buildings) enabling almost total access throughout the School;
- Disabled toilets installed around the site together with appropriate signage.

The School has some listed buildings on site, which causes some difficulty when trying to remedy restricted access.

Wherever reasonable to do so, the School will make changes to the physical environment to accommodate those with a disability. A previous example of this is the moving of a year group to an alternate accommodation on ground floor level.

In addition to physical improvements other changes have taken place in the School with an emphasis on supporting children with special educational needs. For example there are the equivalent of two full-time members of staff in the Learning Support Department being the Head of Department and a Learning Support Specialist.

The Head of Department is the named person for SEN in the Pre Prep and is assisted in this by the Deputy Head of the Pre Prep Department, Mrs Sarah Laing.

Where appropriate the School will continue to seek and follow the advice of LEA services and outside agencies, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN consultants, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

Conclusion

Town Close considers the legal requirement in the Equalities Act 2010 to be merely a starting point. The School is committed to an active, inclusive and ongoing discussion as to how best to provide a first-class education to those with a disability. The School welcomes the contribution of pupils, parents, teachers and governors in this process.

*Last Reviewed Feb 2021
Next Review Feb 2022*