



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024– 2027 v1.5

Town Close School is committed to improving access for pupils, staff, parents and visitors with a temporary or permanent disability.

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

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability;
- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase access for pupils with a disability; and
- Make written information more accessible to pupils with a disability 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 pupils with a disability 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 pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided by the School; and
- c) improving the delivery to pupils with a disability 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 pupils with a disability in their admissions and provision of education and associated services;
- Not to treat people with a disability less favourably;

- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting pupils with a disability 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 Head. 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 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 (2016) 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;
- 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;
- Accessible 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.

The Head of Learning Support is the named person for SEN across the School.

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 September 2023
Next Review September 2024*