

Accessibility Policy

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| Issue Number | 007 | Author | Nicola Kelly |
| School | Oaklands Manor School | Approver | James Madine |
| Headteacher | Chris Hampton | Regional Director | Rob Arrowsmith |

1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 (updated 2012) mandates that all schools and local authorities develop and implement plans to improve accessibility for disabled pupils.

Since September 2002, schools—including independent schools—and local authorities must formulate accessibility strategies and plans to ensure inclusive environments.

Oaklands Manor School is committed to providing a fully accessible environment that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents/carers, and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional, or cultural needs.

We are dedicated to challenging attitudes towards disability and accessibility and fostering a culture of awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

Oaklands Manor School maintains individual accessibility plans (appendix A), reviewed and updated every three years, tailored to the needs of our pupils.

2. Aim and Scope

This policy aims to create and maintain an inclusive educational environment for the entire school community, promoting ongoing awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

3. Definitions and Abbreviations

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This includes sensory impairments (such as sight or hearing loss) and mental illnesses that are clinically recognised (for example, medically diagnosed Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

Not all disabled pupils have Special Educational Needs (SEN), and not all pupils with SEN have disabilities under this legislation. Many pupils may have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or an Individual Development Plan (IDP in Wales).

4. Policy Content

4.1 Improving Access to the Physical Environment

We commit to enhancing the physical environment of Oaklands Manor School, including visual, acoustic, and physical aspects, to meet the needs of disabled pupils. Reasonable adjustments may include sensory adaptations, assistive technologies, and differentiated communication methods.

All new buildings comply with Building Regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations (2012) to ensure physical accessibility.

4.2 Increasing Access to the Curriculum

Access to the curriculum encompasses teaching and learning as well as extracurricular activities such as after-school clubs, leisure, sports, cultural events, and school visits.

We tailor accessibility planning to pupils with EHCPs and complex needs to ensure full participation.

4.3 Improving Delivery of Written Information

We ensure that written materials provided to pupils are available in formats suitable to their abilities and needs, delivered within reasonable timescales.

Local authorities and schools review and revise accessibility strategies and plans regularly, prioritising resources for effective implementation.

5. Responsibilities

The Headteacher, teaching staff, agency staff, and all personnel working within or supporting Oaklands Manor School share responsibility for implementing this policy.

6. Training Requirements

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive induction training on this policy and ongoing professional development related to accessibility and inclusion.

7. Equality Impact

All staff and stakeholders must comply with this policy and demonstrate sensitivity and competence regarding diversity in race, faith, age, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

If any individual or group believes they are disadvantaged by this policy, they should contact their line manager. Oaklands Manor School and Keys Group will respond proactively to such concerns.

Appendices – Procedures and Localisation of Policy

Appendix A – Accessibility Plan Template

| Objective | Actions/Strategies | Responsible Person(s) | Timescale | Success Criteria |
|---|--|----------------------------|-----------|---|
| Improve physical accessibility | Conduct accessibility audit; implement adaptations (ramps, signage, lighting) | Site Manager, Head Teacher | Annually | All areas accessible to disabled pupils |
| Enhance curriculum access | Provide assistive technology; adapt teaching materials; staff training on inclusive practises | SENCO, Teaching Staff | Ongoing | Increased pupil engagement and progress |
| Improve delivery of written information | Provide materials in accessible formats (large print, braille, digital); staff training on communication | SENCO, Admin Team | Ongoing | Pupils receive information in preferred formats |
| Review and update accessibility strategies | Annual review of accessibility plan and progress | Head Teacher, Governors | Annually | Updated plan reflecting current needs |

Appendix B – Reasonable Adjustments Checklist

- Sensory adaptations (e.g., noise-cancelling headphones, tinted overlays)
- Assistive technology (e.g., speech-to-text software, adapted keyboards)
- Differentiated communication (e.g., simplified language, visual supports)
- Physical environment adjustments (e.g., ramps, handrails, accessible toilets)
- Flexible curriculum delivery (e.g., alternative assessments, adapted timetables)
- Staff awareness and training on individual needs
- Accessible formats for written materials (large print, braille, audio)
- Support from specialist services (e.g., occupational therapy, speech therapy)

Appendix C – Accessibility Audit Tool

| Area Reviewed | Accessibility Strengths | Areas for Improvement | Actions Required | Responsible Person | Review Date |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Entrances and exits | | | | | |
| Corridors and pathways | | | | | |
| Classrooms | | | | | |
| Toilets and changing facilities | | | | | |
| Signage | | | | | |
| Lighting and acoustics | | | | | |
| Emergency procedures | | | | | |

Appendix D – Communication Support Protocol

- Identify pupil's preferred communication methods and formats on admission.
- Provide written materials in accessible formats (large print, braille, audio, digital).
- Use visual supports and symbols where appropriate.
- Ensure staff are trained in communication needs and strategies.
- Review communication support regularly with pupils and families.
- Liaise with external specialists for communication aids and advice.

Appendix E – Equality Impact Assessment Template

| Policy/Practice/Change Assessed | Date of Assessment | Assessor(s) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| Protected Characteristic | Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None) | Mitigation or Enhancement Actions |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Age | | |
| Disability | | |
| Gender | | |
| Race/Ethnicity | | |
| Religion or Belief | | |
| Sexual Orientation | | |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | | |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | | |

Summary and Recommendations:

Assessor Signature: _ Date: