



| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Policy Title: | ACCESSIBILITY PLAN | ISI Policy number: 17b |
| Author: | Head of Operations | |
| Date of most recent review: | September 2024 | |
| Date of next review: | September 2025 | |

THREE YEAR PLAN FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SCHEDULE 10 OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The aim of this plan is to set out how Duke of Kent School intends to increase the accessibility of its activities, curriculum and facilities over the three-year period commencing September 2022.

Duke of Kent School is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all pupils in which all will access activities, facilities and the curriculum fully. The School will seek to identify, address and overcome barriers to full participation.

DUTY UNDER THE ACT

The Governing Body recognises its duty under the DDA, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act of 2001 together with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 'Accessibility for disabled pupils', the Children and Families Act 2014, SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years 2014 (SEND Code 2015) and is committed to:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improving the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School.
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled such as written information accessible in a range of different ways for disabled pupils.
- Not to discriminate against disabled people.
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably.
- To take reasonable steps (adjustments) to avoid placing disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage and to improve the developments in physical access to the education and other services.
- To publish this Disability Access Plan.

The duty not to discriminate covers all aspects of school life, including the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, educational visits and school trips. The duty to make reasonable adjustments refers to the full range of policies, procedures and practices of the School.

In deciding whether a step is reasonable, schools may take into account the need to maintain:

- Academic standards
- Available resources
- The practicalities of making a particular adjustment
- The Health & Safety of the disabled pupils and the interests of others

Duke of Kent School is committed to meeting the full requirements of the Act.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The DDA defines a disabled pupil as someone who has “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. The definition includes sensory impairments, learning impairments, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy, ADHD, severe allergies and major illnesses.

AIMS OF THE PLAN

This plan sets out the School’s proposals for increasing access to education for disabled pupils in the three main areas of:

- Increasing access to the School curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment
- Improving the delivery of information

ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School’s Health and Safety Committee will operate as a Disability Action Group. The group seeks advice and input from the Senior Leadership Team and includes the Head, Head of Operations, Designated Safeguarding Lead, School Nurse, nominated Governor, SENCO and Director of Sport.

The Group’s responsibilities are:

- to review the School’s policies, procedures and facilities to maximise accessibility to the School by those with additional needs, monitoring progress achieved since the previous Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan.
- to make recommendations to improve accessibility by means of reasonable adjustment and by planning future improvements, reporting to the Head any necessary changes to this plan annually.
- to monitor the implementation of this plan and to review as necessary and at least every 3 years.

AWARENESS

It is the School’s policy that staff and pupils are to be made aware of disability, understand its effects and accept, support and fully integrate disabled pupils as a part of School life.

- Appropriate staff INSET will be provided to enhance understanding of disability, the need for making reasonable adjustments in compliance with our legal duties and to improve our educational provision. In particular staff will be reminded annually of the need to alert line managers to any concern regarding pupil access to School life.
- Assembly and Form Time will include material designed to raise awareness of disability and to promote positive attitudes to disability.
- The Staff Briefing (academic staff meeting which is held three times weekly) and termly Staff Meeting will be used to disseminate information about any necessary information connected with pupil disability.
- Links with the School’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, Anti-Bullying policy and Staff Employment Manual will be reviewed in order to promote and reflect inclusiveness and to aid understanding and integration.
- The Director of Studies holds the Training Budget and staff are encouraged to apply for funds to enable them to attend external training to develop their skills and the School’s expertise in supporting pupils with disabilities. A number of School staff have received Mental Health First Aid training.

INCREASING ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

- 1.1 The School is committed to researching, understanding and addressing the barriers to curricular access experienced by pupils with physical, medical and cognitive disability to gain a greater understanding of the most effective and practical methods of supporting them. The School's tradition is of approaching support needs with individual programmes, reviewed on a regular basis: see Curriculum Policy.
- 1.2 Duke of Kent School places great importance on home-school partnership and is committed to working with parents prior to and following admission to address any anticipated or actual barriers to access to the curriculum. The requirements of any pupil with additional needs admitted to the School will be very carefully considered and discussed with parents/caregivers prior to the pupil's commencement at the School. Any material adaptations or approaches required will be identified and any necessary training will be provided to appropriate staff. The SENCO will co-ordinate the schedule of meetings, dissemination of information and development where necessary of a programme of appropriate special provision.
- 1.3 In all parts of the School, but particularly from Years 6 and above, children move through the site to access specialist teaching rooms. Wherever possible the School will consider the needs of an individual pupil in accessing a teaching room when the timetable is being created. Any anticipated or actual need for adjustment to site use will also be discussed by the SENCO with parents prior to and following admission.
- 1.4 Staff will be made aware of pupils with a disability or special educational need by the SENCO, the School Nurse or member of the Senior Management Team. Any member of staff requiring further information or training should alert his or her line manager.
- 1.5 Teaching and support will take due attention of the learning needs of all pupils according to their abilities and necessary differentiation should be reflected in departmental schemes of work and evident in any lesson planning materials produced.
- 1.6 Staff will continue to be made aware of strategies to make "reasonable adjustments" within the classroom so as to not to place disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage in accessing the curriculum.
- 1.7 The implementation of reasonable adjustments to classroom management for an individual pupil should take into account the Health & Safety of all pupils.
- 1.8 Teaching staff and pupils from Year 3 upwards are equipped with iPads/Chromebooks to support teaching and learning. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and their teaching staff receive training in how to use these devices to improve access to the curriculum.
- 1.9 For pupils with an EHCP plan, disability or applicable diagnosis, relevant Access Arrangements will be put in place according to current JCQ guidelines and dependent on the pupil's normal way of working. Pupils will be monitored within internal tests and exams and evidence gathered to support their Access Arrangement. The School has adopted a number of examination related policies in this respect and these can be viewed on the School's Staff Google Drive under Exams.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- 1.10 Duke of Kent School is a charity and does not have a large financial endowment or foundation. All improvements to the School have to be funded from its own activities and development and adaptations are subject to budgetary constraints. Where appropriate the School will seek to secure external funding to advance its programme of general access improvements or to purchase additional specialist equipment or support for individual pupils.

- 1.11 Parents should be aware that the School site is large, with the Sports Hall and changing facilities located at the bottom of a steep hill. The site also includes a Victorian mansion building and access around the building is not level and most entrances and exits to the Teaching Block involve steps. Teaching and pupil facilities are arranged over several floors. All these factors present access challenges, for example, for pupils with impaired mobility. However, the School is committed to making any reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils may participate fully in school life and a retractable ramp for school entrances is available when required. There is a disabled toilet and shower with ramp and rail access situated between the girl's and boy's changing rooms. In addition, there is a disabled toilet in Ness Hall (Sports Hall).
The School will continue to purchase or contract lease, mini buses which provide wheelchair access with the intention that all mini buses within the School's fleet will be able to offer this facility, subject to budgetary implications.
- 1.12 The School will seek to further address access issues over time as part of our buildings development and refurbishment programme with access a key focus in any planning of new developments.
Our All-Weather pitch has a ramp for wheelchair access to the pitch and spectator area.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- 1.13 In disseminating information we will take account of disabilities within our community, whether for pupils, staff or parents - for example, communicating with a parent who is visually impaired by telephone rather than letter. Wherever possible Duke of Kent School will use the means of communication stated as a preference by parents.
- 1.14 The School will seek to make reasonable adjustments so that information can be made available in an alternative format within a reasonable period should the School receive a request for such help. This might involve an alternative format such as Braille or audio tape or large print or orally or through sign language.

| TIMELINE | | |
|--|--|---|
| ACTION | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | TIMESCALE |
| Purchase/contract lease an additional minibus with wheelchair facilities/access. Also to ensure that when buses come to the end of their contracts, replacement buses have disabled access and wheelchair facilities. | Head of Operations/Finance Committee | From 2023 onwards New bus acquired 6/24 with disabled facilities. |
| Implementation of measures to improve accessibility to the Main School and Teaching Block for children with mobility difficulties. In particular, to review the footpath by the Top Pitch which is used as a pedestrian walkway to access the Main School. This is now part of the School's Strategic Business Development plan. | Head of Operations/Health and Safety Committee | By end of 2024 |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| All new furniture requests (tables/chairs) to be reviewed by Learning Development to ensure that the furniture is appropriate in size for the relevant age group of pupils and whether there are any special requirements to consider. | Head of Operations/Learning Development Team | Ongoing |
| To include disabled access when planning the new Eco building in the Forum as outlined in the School Strategic Plan. | Head of Operations/Head | By end of 2030 |
| Designated disabled parking behind the Teaching Block to allow access to ILC via ramp/bridge. | Head of Operations | By January 2025 |
| Create a disabled toilet in either the Teaching Block (Ground Floor) or ILC | Head of Operations | By end of 2025 following toilet refurbishments. |
| To review iPad/Chromebook priority for accessibility for LD pupils | Head of Learning and Development/Head of Digital Strategy | Ongoing |
| Whole School audit of classroom environments to ensure they meet the sensory needs of all our pupils | Learning and Development Team | April 2025 |
| To implement a day of lesson observations by the L & D Team to ensure that the curriculum/current classroom strategies reflect current pupil needs. | Learning and Development Team | Ongoing |
| To ensure that the newly appointed Academic Program & Data Coordinator is fully briefed on Learning and Development pupils in terms of standardized testing and tracking. | Learning and Development Team | Ongoing |
| To trial and explore the possibility of standing desks to support learning for those pupils who need movement or have attention difficulties. | Learning and Development Team | July 2024 Standing desks in situ and being used by pupils |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|
| To review whether any reasonable adjustments can be made for pupils with an ASC diagnosis to ensure they eat sufficient food and have access to foods they will eat during lunchtimes. | Learning and Development Team | Ongoing |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|