

## ACCESSIBILITY POLICY and ACTION PLAN

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

**Policy and Plan template reviewed by:** Laura Baker- Headteacher

**Review date:** 01/09/2025

**Submission:** 01/09/2025

**Version:** v8.0

**Policy actioned from:** September 2025

**Next review date:** 01/09/2026

**Reviewer's Signature:** 

Please note: 'School' refers to Chatsworth Schools; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

**POLICY AMENDMENT PAGE**

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## **Accessibility Policy and Action Plan**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Disability Policy.

### **Accessibility Policy**

#### **Introduction**

Accessibility planning is an integral part of the school's annual planning cycle. The Accessibility Plan, created in accordance with the planning duties of the Equality Act 2010 (as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and 2005 (SENDA)), forms part of the whole school development plan while remaining as a permanent agenda item in the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) meetings, ensuring it is a focus of attention.

Original legislation required the plan to cover a fixed 3-year period, as determined by the government. However, recent DfE guidance allows schools to choose any 3-year period. The school's plan covers the 3-year period as specified in its title. The school has adopted the format of planning for a rolling 3-year period; a new year is added at each annual review and the details of the completed year, annotated to record what has been achieved, are archived and made available on request to any appropriate inspection body. The coherence of the plan and its influence upon other developments is monitored by the SLT on an annual basis.

The Accessibility Plan draws on the guidance set out in:

- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- "What Equality Law Means For You As An Education Provider" (2014)
- "Equality Act 2010: What Do I Need to Know? Disability Quick Start Guide" (2011).

Over its 3-year period, the plan aims to:

- a) increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;
- b) improve 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;
- c) improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Adequate resources will be allocated for the implementation of this plan.

#### **Definitions of Disability and Special Educational Needs**

Disability is defined as follows by the Equality Act 2010:

A person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day- to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial; for example it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

The definition of Special Educational Needs in the Children and Families Act 2014 includes pupils with significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age, or a disability which means that a pupil cannot make full use of the general educational facilities provided for pupils of his or her age in mainstream schools. Not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa.

The SEND Code of Practice makes it clear that the definition of disability includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long term health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

### Progressive Conditions Considered to be a Disability

A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

### Conditions that are Specifically Excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

### Objective of the Accessibility Policy and Plan

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

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admission 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 (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty) in matters of admission and education

- To have and regularly to update an Accessibility Plan which meets the statutory requirements by being in writing and covering the three strands over time, as noted in the introduction, above.

The SEND Code identifies a clear focus on the participation of children and young people and their parents in decision-making at individual and strategic levels. 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, which underpin an inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

## Management

In formulating the plan, the SLT may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

The SLT's terms of reference are:

- To review the school's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled;
- To make decisions with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects, to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities, by means of reasonable adjustments and to implement, evaluate, and continue to review the effectiveness of any measures taken;
- To continue to review the school's Disability Policy;
- To continue to review the school's Accessibility Action Plan.

## Learning and Teaching

The school has:

- Appropriately trained SEND staff in each of its educational settings each equipped to deal with the range of mild or moderate learning difficulties experienced by children who, with our support, can benefit from the curriculum we follow.
- A strong and successful record of supporting children with a range of SEND needs by planning with parents and children, seeking advice from appropriate professionals and training staff with regard to any child's specific needs.
- Students are assessed for SEND upon admission and other times when a need is identified.

The school has a procedure for dealing with accessibility in advance of a child's admission or, in the case of the emergence of a disability, the following procedures are in place:

## Pre-Admission

A lot of planning takes place before the child arrives at school. This will include:

- Information gathering from parents, the child's current school or nursery and relevant external agencies.
- Writing an individual accessibility and/or education plan tailored to the needs of the child. This will involve meeting with parents and meeting with the child to discuss their preferences. It may also involve meeting with external agencies who specialise in dealing with that particular disability, who can offer support to the school when planning the appropriate provision for the child.
- Providing adequate training for staff, who will be responsible for that child, so that they feel confident to carry out the plan.
- Providing the correct resources for the child so that he/she has as much access to the curriculum as is reasonably practicable.

## After Admission

Planning and undertakings will include:

- Managing and recording the pastoral care of the child through the school's pastoral system and fostering the child's social and emotional development, with appropriate documentation.
- Reviewing the plan with the parents and child and, where relevant external agencies, at appropriate intervals so that planning can be put in place for the following term.
- Communicating with future schools with regard to the child's needs.

If the onset of disability occurs during a child's time with us, all of the above will be put in place.

## Training

The overall planning of staff training is undertaken by the SENDCO and Head. Training is given to the whole staff (full-time and part-time) on SEND and Disability on at least a two-year cycle. Training is undertaken on a whole staff basis with regard to learning styles, learning differences, learning difficulties and multi-sensory teaching over an extended period.

Training is undertaken on a 'need-to-know' basis with regard to, for example, asthma, epilepsy, anaphylaxis, colostomy management, cystic fibrosis and other conditions. Training will continue to be tailored to provision for and understanding of specific conditions as appropriate.

## Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is an agenda item at each meeting of the SLT and forms part of the annual development plan.

A Health and Safety Committee, comprising appropriate members of staff, meets termly to consider all matters of Health and Safety.

Arrangements for Health and Safety on trips and visits are scrutinised and approved by the Head and Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

## Physical Environment

The Head has overall responsibility for the school's physical environment.

The school recognises that environmental adjustments cannot readily be made in response to the arrival of a child with a disability and that, therefore, longer-term planning is needed to ensure that environmental factors are improved including access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is where the Action Plan becomes a part of the policy.

The plan below sets out the action being taken by the school as positive steps to promote equality and eradicate discrimination for all.

## Disability Policy Review

The responsibility of review is the Senior Leadership Team.

The terms of reference are:

- to review the school's policies, procedures and facilities, as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled, and to prepare an audit of current provision.
- to make recommendations with a view to improving accessibility of the school's education to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities, by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future by preparing an Accessibility Plan.
- to review such plans and policies as necessary at least every three years.
- an audit of current provision

## Admissions

Admission to the school is on a non-selective basis (no written assessments are taken). We welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with physical disabilities provided that our site can cope with them. The school's policy is to enrol pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, provided that the school can accommodate their needs within the parameters of reasonable adjustments.

The school asks parents of prospective pupils if special needs should be taken into consideration. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as considered appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

The life of the school is enhanced by inclusive policies, but equal importance must be given to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

## Delivery of the Curriculum

Through INSET, staff meetings and other initiatives, such as online learning, we train classroom staff on developing inclusive approaches towards teaching.

## Classroom Arrangements

Freestanding tables and chairs in most classrooms mean that furniture can be rearranged easily to accommodate disabled students. Where appropriate for learning needs, the school encourages the use of laptops or other portable devices. The majority of rooms are fitted with blinds, which might be of benefit to students with visual and auditory impairment. Lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve. For example, provision may be made for dyslexic and dyspraxic students to use laptops in lessons and for tests. The school keeps detailed records of pupils' needs and the range of support provided, which it uses to make application for extra provision in public and formal examinations.

## Delivering Material in other Formats

ICT and photocopying facilities are available to produce large print information.

## Visits

School visits are open to all, provided the appropriate medical practitioner declares any individual with a medical condition is well enough to travel. However, the school might need to consider the transport and accommodation needs of a wheelchair user.

## Policies

Details of the Equal Opportunities policy, including disability, are published in the staff handbook. This policy and plan should also be read in conjunction with the SEND and Inclusion Policy.

## School Design: Access to Buildings

Reasonable adjustments have been made to all areas of the school, but some may well require further changes to accommodate individual new students – this will be assessed at the time of application.

## Emergency Evacuation

If a pupil with a disability is admitted to the school, relevant staff will be provided with training to support the pupil's emergency evacuation. Within the structure of the current premises, a number of modifications may be possible in order to increase accessibility for disabled pupils and parents.

Should it be beneficial for a pupil with a disability, the school will create a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), consulting, as relevant, with the pupil's medical practitioner and the emergency services.

In planning for emergency evacuation, if appropriate, the school will consider, for example:



- equipping fire alarms and bells with additional visible signals to meet the needs of any deaf pupils.
- acquiring an 'evac-chair' or similar equipment to facilitate the emergency evacuation of a pupil with mobility difficulties.

## Interpretation

In this policy, the term “senior manager” means the School Head and their designated deputies.

This policy applies to all employees in all Schools (save for Schools with their own procedure which shall prevail) and other work environments within Chatsworth Schools.

This policy applies within all companies, which are wholly owned subsidiaries of Chatsworth Schools Ltd, a company registered in England, registered number 11552579.

The registered office of all companies is Crimea Office, The Great Tew Estate, Great Tew, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 4AH. Any enquiries regarding the application of this policy should be addressed to the Director of Information at the above address.

## Key Action Areas – Sample Document

The following table provides a summary of the school's priority areas for action.

Key Action Areas	Timescale
a) increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;	
<p>The school aims to employ a full-time support assistant in line with the recommendation of the EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)</p> <p>The school aims to improve communication between CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and CS by designating the appropriate Head of Section to attend case meetings of pupils.</p> <p>The school aims to further recognise diversity in our school culture by delivering tailored diversity events (such as assemblies and theme days, etc.) for under-represented groups within the school, so that all pupils feel valued and included in our school community.</p> <p>The school aims to continue to improve the way by which all pupils, including those that are disabled, participate in developing school policies, for example, reviewing the pupil representatives on the 'school council' at the end of each year.</p> <p>The school aims to allow laptop usage during class writing assignments for pupils with dyslexia and dyspraxia.</p> <p>The school aims to make PE lessons accessible to all.</p>	Ongoing.
b) improve 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;	
<p>To school aims to move classrooms to accommodate pupils who find it difficult to go up and down the stairs. This will be minimised and only require going up and down the stairs inside the building twice a week (once for library and once for music lessons).</p> <p>The school aims to utilise sound absorbent boards in the classroom where pupils who wear cochlear implants spend the majority of their learning time (in line with the recommendation of the EHCP).</p> <p>The school aims to complete a walk through to ensure all areas of the school are physically accessible as possible for pupils and staff.</p>	At the beginning of each school year.

c) improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.	
The school aims to use as many visual aids as possible during lesson time as well as signage around the school.	Ongoing

## Accessibility Plan 2021 - 2024

**\*Note:** In the Resources & Cost Estimate column, the following code is used: £ = £0 to £50, ££ = £51 to £500, £££ = £501 to £5000, ££££ = over £5000.

**SECTION A:** Increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
To provide access during lessons to SEND pupils in order to support with spellings and longer tasks.	SENDCO to observe and ensure these provisions are being used. There are a few children with this option available to them in their Pupil Passport. These pupils will also have weekly touch typing sessions to support their ability to best utilise the iPads. SENDCO to ensure this is having a beneficial impact on their attainment.	SENDCO	iPads, touch typing account on <a href="https://benedictthompson.edclub.com/">https://benedictthompson.edclub.com/</a>	Reviewed termly	Pupils with learning needs are able to demonstrate their understanding effectively. Pupils who need to use iPads are able to touch type at a speed that is faster than their writing speed. Speed is noted in the SEN Intervention Tracker. Pupils will be able to use the speech to text function to get their ideas down and then go back and edit them.	MH 3-12-24 Pupils all deemed to be utilising this access arrangement effectively and will remain part of their Pupil Passport.

To provide access to the curriculum for pupils with EAL.	<p>Upon registering with the school the EAL pathway map will be followed. Phonics and reading assessments will be conducted to gauge level of English understanding and whether or not to implement phonics intervention group and extra visual aids (e.g. PECS cards or communication boards).</p>	SENDCO & Class Teachers	PECS cards, phonics boards, RWI assessments	Reviewed half termly	Pupils with EAL will have equal access to the curriculum.	
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To provide access to assessments to SEND pupils.	<p>Access arrangements are put in place to internal assessments and applied for for external examination to ensure equal access for students with SEND.</p> <p>To continue to support staff in providing access arrangements for pupils who have SEND by providing readers, scribes, extra time, coloured paper/overlays, movement breaks, separate room arrangements, etc.</p>	SENDCO & Class Teachers	SENDCO, TA, Class teacher time	Reviewed termly	No SEND pupil is put at a disadvantage during an assessment or test. All pupils have equal access to tests and are able to show what they can do.	
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To learn about and manage the care of a pupil with Cochlear Implants.	<p>SENDCO to monitor and review the new joiner that has cochlear implants.</p> <p>SENDCO to review the curriculum to ensure it enables his learning.</p> <p>Training to be provided to staff regarding what can be heard, how cochlear implants work and how best to communicate with the child.</p>	SENDCO	Acoustic modifications, radio aid, staff training (costs covered by funding from the LA)	First two weeks in September 2024 and then ongoing.	<p>Assess in class (with particular attention to phonics and interactions with peers and adults) and out of class, transitions and participation.</p> <p>All staff who work directly with the child will be knowledgeable with how to use the radio aid.</p>	MH 23-09-24 ongoing monitoring will occur
To ensure that a range of learning resources that are accessible for pupils with different disabilities.	Class Teachers and TAs to look at resources that would support SEND pupils within their class to access the curriculum. Subject Co-ordinators to review resources in their curriculum areas collaborating with the SENDCO. The SENDCO will organise the purchase of resources required.	SENDCO, Subject Co-ordinators & Class Teachers	<p>Exercise bands, coloured paper, tinted books, writing slopes, loop scissors, pencil grips, multiplication charts, communication boards, etc.</p> <p>£-£££</p>	<p>Annually and as necessary for individual pupils.</p> <p>SENDCO to ask for a list in February 2025.</p>	Pupils with different disabilities have increased access to the curriculum.	



To enable pupils with dyslexia or weak working memory to remember instructions and access the curriculum effectively.	Teachers provide written instructions / visual aids / hand-outs of information. Students permitted to take photographs of the whiteboard in lessons. Teachers link new information to prior knowledge. Use speech to text function to aid with typing on iPads. Pupils have access to iPads.	SENDCO, Class Teachers, TAs	Staff training, iPads	Termly reviews on strategies for pupils	Pupils with dyslexia or weak working memory are supported to retain information and access the tasks in class independently.	
To ensure different tools are being used by staff like coloured paper, overlays, fonts, etc.	SENDCO will monitor the use of equipment/tools.	Teachers – monitored by SENDCO	Books with tinted pages, photocopier coloured paper, coloured overlays, enlarged fonts	October 2024	Resources are being used by teachers and given to pupils.	MH 21-10-24 then ongoing

To enable pupils with learning needs to make good progress and attain in line with their underlying ability.	Provide individual or group interventions for pupils struggling to access the curriculum. Review the attainment for all SEND pupils. Provide group reading and spelling support using individualised computer programmes. Provide group curriculum support.	SENDCO & Class Teachers	SENDCO time Leadership time TA time Reading and Spelling programme, 15 licenses ££	Termly progress reviews	The progress across the curriculum of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special education needs currently on the school roll matches or is improving towards that of other pupils with the same starting points.	
To increase the confidence and skills of all staff in noticing and supporting pupils with learning needs.	Develop a plan of training for all staff in noticing and supporting the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff to complete the Autism Awareness, ADHD Awareness and Dyslexia Awareness EduCare courses prior to school starting in September 2024.	SENDCO & SLT	SENDCO time Leadership time EduCare	Annual Review – July 2025	Staff are confident to identify and support children with learning needs and disabilities.	Ongoing

**SECTION B:** Improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school:

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
Provide designated disabled parking	Incorporate into master plan redevelopment project	Director of Estates & Facilities & Site Manager	Recent Travel plan has been commissioned Oct '23 where BHPS will install x1 disabled bay to front of the Elizabeth Building ££££	August 2025	Improve access to school main building and the rest of the school site	
Improve signage	<b>To discuss the potential of illuminating signs with the Director of Estates &amp; Facilities</b> with a view to improve visibility of school entrances and access route better. SENDCO and Site Manager will do a site walk to assess need.	Director of Estates & Facilities & Site Manager, SENDCO	Bursar & Facilities managers to establish ££££	Dec '25	Clear signage directing pupils, staff and visitors around each site	

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
Reduce external trip hazards	Ensure external pathways and steps are accessible to all and hazards are clearly marked	Site Manager	Site Manager time, SENDCO time & Bursar time, paint £££	July 2025	Steps at all access points to be audited and plan put in place to edge paint in fluorescent yellow Once audited plan to be discussed with SENDCO of when to complete	
Access Ramps	Ensure all wheelchair access ramps are serviceable and meet the 1:15 gradient	Site Manager	SENDCO & Facilities Site Manager to assess the requirement for ramps for steps for around the school	Dec 2025	Access ramps are serviceable and compliant	
Differentiate doors and corridors	When re-decorating corridors and doors ensure high contrast between walls and doors to assist visually impaired	Site Manager, Site Assistant	Site Manager time, Site Assistant time, paint £££	Between January 2025 and August 2026	Doors and corridors easily differentiated	
Soundproofing	Install soundproofing boards to x2 reception classrooms, blinds in all classrooms	Site Manager, SENDCO & Bursar	Site Manager to incorporate into master plan Site Management time	Sept '24	Improve environment for hearing impaired pupils and visitors	MH - Sept '24

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
			Blinds Sound absorbent boards ££££			
Stairs	Ensure all stair nosing's are secure and handrails are fitted where required External Fire Escape Stairs Inspected 5 Years	Site Manager & Bursar	Site manager to incorporate into monthly workplace inspection tour rolling maintenance programme ££££	Sept '25	Railings for new MUGA access to be installed before MUGA completion External Fire Escape remedials x1 quote in another en route	
Disabled WC facilities	Ensure existing and future facilities meet DDA requirements	Director of Estate & Facilities	To install as part of renovation of the Elizabeth Building ££££	Sept '22	To provide appropriate facilities for pupils, staff and visitors	JR & MG – Sept '22

**SECTION C:** Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled:

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
To provide information to parents about Special Needs provision.	Special Educational Needs policy to be updated annually and to be kept on the school website.	SENDCO	SENDCO	Updated annually	Up to date policy live on website	Parents provided with access to policies MH – Sept '24 Parents of pupils on the SEND register have regular termly meetings with the class teacher to review their progress and ad hoc meetings with the SENDCO.
To provide information to parents about the external help available to them.	List available of Speech and Language Therapists, Optometrists, Audiologists, and Educational Psychologists	SENDCO	SENDCO	Ongoing	Parents have access to the information necessary to ensure full access to the curriculum for their children.	A list of external agencies created and provided to relevant parents. This list will be continuously added to.

Target	Action	Person Responsible for Action	Resources & Cost Estimate*	Time frame	Outcomes for learners (to include monitoring arrangements and progress)	Date Achieved & Signed Off
	Provide, as requested, available NHS referral pathways to parents.					
Children to be made aware of what SEN is and inclusivity and how it is beneficial for all and that we all have barriers.	Assembly for children on what is a barrier and what is a special need.	SENDCO	No cost.	Summer Term 2025	For children to be more tolerant of each other and aware we all need help sometimes.	

