THE DOWNS
PREPARATORY SCHOOL
BRISTOL

Bertie's
NURSERY SCHOOL
Wraxall

8.7 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The Equality Act (2010) is the legislation that protects our community from discrimination against age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

According to the Equality Act (2010) a person has a disability if:

- He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan must be reviewed minimum every three years and approved by the Governing Body. At The Downs, the review and approval process is delegated to the Risk & Regulatory Committee. The current Action Plan is appended to this document.

- The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the School's Equality Opportunity and Disability Policy objectives.

- The Downs Preparatory School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act (2010) with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the School.

- The Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

  - Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. It also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
  - Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the School, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the School and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;

- Improve the delivery of written information to pupils with disabilities to ensure they can access all aspects of the curriculum

Aims

The Downs School aims to offer the highest quality of teaching and learning and support all pupils in the pursuit of academic and personal excellence. We have high expectations of all of our pupils, EYFS to Y8, and we strive to ensure that as far as possible, every pupil can take part in the whole School curriculum. We value the diversity of our School community and appreciate the contribution that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can bring to School life.

We strive to be a fully inclusive and welcoming School and have an Admissions Policy and criteria which seek to remove barriers to entry to our School for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities.

Context

Our staff regularly review their teaching strategies to ensure that any potential barriers to learning and participation by SEND pupils are removed. We promote the importance of using language that does not offend amongst both our staff and our pupils and ensure that, wherever possible, positive examples of disability are portrayed in teaching materials.

We take a fully inclusive approach to our staff recruitment and aim to appoint the best person based on their skill set and qualifications and regardless of any disability he/she might have. We always consider the School's Equal Opportunities Policy for staff in our day-to-day management.

We offer accessible written information to pupils with disabilities such as sentence starters and written instructions in class for pupils with literacy difficulties and we support different ways of documenting information depending on the pupil's needs for example, visual representation of ideas, scribing for pupils with co-ordination difficulties. We apply and support access arrangements from Year 4, where pupils have had a professional assessment and encourage that these arrangements are adhered to in the classrooms to ensure it becomes the pupil's normal way of working.

Physical Access

The Downs Preparatory School is a single campus set on a level site. The buildings reflect the development of the School over a century and are within easy reach by foot, although access to some parts does involve stairways, steps and slopes. Buildings vary from single storey to three floors, some of which contain several staircases and some narrow corridors. There are no lifts.

We review and take steps to 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 associated services offered by the School.

It is normal practice for pupils to move within and around the buildings and to be taught in classrooms and in specialist rooms, with appropriate subject resources. The School has an active monitoring policy and will do its best to make adjustments to take account of an individual pupil's needs, within the constraints imposed by its buildings on a scattered site. We are progressively improving facilities for disabled access and wheel chair users as our buildings are upgraded. Most recently, the development of the School's swimming pool has included step-free access to the pool via a DDA-compliant sloped pathway, in addition to disabled changing, shower & toilet facilities.

Where it is practicable to make reasonable adjustments to enable a prospective pupil to take up a place at the School and to satisfy the current admission criteria, the School is committed to providing those reasonable adjustments.

In order to meet the needs of disabled pupils, the School requires full information. The School will ask all applicants for admission to disclose whether they have received any learning support, have had an educational psychologist's report, are in the process of applying for, or have and EHCP, or have any disability or other condition of which the School should be aware.

In assessing the pupil or prospective pupil, the School may need to take advice and require assessments as appropriate. The School will be sensitive to any issues of confidentiality.

Monitoring & Evaluation

At The Downs Preparatory School, the Leadership Team is responsible for:

- The annual review of the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled. This annual review is shared with Governors with overall responsibility for their review and approval.
- Making recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future
- Preparing the School's Accessibility Plan
- To review such plans and policies as necessary and at least on an annual basis

The Learning Hub (LH) Team (previously called Learning Support) are continually auditing our provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The following related matters are regularly monitored:

Admissions
Attainment
Attendance
Education
Extra-curricular activities
Physical school environment
Selection and recruitment of staff
Sporting education and activities
Staff training
Welfare

1) Aim: To increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the School's curriculum

Targets	*Strategies*	*Timescale*	*Responsibilities*	*Success Criteria*
To liaise with Nursery providers to review pupils registered for September each academic year	To review which pupils may need additional or different provision to that established in current year	Annually: Summer	Head of Pre-Prep EYFS lead/teachers	Any individual plans required in place by September each year
To review all essential policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	To comply with the Equality Act (2010) *(Essential relevant policies : Curriculum; Health & Safety; Medical Treatment & First Aid; Equal Opportunities; EAL & EHC Plans; Accessibility Plan)*	Annually	SLT Head of LH Head of Nursery	Policy compliance checks reveal inclusive practice and procedure
To ensure close liaison with parents	To ensure collaboration and shared information between School and families Coffee Mornings arranged for open discussion Regular parent meetings	Annually	Head of LH SLT Class teachers	Clear collaborative working approach
To maintain close liaison with external agencies for pupils with ongoing additional needs	To ensure collaboration with external agencies and clear triangulation of observations and information. Clear records kept and shared with relevant parties via pastoral care meetings and other	Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) carry individual review dates	Head of LH External agents	Clear collaborative working approach
To ensure full access to the curriculum for all pupils	Use of INCAS and in class assessment to flag up additional needs and informs practice. In addition, summative data from attainment screening tests. A dedicated team of three Learning Support teachers to provide 1:1 numeracy / literacy support A team of two matrons providing additional support and observation Educational Psychology assessments inform provision and recommendations followed up	Termly EHCPs carry individual review dates	Head of LH Section Heads Deputy Heads	Advice taken and strategies evident in teaching practice

	Visiting Occupational Therapist (OT) provides recommendations for supporting equipment Laptops and reading pens provided in examinations and in class to those that are eligible Make best use of Section Head meetings to triangulate information and share experience			
To review attainment of all LH pupils	Regular progress meetings Standardised assessments made in numeracy and literacy Bi-annual parent meetings	Termly X 2 annually	Head of LH	Review progress against Individual Education Profile (IEP) / Pupil Provision Map (PPM)
To promote the involvement of visually impaired pupils in classroom activities	The School has provided, where appropriate needs are identified: • Additional copy texts for close range view at story time • Enlarged worksheets and visual aids via iPad for full participation in class exercises • Writing slope for improved view of visual aids *(V.I. pupil left the School Aut19 but staff remain skilled if similar needs arise in other pupils.)*	Ongoing	Head of LH Class teachers	Review against progress IEP/PPM
To promote the involvement of disabled pupils in classroom and other activities	The School may provide, where appropriate needs are identified : • Wheelchair access – a range of movable access ramps are held • Creating positive attitudes to disability within the School so that all pupils have an understanding of the needs of disabled pupils • Sensory toys and learning equipment provided where appropriate	Regular Health & Safety review	Whole School approach Internal Health & Safety Committee review access issues annually	Variety of teaching styles and activities matching pupils need evident in the classroom
Deliver findings to the Governing Body	Inset day presentations/ reviews/ meetings as required	Annually	Head of LH, and SLT SLT	Key Governors informed of provision and progress (Internal

	Education Committee reviews progress and standardised assessments Internal Health & Safety Committee consider improving physical access when alerted to new pupils with needs that require new levels of adjustment	Termly meetings	Section Heads	H&S Committee, with escalation to Risk & Regulatory Committee as required)

2) Aim : To improve the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in writing for pupils who are not disabled

Targets	*Strategies*	*Timescale*	*Responsibilities*	*Success Criteria*
To enable improved access to written information for pupils, parents and visitors.	Review available software to support learners with reading difficulties Raising awareness of font size and page layouts will support pupils with visual impairments. Auditing signage around the School to ensure that is accessible to all is a valuable exercise (pictorial signage where relevant)	Annual: Autumn term	Head of LH SLT Head of Nursery Deputy Heads Early Years Lead	Findings of reviews implemented
To ensure all pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have access to the curriculum	Regular parental communication Individualised multi-sensory teaching strategies considered *Current ASD pupil with EHCP in receipt of weekly 1:1 LSA support to ensure provision and inclusion*	By September each year	Head of LH SLT 1:1 LSA	Evidence of pupils' increased involvement in curriculum
To ensure that all pupils with ADD/ADHD have access to the curriculum	Regular parental communication Individualised behavioural and teaching strategies considered *Current ADHD pupil with EHCP in receipt of weekly 1:1 LSA support to ensure provision and inclusion.*	By September each year	Head of LH SLT 1:1 LSA	Evidence of pupils' increased involvement in curriculum
To review children's records ensuring School's awareness of any disabilities	Share information collected about new children via Pastoral Care and Transference Meetings Records passed up to each class teacher and through end of year class teacher meetings IEP/PPM review meetings Medical records updated as soon as new individual conditions identified and reviewed annually for all children	Annually and more regularly if required	All Teaching and Nursery Staff	All staff aware of disabilities within their own class responsibilities and beyond

	Where significant health problems exist – children's photos displayed on Staff notice board			

3) Aim : To improve the physical environmental of the School in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the School

Targets	*Strategies*	*Timescale*	*Responsibilities*	*Success Criteria*
Improve physical environment of School and Nursery premises	The School will take account of the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.	Continuous	Governing Body SLT	Enabling needs to be met where possible Participation in all events regardless of mobility issues. Note: Nursery extension completed April 2022; Swimming Pool re-development completed 2023, including appropriate access & facilities.
Ensure visually stimulating environment for all children	Colourful, lively displays in classrooms and inviting role play areas	Annual: Autumn Term	SLT Teaching Staff Head of Nursery	Lively and inviting environment maintained
Ensuring all with a disability are able to be involved	Create access plans for individual disabled children as part of IEP/PPM process Accessible toilet facilities provided for disabled pupils and visitors.	With immediate effect, to be continually reviewed	Whole School approach	Enabling needs to be met where possible
Ensuring visually impaired pupil has independent and safe movement about the site	Create visual aids to identify routes around School and to provide early warning of approach to hazards • Playground seating replaced with highly colourful seating • Play equipment has bright demarcation lines of steps and edges • Steps have contrasting nosings to aid independent movement	Ongoing	Internal H&S Committee Teaching Staff	Enabling needs and integration to be met where possible

	(V.I. pupil left Aut19 but adjustments remain for a future need)			
To ensure that the medical needs of all pupils are met fully within the capability of the School	To conduct parent interviews, liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and establish individual protocols where needed. Specific focus on pupil allergies: - Lanyards for pupils with allergies for mealtimes - Appropriate crockery for Dining Hall mealtimes (e.g. red bowls for puddings) - Photos of pupils with severe allergies displayed appropriately for staff - Relevant teachers carry laminated lists of pupils' medical conditions (updated regularly by Matrons)	With immediate effect, to be reviewed termly	SLT Matron Head of Nursery	
Ensuring disabled parents have every opportunity to be involved	Utilise disabled parking spaces for disabled to drop and collect children Offer a telephone call to explain letters home for some parents who need this. Adopt a more proactive approach to identifying the access requirements of disabled parents; consider questions in the confidential pupil information questionnaire about parents/carers' access needs	With immediate effect, to be continually reviewed	SLT Matron Head of Nursery	Enabling needs met where possible.
To ensure driveway, roads, paths and internal and external staircases around School are as safe as possible	Regular communication with parents via safety messages regarding temporary changes and hazards Weekly site walkabouts by Bursar	With immediate effect, to be continually reviewed	Estates & Facilities Manager Bursar	

To ensure that anyone who has a disability that requires a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is catered for i.e. all staff, pupils and visitors	Appropriate guidance is given to Reception office staff to ensure that PEEPs are issued in all appropriate circumstances *Note: Specific PEEPs have been developed for individual pupils and visitors as required through the School year*	As requested	Reception Staff Bursar Estates & Facilities Manager	Evacuations are successful and all personnel and visitors accounted for. Disabled people feel safe.

This policy (or Handbook) was updated on	**Signed on behalf of the School/Nursery**	**Date for next review**
10/06/26	*Jonathan Barclay*	*10/06/28*

Overview required by Risk & Regulatory Committee	**Policy uploaded to ISI Portal**	**Policy updated to website**
May 2026	*n/a*	*June '26*