

# **Staines Preparatory School**



## **Accessibility Plan September 2024-2027**

### **September 2025**

## Introduction

Staines Preparatory School ('the School') aims to ensure that all pupils and staff, regardless of disabilities or learning needs, have equal access to the School. We have high expectations of all of our pupils and staff, and we strive to ensure that each and every pupil and staff member can take part in the whole school curriculum. We value the diversity of our school community and celebrate inclusion for all.

### Definition of 'disability'

The Equality Act defines a 'disability' as when a person has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities. This has some overlap with the definition of 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities' (SEND) in the Children and Families Act (2014), but not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa. 'Disabled pupils', for the purpose of this policy, refers not only to those pupils with physical disabilities but could include, for example, those with health issues, including mental health, or learning disabilities if they meet the legal definition of 'disability'.

### Expectations of staff

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that they do not treat a disabled person less favorably than someone else for a reason relating to the person's disability
- Not indirectly discriminate against a pupil with a disability by failing to make a reasonable adjustment when a disabled pupil is placed, or is likely to be placed, at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled (also see the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and the Reasonable Adjustments section below)
- Implement reasonable adjustments
- Ensure that if a pupil discloses a disability, the member of staff should request their permission, where appropriate, to share this information with relevant colleagues

This policy covers three aspects:

**Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the School's curriculum.** This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers entry into the school.

**Improving the provision of written information to disabled pupils, in particular that which has already been produced for pupils who are not disabled.** This will include planning approaches by which the school will make written information (e.g. handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about School events) more accessible to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The delivery of such information should be in ways which are determined after taking into account the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents and be within a reasonable timeframe.

**Improving 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** This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

The School is committed to meeting legislative requirements, providing access as defined above and nurturing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness. The School will not treat disabled pupils less favorably and will take reasonable steps (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty) to avoid putting disabled pupils at a disadvantage in matters of admission and education. As a result, the School has regard to the need to allocate adequate resources for the implementation of this policy.

This policy is written under the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice (2014, updated May 2015) ('the Code') and Schedule 10 of the Equality Act (2010) ('the Act') (as outlined in the Independent School Standards Regulations) and sets out the School's strategy relating to improving access for disabled pupils, including those with learning difficulties. It draws upon the DfE guidance The Equality Act 2010 and schools (2014).

This policy is closely linked to the School's Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and should be read in conjunction with that policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with:

- The Equal Opportunities Policy
- The Admissions Policy
- The Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Policy
- The Health and Safety Policy

The duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' does not include a duty to change physical features. It does include a duty 'to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide auxiliary aids ... where a disabled person would, but for the provision of the auxiliary aids, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled'.

The term "auxiliary aids" found in the Act cover both auxiliary aids and services but there is no legal definition for what constitutes auxiliary aids and services. Examples of what may be considered an auxiliary aid could be hearing loops, adaptive keyboards and special software. There is no generic definition of what constitutes a 'reasonable adjustment'; the key test is reasonableness, which will always be specific to the pupil and context.

For further information about reasonable adjustments, please also see the School's SEND Policy and the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the School's curriculum

When planning, teachers will need to set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to succeed, including pupils with disabilities. They should plan their approaches to teaching and learning so that all pupils can take part in lessons fully and effectively. To create effective learning environments this will include:

- valuing all contributions
- ensuring pupils feel secure and able to contribute appropriately
- ensuring that all forms of bullying will be challenged

Many pupils with disabilities learn alongside their peers with little need for additional resources beyond the aids which they use as part of their daily life (e.g. a wheelchair, a hearing aid or equipment to aid vision). However, teachers must take account of potential barriers to learning and, where necessary, ensure in their planning that they make provision to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to participate as fully and effectively as possible in the curriculum and assessment activities. This may include adapting / modifying resources and / or making them more accessible, e.g. providing soft copies / printed copies of teaching material, ensuring font sizes and reproduced materials are fully accessible, etc. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset of work. Also, during assessments, teachers should bear in mind that reasonable adjustments may need to be made to support individual pupils.

Curriculum planning and assessment for pupils with SEND must take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil. Disabled pupils may need access to specialist equipment and approaches or to alternative or adapted activities, consistent with school-based intervention augmented by advice and support from external specialists. Teachers should work closely with the Learning Support Department and, where appropriate, representatives of other agencies who may be supporting the pupil.

Teachers will need to plan for pupils' full participation in learning and in physical and practical activities through:

- using specialist aids and equipment
- providing support from adults or peers when needed
- adapting tasks or environments
- providing alternative activities, where necessary

Teachers should also take specific action to enable the effective participation of pupils with disabilities, for example by:

- planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for the satisfactory completion of tasks, for example by:
  - taking account of the very slow pace at which some pupils will be able to record work, either manually or with specialist equipment, and of the physical effort required

- being aware of the high levels of concentration necessary for some pupils when following or interpreting text or graphics, particularly when using vision aids or tactile methods, and of the tiredness which may result to allocating sufficient time, opportunity and access to equipment for pupils to gain information through experimental work and detailed observation
- being aware of the effort required by some pupils to follow oral work, whether through use of residual hearing, lip reading or a signer, and of the tiredness or loss of concentration which may occur.
- planning opportunities, where necessary, for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum, for example by:
  - providing adapted, modified or alternative activities or approaches to learning in physical education and ensuring that these have integrity and equivalence to the curriculum and enable pupils to make appropriate progress
  - providing alternative or adapted activities in science, art and design and design and technology for pupils who are unable to manipulate tools, equipment or materials or who may be allergic to certain types of materials
  - ensuring that all pupils can be included and participate safely in geography fieldwork, local studies and visits to museums, historic buildings and sites, etc.
- identifying aspects of the curriculum that may present specific difficulties for individuals.

### **Sports**

The Games Department will need to make plans to consider provision for disabled pupils. Specifically, for disabled pupils who cannot access an activity, teachers will need to provide one or all of the following:

- adapted, modified or alternative activities that have integrity and equivalence to the activities followed by other pupils and that enable the pupils to make progress
- specific support to enable the pupils to participate in certain activities or types of movement
- careful management of the pupils' physical regime to allow for specific medical conditions

### **Recreational activities and School extracurricular activities**

Most recreational areas for break and lunchtimes are accessible. Most after-school clubs will be accessible. Access to school trips may require alternative forms of transport.

For further information about the School's curriculum, co-curricular provision and approaches to teaching, please see the School's Curriculum Policy and the School's Special Education Needs and Disability Policy

Improving the provision of written information to disabled pupils, in particular that which has already been produced for pupils who are not disabled

Written information provided to pupils in School covers a wide range of areas. Most obviously there is the curriculum material provided through visual presentations (including, for example, textbooks and worksheets). This can be complemented by written information on white boards, flip charts or interactive technologies. Accessibility issues are considered when new equipment is acquired by the School to ensure that the current and future needs of all pupils are met as far as is reasonable.

In addition to curriculum information there is the wide variety of other information provided by the Schools to its pupils (e.g. the class timetable, homework diary, a letter about a class excursion, the School's weekly newspaper, etc.). Where reasonable, this information will be provided in an accessible way to pupils with disabilities, recognising that different pupils are likely to require different arrangements in different situations.

Accessibility for all learners is considered when introducing and setting up new ICT hardware (e.g. interactive whiteboards / display screens), peripherals and software.

Reception have a portable induction loop that may be borrowed on occasion. Longer term use would be discussed with parents where required and organised. Information about outside organisations who can provide British Sign Language Interpreters and places where larger documents can be put into Braille.

Improving 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

Although the duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' does not include a duty to change physical features, the School has a planning duty which includes physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services. The School will continue to work towards improving access for the disabled and intends to make alterations to the physical features of the School as part of its long-term planning process.

#### Wheelchair users

The majority of the school, all lower ground is accessible to portable ramps are available to enable access to some additional areas

#### Support for Specific Areas of Need

It is important for teachers to make adjustments to help disabled pupils overcome difficulties presented by particular aspects of the teaching and learning programme, for instance by:

- using approaches to enable hearing-impaired pupils to learn about sound in science and music • helping visually impaired pupils to learn about light in science, to access maps and visual resources in geography and to evaluate different products in design and technology and images in art and design
- providing opportunities for pupils to develop strength in depth where they cannot meet the particular requirements of a subject, such as the visual requirements in art and design and the singing requirements in music
- adjusting or discounting these aspects in appropriate individual cases when required to make a judgement or academic attainment.

#### Access Arrangements

Arrangements in Entrance Examinations and Public Examinations will duly be considered, and adaptations will be made if reasonably able.

#### Working with external advisors

The Learning Support Department, School Nurse and / or Pastoral and Wellbeing Advisor can be contacted by parents in relation to assessment of and on-going work with pupils. Where appropriate, the School will make use of external advisors (e.g. medical practitioners and Educational Psychologists)

Health and Safety There is a welfare team on site daily during normal school hours who would oversee the administration of any medicines required for a disabled pupil. The School's health and safety procedures, including the procedures for evacuation of disabled pupils in the event of an emergency (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)), are described in the relevant policies, which are reviewed and revised where appropriate to incorporate the needs of disabled pupils.

For further information about provision for pupils with SEND, please refer to the School's SEND policy.

#### Staff Training

It is recognised that there is a need to ensure that skills are more specifically developed to enable teachers to provide effectively for pupils with a range of disabilities. Staff training and development will take place to ensure that curriculum access is further enhanced.

Examples of training which may be sought by and provided to teachers include:

- ensuring access to text and supporting delivery of information in the three main areas of impairment (physical, hearing and visual), including through the use of different media
- differentiation and / or scaffolding
- developing ICT-based resources / templates which can provide a basis for effective information delivery (in both the curriculum and organisational/administrative aspects). Training will be provided on new ICT equipment to allow teachers to use special features to make teaching / resources more accessible to pupils with SEND.
- specialised areas (e.g. Braille and BSL to ensure that effective communication can take place)

## Additional information

### **The Equality Act 2010**

From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply.

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

- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- '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
- The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in the areas of:
  - Employment
  - Education
  - Access to goods, services and facilities including larger private clubs and land-based transport services
  - Buying and renting land or property
  - Functions of public bodies, for example the issuing of licenses
- The Equality Act 2010 also provides rights for people not to be directly discriminated against or harassed because they have an association with a disabled person. This can apply to a carer or parent of a disabled person. In addition, people must not be directly discriminated against or harassed because they are wrongly perceived to be disabled

### **The Code of Practice for Rights of Access: Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises**

Responding to your duties as a service provider under the DDA means coming up with solutions that are reasonable in all the circumstances, and which result in as many disabled individuals as possible being able to access your goods and services. For small service providers (as compared to larger ones with more resources at their disposal) the emphasis is likely to be on practical, low-cost adjustments, although you should also consider more major physical alterations to improve access to your premises if feasible and affordable.

### **Fire Safety Risk Assessment Supplementary Guide – Means of Escape for Disabled People**

This guidance provides advice on a wide range of options for ensuring the safe evacuation of disabled people. These options contain some standard elements, but these can of course be adapted to suit particular organisations. In order to provide suitable means of escape for visitors and employees, a set of standard escape options should be adopted by the organisation.

A standard plan is used where there are visitors or casual users of the building who may be present infrequently or on only one occasion. The provision of standard Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) takes account of the following:

- The disabled person's movements within the building
- The operational procedures within the building
- The types of escape that can be made available
- The building systems, e.g. the fire alarm
- The existing egress plan

The plan must be tailored to the individual's needs and is likely to give detailed information on their movements during an escape. It is also possible that there will be some building adaptation to facilitate their escape and to reduce the need for personal assistance.

The Equality Act 2010 does not make any change to these requirements: it underpins the current fire safety legislation in England and Wales – the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – by requiring that employers or organisations providing services to the public take responsibility for ensuring that all people, including disabled people, can leave the building they control safely in the event of a fire.

Annual budgets will take into account the proposed action plans for accessibility improvements.

## Improving access to physical environment

Activity/Area of Concern	Action Required	To be Completed By	Date Completed	Responsible person	Estimated Costs
<b>Audit</b>	Commission a disability access audit for the facilities and curriculum	Jan 26			£5000 (TBC)
<b>Approach Routes and Street Furniture</b>	Periodic checks of access routes to ensure they remain clear of obstruction for wheelchair and visually impaired people. Upper School teaching spaces are not currently accessible.	Weekly	Integrated into weekly inspections	FM	No cost
<b>Car Parks and Setting Down Points</b>	Undertake periodic checks to ensure bays are kept free for disabled badge holders	Weekly	Integrated into checks when completing fleet daily checks	FM	No cost
<b>Entrances</b>	Provide disability access awareness training for front of house staff Handling deaf or hard of hearing visitors.	Jan 26		FM/	£170 per person
<b>Internal Ramps and Stairs</b>	Recommendations for internal stairways to be considered where there is a disability identified for a person who may need to use the upper floors of the building. The type of disability will affect the outcome of what kind of reasonable adjustments are required for any given individual case.	Sept 2024	Risk assessments completed for all who have a temporary or permanent disability	FM	From £5,000 to £35,000 + depending on individual needs.
	Investigation into feasibility of lift installation, stair lift or other alternative means of reaching the Upper School teaching spaces.	Jan 25	Forms part of ongoing Property Committee considerations in school's masterplan	FM	£500
<b>Signage and Way Finding</b>	Consider the provision of visual information by distinguishing floor, wall and ceiling planes, door surrounds and decorative features. Audio and tactile guides may be considered within easy reach.	Ongoing	Basic distinguishing completed. More in-depth markers planned in future	FM	£1,500
<b>Acoustics and Lighting</b>	Ensure that designers and architects consider the effects of noise reverberation during the planning stages of new projects.	Ongoing	Ongoing	FM / SLT	-
	Address low lighting level concerns in corridors, stairways and classrooms – replace bulbs or reinstate lighting, as necessary. Classroom modernisation will include lighting as a key component	Ongoing	Ongoing. All lighting replacements are upgraded to LED	FM	£10,000

			75 % completed		
<b>Means of Escape and Final Exits</b>	During any interim periods where visual fire alarm systems are not fitted, incorporate management procedures to ensure where persons with hearing impairments are placed buddies or helpers assist with evacuation (PEEP).	Ongoing	Ongoing	FM/ Teachers to raise requirement	
	Consider the installation of evacuation chairs for school buildings that have more than one floor. The number of chairs required to be assessed. Training on use and inspections / servicing will also need to be included.	Sept 2024	Ongoing	FM / SLT	£6,000
	Continue weekly cycle of workplace inspections by the management team to assist enforcement of Fire Safety protocols and provisions.	Ongoing	Ongoing	FM / SLT	No cost
<b>Building Management</b>	Providing disability access awareness training for Reception staff/maintenance personnel and management. This will allow consideration to be given to any related aspects of building/grounds management. Specific knowledge of Document M requirements and the need for access statements relating to project work will help ensure that accessibility is always considered.	Jan 26		FM	£170 per person

#### Abbreviations

FM – Facilities Manager

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

SENCO - Special Educational Needs Coordinator

#### Improving Access to the Curriculum

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for implementation of the improving the access to Curriculum action plan. The following action table outlines the steps for increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.

The policy is in conjunction with our school equal opportunities policy.

TARGET	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	OUTCOMES
Improve identification of pupils with barriers to learning within the school	Consult with SENCO Head of Year, Form Teachers to gain accurate assessments and feedback on individual pupils	Ongoing	Staff to be aware of specific barriers to learning for individual pupils via ISPS
Continue to develop a range of learning resources that are accessible for pupils with different disabilities	Heads of Department to review annually resources in their curriculum to provide adjustments	Annually	Pupils with disabilities have increased access to curriculum materials

Teachers and other staff to develop their knowledge of different styles of teaching and learning and to develop skills to deal with pupils with specific disabilities	Head of Learning Support to provide or arrange specific training or information for new and existing staff relating to disabilities experienced by pupils. Information to be issued to teachers through the induction process.	Ongoing	Staff have a greater understanding of disability issues, can identify barriers to learning and can produce lesson plans with methods of differentiation applicable to individual pupils.
Disability equality to be included in the PSHCE curriculum	Teacher responsible for PSHCE to ensure disability equality is included in the curriculum	Ongoing	Pupils have greater understanding of disability issues. Reduction in disability related name-calling.

### Improving access to information

The Senior Leadership team are responsible for implementation of the improving the access to information action plan. The following action table outlines the steps for improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled:

TARGET	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	OUTCOMES
Improve identification of pupils with barriers to learning within the school	Consult with SENCO Head of Year, Form Teachers to gain accurate assessments and feedback on individual pupils	Ongoing	Staff to be aware of specific barriers to learning for individual pupils via ISPS
Continue to develop a range of learning resources that are accessible for pupils with different disabilities	Heads of Department to review annually resources in their curriculum to provide adjustments	Annually	Pupils with disabilities have increased access to curriculum materials
Teachers and other staff to develop their knowledge of different styles of teaching and learning and to develop skills to deal with pupils with specific disabilities	Head of Learning Support to provide or arrange specific training or information for new and existing staff relating to disabilities experienced by pupils. Information to be issued to teachers through the induction process.	Ongoing	Staff have a greater understanding of disability issues, can identify barriers to learning and can produce lesson plans with methods of differentiation applicable to individual pupils.
Disability equality to be included in the PSHCE curriculum	Teacher responsible for PSHCE to ensure disability equality is included in the curriculum	Ongoing	Pupils have greater understanding of disability issues. Reduction in disability related name-calling.

### Improving access to information

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TARGET	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	OUTCOMES
Make information available more accessible to pupils with disabilities	SLT to liaise with the SENCO to advise the most appropriate method of delivering information to particular pupils with Asperger syndrome or autism, pupils with dyslexia/dyspraxia, pupils who are visually impaired or with impaired hearing	Ongoing	Pupils with disabilities have equal access to information. The school is able to respond quickly to requests for information in alternative formats.
Make information available to parents of pupils with a disability or parents with a disability themselves	SLT to discuss with parents their preferred method of receiving information about their child	Ongoing	Parents have equal access to information about their children
School website to be accessible and comply with current statutory requirements	Ensure that the website welcomes disabled pupils and parents	Ongoing	Parents/carers feel confident in the information they have about the school.

### Approved Document 'M' exerts & Information Sites Approved Document 'M' – Disabled Access

Full copy of the Approved Document 'M' can be located at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m>

### Approved Document 'B' – Fire Safety

Approved Document 'B' – Fire Safety can be located

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-approved-document-b>

### Government Disability Site

<http://www.disability.gov.uk/>

### Roller Ramp – Portable wheelchair and access ramps

<http://www.rollramp.co.uk/>

There is an online video of product at:- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MQ7i77uYo8>

### Construction, Design and Management 2015

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm.htm>