



The Shrubberies School Accessibility Plan



Introduction

This Accessibility Plan is compliant with current legislation and the requirements relating to Disability specified in Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person suffers a disability if he or she has “a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal daily activities”.

School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan.

Legal Requirement

Every school has a duty to prepare an Accessibility Plan. These plans:

- must be in writing
- must be reviewed and revised if necessary
- must be published by governors
- will be inspected by Ofsted
- should cover the whole life of the school and all its policies, procedures and activities

Basic information about the school's Special Education Provision

The Shrubberies School is a maintained Local Authority day school for children aged 2-19 with special needs who have severe learning difficulties and complex needs. Some pupils also have PMLD and/or behavioural needs.

The school has an EYFS (pre-school) Department and a Further Education provision, The Apperley Centre. All pupils are likely to be deemed disabled under the definition.

Our vision statement is:

“All members of the school community are respected and seen to have potential for improvement. Through effective teaching and learning, support and encouragement, together we can enable the fulfilment of that potential. We aim for success for all.”

‘we don’t say “We can’t”; we say “let’s do it.”’

Main Features of the Planning Duty

1. To improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities are able to take advantage of education and associated services.

The initial buildings that formed what is now the Shrubberies School were built in the early 1970s. Expansion and refurbishment have resulted in many new buildings and alterations over the years with the Senior Department’s temporary classrooms being replaced in 2012 with a single, more permanent, building.



The Shrubberies School Accessibility Plan



The Classroom refurbishment was completed in March 2015. This has provided four hygiene rooms integrated within classes, overhead track hoisting for five classes and corridor with wheelchair access to the pool area. The swimming pool has also had a hygiene room added and through overhead tracking and hoist system. Two mobile hoists are available within the school and one at the Apperley Centre for areas not covered by overhead tracking.

A successful suitability bid has resulted in storage and an additional disabled toilet being installed in the hall.

The Shrubberies School is committed to improving provision for Post 16 pupils. A new, offsite Post 16 provision, The Apperley Centre, opened in summer 2014 and this has allowed for the reorganisation and refurbishment of existing spaces. The Apperley Centre provides three classrooms, a sensory room, outside learning areas, a Yurt and a communal social area.

The effectiveness of the premises is continually reviewed and alterations/improvements made where these are appropriate, possible, relevant and affordable. The diversity of our pupil population means that some needs remain unmet in order to achieve a higher level of safety for other pupils. Some pupils have less independent access through doors and gates than they would in an environment which did not also contain Early Years pupils and those with severe Autism and/or challenging behaviour. These pupils have little or no awareness of danger and would readily run out through automatic doors or gates. The school site is relatively open and borders a busy road and railway line which present serious hazards to any child who is able to breach the security of the building or play areas close to the boundary.

2. To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum

The Shrubberies School and Apperley Centre offers a relevant broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated appropriately according to the age and learning needs of each pupil. Long term plans, Curriculum Pathways, Behaviour Curriculum, Annual Review documentation, Personal Education Plans (PEP for Children in Care), Educational Health Care Plans and Pupil Profiles provide detailed evidence of curriculum delivery, teaching and learning strategies and individual targets. The use of specialist facilities, additional support and timetabled, needs-led activities (such as music therapy, online safety, counselling and rebound) complement work done in the classroom. A sensory integration room has been installed and equipped. Improved provision for sensory activities for pupils, including an additional sensory room and improved dark room has been completed.

A wheelchair accessible track has been installed within the school grounds. This provides access to the forest school, greenhouse, pond area and outdoors classroom. The pond area has been refurbished and has an accessible decking area. A clamber stack has been installed to meet the proprioceptive and vestibular needs of students with sensory processing difficulties. This is part of the OPAL project. A wheelchair trampoline has been installed at the Apperley Centre.



The Shrubberies School Accessibility Plan



A canopy over the Middle School court yard ensures that it can be used as a learning space throughout the year. A canopy and seating area at the Middle School corridor entrance allow all weather access to the playground.

3. To improve the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities

The Shrubberies School operates a Total Communication approach through the use of speech, the written word, sign language (Makaton), Picture Exchange System (PECS), Objects of Reference, the use of symbols, the use of AAC (alternative and augmentative communication) and sensory communication. Through CPD and the use of new technology, the school is committed to continuing to help staff and pupils develop effective communication skills of all kinds.

Development & Future Plans

- provision of classroom space to reduce pressure in existing rooms
- Continue to embed Total Communication across the school
- the retention of a Parent Support Worker to counteract the withdrawal of specific services (now partially funded from Pupil Premium funding)
- following fundraising and after consultation with staff and pupils, the installation of further more outside equipment as part of the OPAL project.
- updating ICT equipment, improving communication and access to curriculum for many pupils
- Accessible outdoor equipment for wheelchair users e.g. a wheelchair trampoline.
- more quiet room provision. These spaces are mainly intended to provide break out spaces for group and individual work, but will also provide a space where challenging behaviours can be defused, student and staff safety protected and will allow other students' learning to continue uninterrupted during incidents.

We aim to continue to develop these and other initiatives in order to offer each pupil full access to The Shrubberies School curriculum in order that they may flourish and meet their potential.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and significant amendments will result from whole school discussion. The policy will then be presented to the governing body for approval.

This document was reviewed and updated in January 2021.