

## Thames Valley School

### Accessibility Policy (with Plan)

Agreed by Governors:	December 2014
Ratified:	May 2016
Reviewed:	March 2022
<b>Next review date:</b>	<b>May 2027</b>

## Introduction

The Liberty Trust wants a world where all people living with autism get to lead the life they choose. Our mission is to ensure all people with autism receive the support they need.

Thames Valley School is committed to removing the barriers to learning and achievements to all young people we support. We support and value the learning journey and aspirations of every individual.

This plan focuses on improving accessibility for all stakeholders including students, staff, parents and other visitors. This plan should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities Policy, SEN Policy, and Safeguarding Policy.

## Aims

We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which 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 challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

In seeking to enhance opportunities for all pupils to develop their academic and social skills whilst addressing their emotional, physical, moral and spiritual needs the school will:

- Provide a curriculum that is accessible to all pupils
- Provide an environment which is accessible to everyone
- Provide access to information for pupils and parents

## **Admissions & Recruitment**

Our admissions policy states that we specialise in supporting young people who have a diagnosis of Autism. Therefore, all young people referred to us have an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

All staff receive Safeguarding training during induction. Our staff team includes access to specialist staff such as Speech and Language Therapists (SaLT), Occupational Therapists (OT), and Psychologists where specific and targeted needs are identified. We have small class groups of students supported by a teacher and at least one Learning Mentor (LM).

## **Information Access**

All students have their own timetable. We have regular school council meetings that involve students in key decisions regarding the school where any barriers to learning have been identified. We adopt a non-aversive approach to behaviour management. Our aim is to ensure that every pupil and parent has access to all lesson plans, curriculum information targeting / outcome grades for every pupil.

In order to achieve this target, the following steps have been taken:

- EHC Plans, combined records and other hard data will be available to all pupils and parents.
- The School Based Guarantee - parents and pupil will have access to 'hard' copies.
- The school website will contain all relevant school information, in an accessible format.

We are working closely with Ask-IT Solutions to ensure IT and communications are effective and up to date.

## **Curriculum Access**

Our curriculum includes both a national curriculum-based entitlement and a more specialist curriculum which focus on areas of development deficit such as a social skills programmes, as well as areas of strength and talent for future destination. Enrichment and links to external providers as appropriate. We are committed to ensuring all students have regular opportunities to experience

success and that these are celebrated. Pupil achievement data is carefully monitored and analysed to check no group of students are progressing less well. Teachers and learning mentors attend courses, as appropriate, to support specific needs and individual requirements.

Teachers work closely with LMs to address pupils' EHC Plan targets and liaise with multi agency support services.

Access to information within the classroom is enabled through the use of visual timetables and the visual labelling of equipment and resources.

Furniture and equipment have been carefully selected as appropriate to the needs of learners with Autism, Autistic spectrum disorders or those with language and communication difficulties. School trips are made accessible to all children irrespective of difficulties.

We have a clear policy on the administration of medicines, with staff trained to administer epi-pens. There is a register of children with medical needs. We have a defibrillator in school and staff are trained in its use.

### **Physical Access (buildings)**

The School adopts the SPELL approach at the heart of which is a low arousal environment. We make significant adjustments to our physical environment to meet the needs of all the young people we support where appropriate. We use the SPELL approach to ensure a clearly structured environment in order to reduce anxiety for the young people we support. To keep people safe the school is split into different zones operated by fob locks.

The school provides easy access to those in the community who have physical impairments. The school is across two levels, with a lift to facilitate all parts of the school are available to wheelchair users. Both levels have toilet facilities with wheelchair access and fire doors in internal corridors are held open magnetically.

Pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements are safe. There is parking on site which includes disabled spaces. The main school gate

is closed during the school day to prevent vehicles entering the site. All play areas are fenced off from the car park by a gate or are sited to the side and rear of the building away from the car park.

Emergency and evacuation procedures are accessible to all at present. Alarms are auditory and the assembly points are clearly identified throughout the school.

## Thames Valley School Accessibility Plan 2022-2027 Improving Curriculum Access

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	ACHIEVEMENT
To develop a CPD programme to ensure staff are knowledgeable in terms of the needs of pupils and strategies to support them	Staff training requirements identified (Performance Management) Training booked to address needs	All teachers fully meet the requirements of disabled children's' needs with regards to accessing the curriculum Monitored by Principal	Continuous	Increased access to an appropriate curriculum for all pupils
All enrichment activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Review of provision	All enrichment activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment and if external providers are used they will comply with all current and future legislative requirements	Continuous	Thames Valley pupils are able to access a whole range of enrichment activities
To ensure classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils Monitored by Principal	Continuous	More time is available for pupils to participate in curriculum activities

<p>Training for Governors in terms of Raising Awareness of Disability Issues</p>	<p>Provide training for governors</p>	<p>Whole school community aware of issues relating to access</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Thames Valley will be a more inclusive school and social environment</p>
<p>To deploy Learning Mentors effectively to support pupils' participation</p>	<p>Review needs of pupils within each class and staff accordingly</p> <p>Ensure staff skills are matched to pupil needs</p>	<p>Pupils needs are appropriately met through effective deployment of skilled support staff</p> <p>Monitored by Deputy Principal</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>All pupils are supported to achieve their full potential</p>

## Thames Valley School Accessibility Plan 2022-2027 **Improving Curriculum Access**

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	ACHIEVEMENT
Availability of written material in alternative formats	The school will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats.	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes such as the use of symbols, how to best communicate in print i.e. large print or through augmentative communication technology and contrasting colours.	Continuous	Delivery of information to disabled pupils and parents improved
Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats	Review all current school publications and promote the availability in different formats for those that require it	All school information available for all through hard copy and website	Continuous	Delivery of school information to parents and the local community improved
Raise the awareness of adults working at and for the school on the importance of using a range of communications systems according to individual needs	Advice from SALT On-going Performance Management arrangements. Training on range of issues such as functional use of language and managing SALT plans Other training as required	Awareness of target group raised	As required	School is more effective in meeting the needs of pupils