



# Old Vicarage School

## Accessibility Policy and Plan

**This policy applies to the whole school including the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).**

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Admissions, Equality of Opportunity, Individual Needs and First Aid & Medical Conditions Management.**

At Old Vicarage School, we are mindful of the definition of disability in the Equality Act (2010) and the definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the requirement that schools need to examine all aspects of their provision of educational and associated services, and to ensure that appropriate responses are made to meet the needs of those with disabilities, differences or special needs.

The definition of a disabled person is “someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has an effect which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal educational activities”. Special Educational Needs (SEN) refer to any circumstances resulting in an individual pupil requiring additional or different help in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to pupils of the same age.

In planning and designing its educational provision, the School is committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to learning and to the curriculum. We recognise that every child is unique and are committed to making reasonable adjustments in order to remove barriers to learning and participation in school life. We value the diversity of our school community and appreciate the contribution that those with SEN and/or disabilities can bring to school life.

In drawing up its Accessibility Plan, the School recognises its duty to consider the broad range of needs and requirements of all pupils, current and future, and to plan and make changes to policies, procedures and practices to ensure that the school will not discriminate against pupils with SEN and/or disabilities as far as is reasonable.

In making reasonable adjustments and in drawing up accessibility plans to improve access over time, the School will aim to plan for positive solutions, but will also take into account its own resources, the health and safety of all pupils, the practicalities of making adjustments, the need to maintain standards and the interests of other pupils.

### **Admissions**

Admission to Old Vicarage School is non-selective for entry in the Pre-School year and minimally selective thereafter. The School must feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil’s peers, so that there is every anticipation that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult. The School applies these criteria to all potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments.

### **The Physical Environment**

#### Little Vic Pre-School

The ‘Little Vic’ pre-school operates from leased facilities in the Vineyard Life Church which is located just around the corner from the main school. As the School shares these premises with the Church, our ability to make reasonable internal adjustments are limited.

Most activities take place in the Church Hall which is spacious and nearly all on one level. Access to this Hall is via a flight of steps from the entrance lobby (a wheelchair lift is available) which also houses wheelchair accessible toilet facilities. From the Hall, there is step access to a confined rear enclosed garden area. With assistance from the staff, it may be possible for 3-4 year old children with impaired mobility to enjoy all the facilities on offer but, after their first year, all pupils have to move onto the main school which presents a more challenging environment.

### The Main School

The main School building sits on a confined site and is a Grade II\* listed building with several storeys. There are severe restrictions on the extent to which major adjustments can be made, for instance, a lift cannot be installed. The School has a portable access ramp which provides limited access.

In accordance with Health and Safety legislation and good practice, the School regularly reviews:

- Circulation around the building (daily and in the event of an evacuation).
- The accessibility of the entrances to the building and external areas.
- Provision of services, taking into account any changes in good practice or advances in technology.

All pupils, from Reception class upwards, are required to move around school for their lessons, based on the valid premise of having all the facilities for each subject in one place. As such, it would be difficult to confine lessons for physically disabled pupils to a specific area of the school. Any pupil with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether from access to most of the educational and other facilities the school offers.

These matters cannot be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustment either due to the listed status of the building, the confines of the site, or because of the significant and prohibitive cost involved.

### **Pupil participation in the curriculum**

The School's Individual Needs department provides help and support to all pupils identified as being in need of additional help.

Although blind or deaf children would have difficulty in accessing the curriculum, provision could be made to provide auxiliary aids and services that would enable partially sighted and hard of hearing children to lead fulfilling lives at the School. Any other disability that does not include severely restricted mobility e.g. epilepsy, would not prevent a child from gaining complete access to the curriculum.

Teachers will be provided with appropriate support, guidance and resources to ensure they are able to meet the learning needs of all pupils. When planning visits out of school, whether day or residential, these will, where possible, be organised to places that are accessible to those with physical disabilities or restrictive medical conditions. Staff must ensure that the appropriate risk assessments have been completed and precautions have been considered. If a visit were not accessible, the School would aim to provide alternative learning opportunities.

Use of laptops and/or extra time for examinations will be permitted if an educational psychologist's report has diagnosed a specific learning difficulty or if a candidate has a physical disability or medical condition which causes her to write slowly.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Extra-curricular activities are a fundamental part of School life. Wherever possible, adjustments will be made to overcome any difficulties and enable all pupils to take part in such activities.

### Three Year Accessibility Plan

The regular review of disability provision at Old Vicarage School has informed the action plan below:

#### ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

##### A. Improving access to Physical Environment

Targets	Action	Responsibility	Resources (Staff and Budgeting)	Timeframe	Outcomes	Achieved
Improve access to the main school building for wheelchair users	No wheelchair access to entrance hall. Investigate possible wheelchair ramp.	Bursar	Costs to be determined	2021-2024	Improve access to the main school.	
Improve safety of access to dining room and cloakroom.	Steep steps difficult for visually impaired and DCD pupils.	Bursar	Costs to be determined	September 2023	Clearer access to dining room and cloakroom.	
Improve acoustics of Little Vic room	High ceilings and wooden floors are loud for pupils and staff with hearing difficulties	Bursar	Costs to be determined	2021-2024	Improve sound quality in Little Vic room.	

##### B. Improving access to the Curriculum

Targets	Action	Responsibility	Resources (Staff and Budgeting)	Timeframe	Outcomes	Achieved
To Identify pupils who need resources adapted visually (different fonts, papers, enlargements and backgrounds)	IN dept. to continually review needs of children who would benefit from these adaptations.	Head of IN Bursar	Coloured overlays, coloured paper	2021-2024 (continuous review)	Pupils visual stress is minimised	Ongoing
Staff training in Autistic Spectrum Disorders	Staff to be trained how to identify and meet needs of	Head of IN Bursar	£350 plus travel	September 2022	Staff will be more skilled at and confident	

	pupils on ASD spectrum.				in meeting needs of ASD pupils	
Ensure all pupils are aware of and can use special accessibility tools on their iPads.	Class teachers and IN staff to model tools and help children use them	Head of IN Head of IT Class teachers	none	2021-2024	Pupils will use clutter free screens and dyslexia friendly font to improve experience	Ongoing

### C. Improving access to Information

Targets	Action	Responsibility	Resources (Staff and Budgeting)	Timeframe	Outcomes	Achieved
Improve IN awareness of support groups outside school to help parents and children	Ensure IN staff are aware of details of all outside agencies and support groups	Head of IN	Coloured overlays, coloured paper	2021-2024 (continuous review)	IN staff are better informed about how to help parents in finding help in matters that are beyond the scope of the school	Ongoing
Further improve communication to parents with Children on the SEND register	Termly meetings with IN staff	IN staff	Administration of meetings	2023	Parents are aware of child's progress and needs	September 2023

Signed: **Gill Linthwaite**  
Position: Head

Reviewed: June 2022  
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