



# ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

APPROVED FEBRUARY 2021

REVIEW DATE JULY 2024

## The School Accessibility Plan

The School Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions that meet the requirements of the Equality Act to:

- Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability, modifying the **curriculum** as necessary to ensure that students with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied students; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010); 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.
- Improve and maintain access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – the school considers the needs of students, parents and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements. The Thomas Aveling Accessibility Plan considers how access is to be improved for students with disabilities, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipates the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.
- Improve the delivery of **written information** to students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school. The school recognises and values a parent's knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out everyday activities and respects the parent's and child's right to confidentiality.

## Curriculum

The SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (September 2014) underpins the identification and support of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at the Thomas Aveling School. The Code of Practice identifies that "All teachers are teachers of students with special educational needs." The Code of Practice clearly acknowledges the importance allocated to the teacher with regards to SEN. Quality First Teaching is an essential element of addressing and supporting students with SEN in their classes. All Departments at the School have been asked to complete a Provision Map identifying how they can differentiate and support students in their lessons, this has four broad areas of need.

The four Broad Areas of Need (SEND COP 2014) for which the school is responsible for planning provision:

- Communication & Interaction
- Cognition & Learning
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health Difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

The Special Educational Needs Department includes the SENCo, Assistant SENCo and an Administrative Assistant. The EAL TAs work with students who have difficulties with English and they also work closely with curriculum staff to help differentiate the curriculum itself.

The School has a specialist unit for students with Hearing Impairment (HI). The HI Support Team is led by an HI Specialist Teacher and trainee specialist teacher and includes designated LSA staff. Our HI students can join in with most activities in most lessons. Where students need extra time either before or after specific lessons to embed technical understanding or language, they are withdrawn from lessons for 1:1 or small group work. In addition to this:

- Teachers use specialist equipment to broadcast straight to HI receivers worn by children with HI
- Classrooms in most subjects are fitted with the Soundfield system.

We will start screening and testing any students who may require Access Arrangements for their Public Examinations from term 4 of Year 9. We will determine whether a student has a substantial long-term impairment that will cause them a significant disadvantage in academic performance in comparison to the majority of their peers. We will be able to offer reasonable adjustments in the form of Access Arrangements regulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications that will create a 'level playing field' and allow students to achieve their full potential. These arrangements can include a Reader, Scribe, Extra Time, Supervised Rest Breaks, Use of word processor, Prompter, Modified/Enlarged/Coloured papers, Practical Assistant, and working in a smaller room.

## **The Physical Environment**

Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which students, adults and members of staff with disabilities can use the school facilities and resources. The main improvements include:

1. All corridors and classrooms (except specialist labs) are carpeted – helping with acoustics around the buildings.
2. The main assembly hall has the Soundfield system to allow all to fully participate in weekly assemblies.
3. Main entrance doors to the school are automatic slide doors to aid access into the main school building.
4. Two 'Evac Chairs' have been installed for evacuation of students with physical disabilities on first and second floor landings.
5. Improvements to paths to assist students and staff with mobility issues to gain entrance/exit to school fields during breaks plus to assist during fire alarm evacuations. Ramps to changing rooms and multiplay areas have been installed.

6. Additional disabled toilets have been provided.
7. Visual fire alarms for HI students.
8. Specialist equipment has been purchased such as talking scales and label recorder and reader.
9. New blackout blinds have been installed in every classroom. These will improve quality of blackout achievable particularly for those students with visual impairments when IWB projectors are used for teaching and learning.
10. Programme of redecoration of teaching classrooms to improve environment and light quality.
11. Contrasting edges to steps are regularly redone.
12. Banisters on stairs now extend so that they begin before the top of the stairs and extend beyond the end of the stairs.
13. All desks are currently the same height throughout the school. Specialist furniture will be purchased when required.

### **Written Information**

The Thomas Aveling School is committed to improving the delivery **of information which is provided in writing** to students, parents and other stake holders.

- All letters sent from school are in same font, chosen for clarity and ease of reading.
- Specific coloured paper and coloured hand-outs are provided for students experiencing visual stress due to Dyslexia or Irlen Syndrome to reduce the impact of their visual barrier.
- The SEN Department can provide overlays for students who have been diagnosed with Irlen Syndrome.
- The Head of the HI Unit will provide regular CPD for teaching and support staff on the difficulties that students with Hearing Impairments experience, and how they can be addressed.
- Students who have difficulties in presenting work that is legible are supported to improve their handwriting by the SEN Department. Laptops are also loaned out where necessary to aid speed and accuracy of work at both KS3 and 4.

## **Views of those consulted during the development of the plan**

- All sections of the school community are encouraged to share concerns that can be included in the development of this Accessibility Plan.
- The SENCo and the Head of the HI unit have been consulted about very specific details of the provision.
- All students with Education Health and Care Plans (Statement of SEN) have an annual review where student and their parent/carer(s) are consulted about the provision that the school offers and can contribute to any support that may be required.
- There is regular liaison with the advisory teacher for HI children and the SEN caseworker.
- The school has a multi-agency approach and welcomes advice from our Counsellor, Behaviour Support Worker, and Educational Psychologist as well as outside agencies in how we may support groups and individual students.
- Parent/Carers visit the school in Year 5 and Year 6 which also helps us with our planning for any students with disabilities who may join the school in the future years.

## **Coordination**

The coordination and implementation of Accessibility Plans will be led through the Trust Business Manager who manages our site and all facilities. This will involve the co-ordination of the work of the Site Manager and his team other external workers/contractors for the school.

The Accessibility Plan relates to the accessibility audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the Local Governing Body. It may not be feasible to undertake all actions identified during the life of this accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

The Accessibility Plan will be published on our school website. The policy will be reviewed every three years and updated as appropriate unless a statutory requirement or issues identified in the practical application of the policy occur prior to the scheduled review of the policy. The School Accessibility Plan will be monitored, reviewed and reported on by the Local Governing Body.