



Milbourne Lodge School  
*ad optima petenda*

**COGNITA**

## **Accessibility Plan**

**September 2023 onwards**

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The document outlines our Accessibility Plan as required by the Equality Act 2010. The Act makes it unlawful for Cognita, which is the responsible body of a school, to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil or staff in relation to:
- admissions;
  - the way we provide education for pupils;
  - the way we provide pupils access to any benefit, facility or service;
  - by excluding any pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 1.1 The Act outlines some protected characteristics (below) and we pay due regard to these:
- Sex
  - Race
  - Disability
  - Religion or belief
  - Sexual orientation
  - Gender reassignment
  - Pregnancy or maternity
- 1.2 This plan fulfils the requirements of the Independent School Standards.

### 2 Purpose

- 2.1 This Accessibility Plan outlines how we ensure that we are working to remove barriers to learning and access in our school. The plan is reviewed every three years.
- 2.2 The school aims to treat all its pupils, staff and visitors fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind
- 2.3 The school ensure all staff are trained in understanding equality and disability issues in line with the Equality Act 2010

### 3 Reasonable Adjustments

- 3.1 We aim to ensure that nothing we do as a school places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils. However, where we have to do so, we make sure that we take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- 3.2 When it is reasonable to do so, we provide auxiliary aids or services for a disabled pupil, when such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces compared to other non-disabled pupils.
- 3.3 Where an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN system (i.e. via a Statement/EHC Plan) there should be no assumption that it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Any decision would be taken on the basis of the facts of an individual case, including cost implications.
- 3.4 There is no legal definition of auxiliary aids. We interpret this to mean any or all of the following: helpful; providing support or assistance; and that these can be things or persons which help. We include hearing loops, adaptive keyboards, and special software.
- 3.5 Our SEN Policy defines what provision we make available including reasonable adjustments in our school. We will consider what is reasonable in the context of our school, given the circumstances of each individual case.

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- 3.6 Where the auxiliary aid has a benefit to the rest of the child's life outside of school, it would be unreasonable for our school to make such provision; e.g. hearing aids.
- 3.7 We consider that effective and practicable adjustments for disabled pupils will involve little or no cost or disruption, and will therefore be considered as reasonable. Where substantial adaptations are required which are not contained within our three year accessibility plan, we reserve the right to deem these as unreasonable.
- 3.8 It is our aim to ensure that disabled pupils play as full a part as possible in school life and our accessibility plan and reasonable adjustments help support that aim. Where any adjustment would have a detrimental effect on other pupils, we would not consider it to be *reasonable*. For example, if a geography field trip were planned to involve climbing and a wheelchair user could not take part, we would carefully consider how the disabled pupil could participate viably, but we would not cancel the trip because to do so would be detrimental to other pupils

### 4 Aspects of the Plan

- 4.1 Our Accessibility Plan focuses on the following areas:
- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
  - Improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
  - Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

### 5 Responsibility

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that the school has an Accessibility Plan which matches the needs of the school and to ensure that it is available on the school's website.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the Proprietor (via the Director of Operations) to ensure that the plan is reviewed annually and is fit for purpose.

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#### Actions to increase access to the curriculum and learning

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Availability of written material in alternative formats using 1-2-1 devices.	From Sept 2018 onwards	Senco/Deputy Head/ Inclusion Officer from November 2022	Liaise with professional advisors Source publishers/text book providers who can provide material in alternative formats eg large print Liaise with specialist charities for assistance (eg RNIB) All above to lead to the school being able to provide written information in alternative formats
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum for pupils with physical/learning difficulties.	From Sept 2018 & ongoing thereafter  2018-2020 Training on teaching pupils with a visual impairment  From Sept 2021 Training of staff for pupil with hearing loss.	Senco and Head of Pre-Prep	Delivery of information for pupils with additional needs improved and cohort of pupils able to access the curriculum at an appropriate level with stretch and challenge Increase in access to the School's Curriculum for pupils requiring assistance
Planning for Class trips - investigation of venues with regards to accessibility – via pre visits, and ongoing communication with providers	Ongoing investigation –	SENCO, EVC, Trip Leader	All trips are accessible and are reasonably adjusted to be inclusive for all students. Staffing ratios adjusted to accommodate children with increased need where necessary.
Readers/assistants for examinations	As & when required	Senco in liaison with Deputy Head	Improved access to examinations

#### Actions to improve the physical environment to enable those with disability to take better advantage of the education and facilities

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**Note: The school already has ramps/disabled toilet facilities with changing space/low level entry bell at main door entrance/basic disabled parking bay**

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria	Progress
Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing to benefit any pupils with visual impairments and install window blinds.	Cyclical as refurbishment work is carried out	Business Manager/Site manager	Physical accessibility of school increased.	Appropriate blinds now installed in all classrooms to reduce glare (Sept 2019) Completed.
Review of seating in classrooms and adapting lighting and equipment	Annually as needs become known + pre start of new academic year	Senco/Deputy Head/Facilities Staff	Physical accessibility of school increased.	Ensure lighting and boards are clear
Lighting	Rolling lighting improvement programme	Business Manager/Site Manager	Improved lighting to all site areas- classrooms/offices/corridors/landings	Improved LED lighting installed in classrooms , changing rooms , and office on a rolling programme
Making Huts 2, 3, & 4 Wheelchair Accessible through planned refurbishment of Huts, including levelling path outside.	Summer 2020	Business Manager	Step free access to all classrooms in the Huts.	Refurb completed in Aug 2020 – step free access now achieved.

### **Actions to improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors**

We will ensure the availability of written material in alternative formats when specifically requested, including the use of large print resources and the use of coloured paper. When required, readers and scribes are provided for examinations and additional time is allowed for those who require additional support.

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria	Progress
Large print resources and use of coloured paper	Academic Year 2018/19 Academic Year 2019/20 Academic Year 2020/21	Senco / Office	Appropriate resources available when these are requested	Provided where necessary. All curriculum resources modified for VI pupil until they left the school in July 2020.

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Employment of TA to support VI pupil	Academic Year 2019/20	Deputy Head / SENCO	VI pupil has increased access to curriculum through modified resources.	Employment commenced Feb 2020 to support VI pupil until he left in July 020.
Internal signage	2019/20	Senco to liaise with Business Manager	Appropriate signage in place	Signage improved on a rolling programme.
Support for pupil with hearing difficulties	Academic Year 2021/22 Academic Year 2022/23 Academic Year 2023/24 Academic Year 2024/25	Senco, Head of Pre-Prep	Using an outside agency	Claire Lemmon is from Surrey County Council trained staff

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