



Merchant Taylors' School

Ambition | Character | Excellence

Three Year Accessibility Plan

Title: Three Year Accessibility Plan

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MERCHANT TAYLORS' GIRLS' AND PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY AND SENDA POLICY

Merchant Taylors' Girls' School (MTGS) and Primary School (MTPS) is committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their spiritual, educational, physical, sensory, 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.

MTGS and MTPS continues to enhance provisions to increase the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school and plans to continue to enhance provision.

The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

- Improve access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, ensuring that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
- Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

Action Plans relating to these three aspects of accessibility are reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis.

MTGS and MTPS acknowledges that there is a need for on-going awareness raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter.

Introduction

This policy has been written with government policy and legislation in mind. Relevant legislation and guidance taken into consideration include:

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Education Act 1996
- Code of Practice (2014, updated 2015)
- Accessible Schools: Summary Guidance DFES/0462/2002
- The Disability Rights Commission's Code of Practice for Schools 2002
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended (S12003/1910)
- The Equality Act 2010

1. Definitions of Disability

1.1 The schools will treat each case in which a pupil or adult considers that they have a disability individually and with sensitivity.

1.2 As a guide you are considered to be disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a:

“physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities”.

1.3 The definition of a disability covers a broad spectrum of impairments. An up to date list of impairments covered by legislation and further information on the definition of ‘disability’ may be found on the Disability Rights Commission’s website: www.drc-gb.org

2. Admissions, Disability and Accessibility

2.1 Merchant Taylors’ Girls and Primary Schools are an independent fee paying and academically selective school. We welcome all pupils who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in our caring environment. MTGS and MTPS recognise pupils of all abilities may experience obstacles to learning and our aim is to treat each child as an individual and welcome children with special educational needs and disabilities

2.2 The school’s policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage because of her disability.

2.3 The school asks parents to make a declaration regarding disabilities and learning difficulties in respect of a prospective pupil when accepting the offer of a place. This declaration forms part of the Medical Form, sent to prospective parents. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. If a girl, who has a history of a learning disability, is successful in being offered a place, parents should be aware that although SENCO advice is given to all teachers, one-to-one support with a qualified specialist teacher occurs only if a pupil’s needs cannot be met in the classroom and the sessions are not necessarily offered on weekly basis.

2.4 The school’s policy is also to ensure that no member of staff, visitor or parent is put at a substantial disadvantage because of a disability and to ensure that their needs are met, in accordance with its obligation to make reasonable adjustments.

3. On Entry

3.1 The Acceptance Form with the Medical Form and entrance procedures give the school adequate details of the nature and effect of any disability so as to enable it to do its best to make any adjustments.

4. School Site / Physical Accessibility

There has been a major investment in the facilities over the last five years and these are ongoing. We now enjoy sports facilities via the Boys School, which are compliant with the Equality Act however, there are still a number of historical buildings which are not totally accessible. Nevertheless the schools believe that adjustments can be made where needed, through classroom and timetable changes to provide access to pupils with SEN/disabilities. Applications for places at the school will be treated fairly and we do not discriminate against any prospective pupil. All applicants in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy must pass the academic entry criteria.

We conducted a 'Disability Access audit' in 2009 to review our provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The School is currently developing an Master Estates Strategy Plan covering the next 5 – 10 years which will look at in detail, how best to deliver a more accessible/diverse estate for our pupils. This will be completed during 2019. We also consider accessibility needs and requirements during major refurbishment programmes.

5. Other Adjustments

- 5.1 Pupils who need to use laptop computers in lessons are permitted to do so and there is provision for pupils to use laptop computers in examinations. All pupils who require extra time, a reader or scribe for either external or internal exams are supported in a separate examination rooms.
- 5.2 If pupils with visual impairment are admitted to the school, facilities would be made available to provide appropriate materials i.e. large print documents, coloured paper or Braille material. Care is also taken to provide suitable window blinds to benefit pupils and staff with visual impairments.
- 5.3 Individual Pupil Profiles are made for all pupils in the school who have a sensory impairment and their needs are addressed on a case by case basis. Similarly individual plans and reasonable adjustments would be made for any member of staff with impairment to ensure they are appropriately supported.
- 5.4 All members of teaching and support staff will receive appropriate training on working with disabled people when required.
- 5.5 On request we will endeavour to arrange for the production of relevant leaflets or brochures to be made available in large print. Many of our publication are also available on our website.

6. Information Technology

- 6.1 The School Portal: The School Portal allows accessibility of information to all pupils, parents and staff.

6.2 The School Website: The website does have a high visibility option however we encourage the use of web browsers such as Chrome, Safari, Firefox and Microsoft Edge as they have some excellent accessibility tools built in.

7. **Welfare**

7.1 We review and agree suitable arrangements in consultation with relevant professional advisers, parents and the pupil herself.

7.2 The school curriculum and all staff promote equality and the acceptance of difference.

8. **Related MTGS Policies**

- SEND Policy
- Pupil Mental Health Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Management of Health & Safety in Schools Policy
- School Health Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Employment policies

Appendix 1

Accessibility Plan September 2019 - September 2022

Action Plan A – Improving Physical Access

Aim	Actions	Time Scale	Date Completed	Responsibility
Improve longer term access to buildings.	Estates strategy review.	Completion during 2019.		Estates and Facilities Management / DFO / Heads.
MTPS – Adjustments made to classroom locations to cater for pupils with disabilities. (e.g. Year 5 classroom moved to ground floor)		Autumn Term 2019	Autumn Term 2019	Heads / SMT
MTPS – Assess how ICT curriculum can be delivered to pupils unable to access ICT suite which is located in 'Stanfield House' and only accessible via stairs.	Review of mobile devices within the school (e.g. laptops and tablets) that will allow for ICT curriculum to be delivered away from the ICT suite	Completion during academic year 2019-20		Estates and Facilities Management / DFO / Heads / ICT Dept.

Action Plan B – Improving Curriculum Access

Aim	Actions	Time Scale	Date Completed	Responsibility
Improved Quality First Teaching for SEND pupils.	SEND department to deliver departmental staff training on strategies to use in the classroom, to ensure high Quality First Teaching SEND department to observe girls in lessons to inform better strategies and interventions.	ongoing		SENDCO SEND Department

Early identification of pupils with SEN	LUCID assessment for all Year 7 during Term 1. Data produced will inform intervention/support needed	Term 1	27/09/19	SENDCO
Effective interventions to support SEND pupils	Introduction of new interventions for Years 7 & 8, with clear monitoring of the success/impact on progress.	Ongoing		SENDCO SEND Department
MTPS – Early identification of pupils with SEN	SNAP assessments for pupils where concerns have been raised by class teachers.	Ongoing	Current practice – to continue	SENDCO

Action Plan C – Improving Delivery of Written Information

Aim	Actions	Time Scale	Date Completed	Responsibility
Availability of written material in alternative formats when specifically requested	The school will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats e.g. large print, braille etc.	Ongoing		
MTPS – Availability of written material in alternative formats when specifically requested	Strategies put in place for improving delivery of written information include a policy of using buff paper (where appropriate instead of white) across the school, enlarged copies, use of coloured copies and overlays for certain pupils.	Ongoing	Current practice – to continue	SENDCO / All teaching staff