



# Merchant Taylors' School

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# Three Year Accessibility Plan

**Title:** Three Year Accessibility Plan

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# **STANFIELD MERCHANT TAYLORS**

## **ACCESSIBILITY AND SENDA POLICY**

Stanfield Merchant Taylors (SMT) 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.

SMT 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.

MTS 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](http://www.drc-gb.org)

## **2. Admissions, Disability and Accessibility**

2.1 Stanfield Merchant Taylors’ is 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. SMT 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 pupil, 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 major investment in the School facilities between 2012 and 2014 with two thirds of the school being rebuilt. The school also benefits from the use of the sports facilities via the Boys School, both of which are compliant with the Equality Act and will have had to have met appropriate DDA compliance when constructed.

During 2021, we have embarked upon updating the onsite outdoor facilities for all pupils at the School, as part of the integration of the Junior Boys to the campus. The schools are also in the process of developing an Estates Master Plan covering the next 5 – 10 years and beyond which will look at in detail how best to deliver a more accessible / diverse estate for our pupils. In terms of this School this will consider older areas of the school which are not as accessible as the new build areas and what the school can do to improve access to these areas.

In the interim, the school believes that adjustments can be made where needed, through classroom and timetable changes to provide access to pupils with SEN / disabilities in these areas. 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 Admission Policy, must pass the academic entry criteria.

We conducted a Disability Access Audit in 2009 and as part of the new build provision between 2012 and 2014 this has been superseded, however we continue to review our provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as part of any future planned developments.

#### **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 and Educational Plans are made for 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 publications 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 January 2021 – January 2024

#### Action Plan A – Improving Physical Access

Aim	Actions	Time Scale	Date Completed	Responsibility
Improve longer term access to older building areas.	Estates strategy review to identify potential was to improve access to older areas of the school.	Commenced 2020	Ongoing	Estates and Facilities Management / DFO / Head / Governors
Improve playground facilities for all pupils.	Remodeling of external facilities to make better use of space for sport, physical activity and play, external learning and pupil engagement with environmental learning and sensory experience.	Commenced January 2021	To be completed by the end of the Summer Term 2021.	Estates and Facilities Management / DFO / Head / Governors
Assess toilet facilities / numbers for pupil requirements.	Review existing facility numbers v potential requirements and implement output of any findings.	Commence February 2021	To be completed by the end of the Summer Term 2021.	Estates and Facilities Management / DFO / Head

#### Action Plan B – Improving Curriculum Access

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

### 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		
Stanfield – Availability of written material in alternative formats when specifically requested	Strategies put in place for improving delivery of written information include a across the school, enlarged copies, use of coloured copies and overlays for certain pupils.	Ongoing	Current practice – to continue	SENDCO / All teaching staff