



**Dame Alice Owen's School  
The Dame Alice Owen Foundation - 1613**

**Accessibility Policy and Plan**

Agreed by the Governing Body Curriculum Committee  
and agreed by the Facilities Management Committee

February 2015

March 2015

To be reviewed  
*[first approved in March 2015; reviewed every 2 years]*

Spring 2017

**Accessibility Policy and Plan**

Introduction

This policy and plan are drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. The SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) amended part 4 of the DDA so that it became applicable to education and to prevent discrimination against disabled people in their access to education. This has placed three key duties on schools, which are:-

- not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage; and
- plan to increase access for disabled students.

**The Policy**

**Definition of Disability**

Disability is defined within the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

## **Key Objectives**

To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for students and prospective students with a disability.

To also ensure that the needs of disabled staff and parents/carers are accommodated in the school environment, as far as is reasonably practical.

The DDA specifies that an Accessibility Plan should make provision for:-

- increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum
- improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services
- improving the delivery of information to disabled students, which is provided to students who are not disabled. This should take account of views expressed by the students or parents about their preferred means of communication.

## **Principles**

The School recognises its duty to:

- ensure that compliance with the DDA is consistent with the school's Single Equality Policy; the operation of its SEN policy and any other school policy that has a focus and impact on its disabled students, staff and parents/carers
- not discriminate against disabled students, staff and parents/carers in admissions and exclusions or in provision of education and associated services
- not treat disabled students, staff and parents/carers less favourably
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students, staff and parents/carers at a substantial disadvantage; and
- publish an Accessibility Plan (detailed herein as follows).

## **The Accessibility Plan**

The plan is summarised below:

- In performing their duties, Trustees, members of the SLT and staff will have regard to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) Code of Practice for Schools (2002);
- The School recognises and values parents' or carers' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects their and the child's right to confidentiality; and

- The School provides all students with a broad, balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles, promoting the development of a more inclusive curriculum setting suitable learning challenges responding to students' diverse learning needs overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students, accommodating the needs of disabled staff and parents/carers as far as is reasonably practical.

## **Activity**

This section outlines the main activities and facilities which the School already has in place or undertakes, or is planning to implement or undertake, in order to achieve the key objectives.

### **a) Education and related activities**

The school already offers a broad and balanced curriculum with a diverse range of additional opportunities that are appropriately differentiated so as to maximise student access and to encourage wider participation. The school will continue to review provision and seek input from students, parents/carers, relevant specialist advisers and appropriate health professionals on a regular basis.

### **b) Physical environment**

The school has in place disabled access to the majority of its facilities and has ensured that such access has been provided in its recent building programme. Access is in place to most external parts of the school's site. The school has similarly ensured that there are sufficient washroom facilities designed specifically for disabled users. As has been best practice in the past, the school will continue to take account of the needs of its students, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and other impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes.

### **c) Provision of information**

The school will ensure all staff are aware of local services, including those available through the LA, and will provide information to parents/carers about these services. It will also provide information in alternative formats when requested.

## **Policy Review**

This policy has been adopted by the Governing Body and is approved biennially by the Facilities Management and Curriculum Committees unless a significant change requires agreement outside of this timescale. In the meantime it is reviewed as necessary by the SENCO, Premises Manager and the Head, and any resultant changes other than minor clarifications or amendments will be brought to the attention of the SLT.

## **Dame Alice Owen's School – Accessibility Plan**

1. This Accessibility Plan has been drawn up in consultation with the students, parents, staff and approved by the Governing Body of the school and covers the period from March 2015 to March 2018.
2. At Dame Alice Owen's School, we are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
3. Dame Alice Owen's School is well provided for in terms of enabling accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors to the school, though will continually strive to ensure this is both prioritised and taken into account when considering future developments. This plan covers the following three categories

- Improve access to the physical environment of the school including facilities provided within the classroom. Existing facilities include
  - Lifts in all new buildings
  - Ramps to allow wheelchair users access around the site
  - Disabled toilets accessible from all blocks
  - Steps and stairs marked to aid with visual impairment
  - Handrails to staircases and steps
  - Colour schemes to aid with visual impairment; and
  - Lighting to aid external access.

All future buildings will be fully accessible and comply with current regulations.

Reasonable, practical and affordable provision will be made on a case by case basis for any future student who may have a physical disability.

- Improve the delivery of written information to students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

On a case by case basis written information will be produced in an accessible way, if necessary by contacting the LA

- Incorporate reference to accessibility within curriculum planning documents and within Schemes of Work. Current practices include:

Differentiation in all topics

Modified curriculum

Short and long term interventions

Access/provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment

Contact with and advice from the relevant LA and Health Service Advisors

Modification of resources

Setting in Maths and MFL from Year 8

Diagnostic marking with clear targets

Structured homework and guidance; and

Information shared on the VLE.

4. It is acknowledged that there will be need for ongoing awareness raising and training for all staff and students in the matter of disability discrimination and the potential need to inform attitudes on this matter.

5. This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Single Equality Policy
- Health & Safety
- Equal Opportunities
- Special Needs
- Behaviour Management
- Equal Opportunities in Employment
- Child Protection; and
- Bullying.

6. The requirements for physical accessibility may include for works that the school is unable to undertake during the life of this first Accessibility Plan through funding caution and/or identification of other school funding priorities and as such some items may roll forward into subsequent plans. At all times where fully desired works are not achievable, the school will look to make reasonable adjustments short of the full works if this is deemed possible. The audit will need to be revisited prior to the end of this first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for 2015-2018.

7. As curriculum policies are reviewed, a section relating to access will be added to that on the Single Equality Policy. The school prospectus and its website will also make reference to this Accessibility Plan.

8. The school will be particularly alert to any needs arising from the requirements of newly enrolled students to Year 7 and Year 12 each year as well as in-year entrants.

9. The Plan will be regularly monitored through the SLT.

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### Plan for the improvement of the physical environment

Aim	How to achieve	Date	Outcome
Meets the accessibility needs of all our current and incoming students	Individual accessibility plan tailored to the needs of each student with difficulties.	As required by the student	All students can move round the whole building with or without help.
Fully accessible drama and learning support teaching space	Replacement of the drama and learning support blocks	April 2015	Teaching and learning facilities which allow all students to fully access the curriculum. Staff facilities which enable all staff to teach in the new LDLS Block (Languages, Drama and Learning Support)
Fully Accessible Teaching Block	Replace existing block ensuring full accessibility compliance. Bid to EFA and Foundation for funding	2018-19	Teaching and learning facilities which allow all students to fully access the curriculum. Staff facilities which enable all staff to teach in the teaching block
Fully accessible admin, dining, RE and gym	Replace existing block ensuring full accessibility compliance	2022	Fully accessible working facilities for all staff working in this block and fully accessible teaching and learning facilities for the RE department and gym.

### Plans for the improvement of the delivery of written information

Aim	How to achieve	Date	Outcome
Availability of written material in alternative formats	All written information reviewed	As required by prospective parents / guardians	All relevant information is accessible
Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats	All written information reviewed and adjusted with the support of appropriate expertise	As required by prospective parents / guardians	All relevant information is accessible
Review documentation with a view of ensuring accessibility for pupils with visual impairment	Contact LA Visual Impairment team for advice regarding modifying / enlarging materials	As required by students with VI	Students with VI have access to all documentation to support their learning



**Plans to incorporate reference to accessibility within curriculum planning documents  
and within Schemes of Work**

Aim	How to achieve	Date	Outcome
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum for students with additional needs	Build on current staff training to ensure full differentiation within schemes of work. Ensure staff have access to specific learning strategies. Specific training / meetings as required.	As required by the needs of the students – annually in Sept	Staff feel confident in supporting and meeting the individual needs of the students
All out-of-school activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Extra- curricular activities are offered to all students with encouragement to participate.	Jan 2015	Students have opportunities to participate in all activities subject to allocation of numbers
Training for Awareness Raising of Disability Issues	Regular training of a range of disability issues. Set up specific training of new disability issues through close liaison with the LA. Incorporate strategies into schemes of work.	As required by the needs of the students – reviewed annually in Sept.	Increased staff awareness and knowledge of disability issues Staff feel confident in supporting and meeting the individual needs of the students