

DISABILITY INCLUSION POLICY (incorporating the Accessibility Plan Apr 2021-Mar 2024)

Last reviewed:	March 2021
Next review due:	March 2022
Reviewed by:	Bursar Facilities and Compliance Manager

1. Principles

The Board of Governors, senior management and staff of d'Overbroeck's are wholly committed to the principles and aims of the Equality Act 2010 and to its implications for schools. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities for Students policy, the Exams Accessibility policy, the SEND policy and the school's current Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Plan is appended to this policy.

We fully take on board our responsibility, in accordance with our equality obligations, not to treat disabled students or prospective students less favourably than their non-disabled peers, and to comply with our duty to provide reasonable adjustments for those students with a disability who are at a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

We aim to make sure that this principle applies in all aspects of our school life including admissions and exclusions, examinations, and the provision of education and all other related services including sport and other activities. And we seek to ensure that this principle is applied whenever relevant individual decisions have to be made or whole-school policies reviewed.

2. Definitions**2.1 Disability**

Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as any 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

In the definition of disability given above:

- 'Impairment' can be a physical or mental condition.
- 'Substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long term' means that the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so, or that it is likely to last for the rest of the affected person's life.
- 'Normal day to day activities' could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of examples given on page 34 of the government's guidance (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85010/disability-definition.pdf). Study and education-related activities are included in the meaning of 'day to day activities'.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- Persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person's native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- Persistent distractibility or difficulty in concentrating;
- Difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions.

Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- Minor problems with writing or spelling;
- Inability to fill in a long, detailed, technical document, which is in the person's native language, without assistance;
- Inability to concentrate on a task requiring application over several hours.

2.2 Special educational needs

A person has 'special educational needs' as defined in the SEND code of practice if s/he has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for her/him.

A person has a learning difficulty or disability if s/he:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Children will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Those disabled students with substantial and long-term impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy, do not necessarily have SEN; but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

2.3 Disability discrimination

Within the Equality Act 2010 unlawful disability discrimination can be:

- Direct discrimination (which can be discrimination based on perception or association), which is discrimination which occurs because of the 'protected characteristic' of disability;
- Discrimination arising from disability, which will occur where a disabled pupil or member of staff has been treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability;
- Indirect discrimination, which will occur where the school applies a 'provision criterion or practice' in the same way for all pupils/staff but which has the effect of putting disabled pupils/staff at a particular disadvantage; and
- Discrimination arising from a failure to make reasonable adjustments.

Indirect discrimination and discrimination arising from disability can be justified if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

2.4 Less favourable treatment

For 'less favourable treatment' to lead to unlawful disability discrimination it must be shown to be:

- for a reason related to the person's disability; and
- less favourable treatment than the treatment given to a person without disability; and not justified.

2.5 Justification

Less favourable treatment can be justified if the reasons are material to the circumstances and substantial. In addition, in the case of a student, non-admission to a school can be justified if it is the result of a 'permitted form of selection'. Selective schools can continue to select so long as the criteria are not such as to exclude only students with disabilities.

3. Accessibility planning

3.1 Aims

We are committed to ensuring that as far as reasonably practicable our school environment and our educational provision in its widest sense are accessible to students and prospective students with disabilities. We are ready to consider all reasonable adjustments that would, over time, help us to achieve this aim more fully and more effectively.

This commitment is made within the limits imposed on us by such constraints as:

- health and safety;
- the physical layout of our teaching and residential buildings;
- the practicalities and cost implications of certain changes;
- the need to maintain academic and other standards;
- the interests of other pupils and the school community as a whole.

The school's current Accessibility Plan covers the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2024. It is appended to, and forms a part of, this policy. The previous plan covered the period from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2021.

3.2 Approach and structure

The school's Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions to:

- a) increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum;
- b) improve the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in writing for pupils who are not disabled;
- c) improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school.

The Bursar is responsible for ensuring the implementation and review of the Accessibility Plan during the period to which it relates.

Related school policies available from the [policies page of the school website](#) or from the school office:

- Admissions
- Anti-bullying
- Curriculum
- Equal opportunities for students
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN: 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2024

This Accessibility Plan supports, and should be read alongside, the school's Disability Inclusion Policy.

It identifies the physical evidence of the commitment by the Board of Governors, senior management and staff of d'Overbroeck's to follow the principles and aims of the Equality Act 2010.

Aim

The school will use the Accessibility Plan to:

- A. increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum;
- B. improve the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in writing for pupils who are not disabled;
- C. improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school.

The Plan, below, includes these letters A, B and C to indicate how each proposal reflects these aims and improves the accessibility experienced by our students.

The actions and conclusion from the previous Plan (April 2018 to March 2021) are shown in the Appendix below.

2021-24 Accessibility Plan

	Proposal	Aim	Action required	How this improves accessibility provision for students	Resources required	Lead	Target Completion date	Conclusion	Aim met?
	<p><i>Delayed by COVID, brought forward</i></p> <p>1. Consider improving signage across the school for the visually impaired.</p>	B	Assess the need for large type and/or braille signage at reception, lifts and staircases, giving directions and providing warnings.	Improved communication will improve the safety and independence of students with impaired vision.	Time for assessment of need. Purchase of new signs if required.	F&C Manager		Braille – no immediate need. Large type – (<i>being assessed</i>)	
	<p><i>Delayed by COVID, brought forward</i></p> <p>2. Introduce student access to Mental Health support across the school.</p>	A	Recruit Mental Health first aiders, or train existing staff to fulfil this role.	Allows self-referral as well as referral by staff. Provides immediate student access to mental health advice, thereby reducing anxiety and promoting resilience.	Recruitment and/or online training courses for existing staff.	Pastoral Director			
	<p><i>Delayed by COVID, brought forward</i></p> <p>3. House reception: install vision panels and improve door furniture on internal doors.</p>	C	Assess whether vision panels can be inserted into existing doors or if new doors are required. Source door handles that are easy to grasp and manipulate.	Vision panels will improve visibility and prevent accidents. New handles will be grasped and operated more easily, improving access to the building.	New doors/panels; new door handles.	F&C Manager			
	<p><i>Delayed by COVID, brought forward</i></p> <p>4. Create a Quiet Space for Y7-11 students.</p>	C	Locate a suitable location at Leckford. Assess what work is needed to create a calm environment.	Provides a quiet and safe environment where students who struggle with heightened stimulation can withdraw temporarily from the school's busy environment and regain their self-control and a sense of calm.	A suitable location. Some structural work and refurbishment, depending on the location selected.	DSL			

APPENDIX

2018-21 Accessibility Plan:

	Proposal	Aim	Action required	How this improves accessibility provision for students	Resources required	Lead	Target Completion date	Conclusion	Aim met?
1.	Provide personal assistance for a Sixth Form wheelchair student at 333 (Sep 2018 – June 2020).	A	Recruit a Personal Support Assistant, part-funded by the Local Authority.	Assistance with belongings to/from classes, personal care and fulfilling the role of carer on school trips, thereby ensuring equal participation and dignity.	Recruitment of PSA and access to Local Authority funding Sep 2018 – June 2020.	Bursar	Sep 2018	PSA recruited for Sep 2018	Yes
2.	Provide appropriate transport for a Sixth Form wheelchair student to accompany school trips (Sep 2018 – June 2020).	A	For each trip, ensure a coach is booked that will accommodate a wheelchair.	Allows social interaction by travelling as part of the group.	Training for subject teachers and SF admin staff.	Trip leader	Sep 2018 – June 2020	Coaches successfully booked	Yes
3.	Increase the availability of Counselling across the school.	A	Establish Pastoral support for Y7-11 and increase availability of Counsellor sessions.	Greater access to advice and support, thereby reducing anxiety and promoting resilience.	Recruitment of an additional School Counsellor. Training and adjusted working hours for existing staff.	DSL / Principal	Sep 2019	Additional School Counsellor appointed Oct 2018. Trained KS3 and KS4 Pastoral Co-ords and Y7-11 SEMH Co-ord (0.15 fte) in place for Sep 2019.	Yes
4.	Consider improving signage across the school for the visually impaired.	B	Assess the need for large type and/or braille signage at reception, lifts and staircases, giving directions and providing warnings.	Improved communication will improve the safety and independence of students with impaired vision.	Time for assessment of need. Purchase of new signs if required.	F&C Manager	Sep 2020	Braille – no immediate need. Large type – <i>(being assessed)</i>	Carried forward

	Proposal	Aim	Action required	How this improves accessibility provision for students	Resources required	Lead	Target Completion date	Conclusion	Aim met?
5.	Resurface car park at 111-113 and mark a disabled parking space.	C	Decide location of disabled parking space. Engage resurfacing company.	Allows parking close to the building for picking up/dropping off disabled students. A smooth car park surface prevents trips.	Engage resurfacing company.	F&C Manager	Sep 2020	Item removed as it is contained within the Capital Expenditure Plan	n/a
6.	Introduce student access to Mental Health support across the school.	A	Recruit Mental Health first aiders, or train existing staff to fulfil this role.	Allows self-referral as well as referral by staff. Provides immediate student access to mental health advice, thereby reducing anxiety and promoting resilience.	Recruitment and/or online training courses for existing staff.	Pastoral Director	Sep 2020	The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted implementation	Carried forward
7.	Leckford Hall and Hayfield House reception: install vision panels and improve door furniture on internal doors.	C	Assess whether vision panels can be inserted into existing doors or if new doors are required. Source door handles that are easy to grasp and manipulate.	Vision panels will improve visibility and prevent accidents. New handles will be grasped and operated more easily, improving access to the building.	New doors/panels; new door handles.	F&C Manager	Mar 2021	The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted implementation	Carried forward
8.	Create a Quiet Space for Y7-11 students.	C	Locate a suitable location at Leckford. Assess what work is needed to create a calm environment.	Provides a quiet and safe environment where students who struggle with heightened stimulation can withdraw temporarily from the school's busy environment and regain their self-control and a sense of calm.	A suitable location. Some structural work and refurbishment, depending on the location selected.	DSL	Mar 2021	The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted implementation	Carried forward
9.	Assess the feasibility of using buff paper as standard for photocopying	A, B	Verify if buff paper would be helpful to our dyslexic students.	Some research suggests that text on buff paper is easier for dyslexic students to read and assimilate.	Time for initial research.	Y7-11 and SF SENDCos	Mar 2021	The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted implementation	Carried forward

	Proposal	Aim	Action required	How this improves accessibility provision for students	Resources required	Lead	Target Completion date	Conclusion	Aim met?
	across the school, instead of white paper.		If so, identify a source of buff paper and evaluate the cost of bulk supply.		Budget for supplies (if buff costs more than white paper).				
10.	Continue to improve Fire Safety for disabled students	C	Install Evacuation Chairs at the Swan Building	Ensures a swift evacuation whilst maintaining the dignity of the student.	1 x new evacuation chairs for 113	Facilities & Compliance Manager	Mar 2021	The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted implementation	Carried forward

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