



THE OUTDOORS SCHOOL

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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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Introduction

This document has been created with reference to the following guidance and legislation, all of which should be referred to in relation to decisions made because of learner or other accessibility issues to sites, resources, activities, and information.

1. Equality Act 2010
2. United Nations convention on Disability Rights

It is against the law for a school or other education provider to treat disabled learners unfavourably. This includes:

- direct discrimination, for example refusing admission to a learner because of disability
- indirect discrimination, for example only providing application forms in one format that may not be accessible
- discrimination arising from a disability, for example a disabled learner is prevented from going outside at break time because it takes too long to get there
- harassment, for example a member of staff shouts at a disabled learner for not paying attention when the learner's disability stops them from easily concentrating
- victimisation, for example suspending a disabled learner because they have complained about harassment

Reasonable adjustments

An education provider has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to make sure disabled learners are not discriminated against. These changes could include providing extra support and aids (like specialist staff or equipment).

As a school we are committed to providing accessibility options to those who require additional support to access facilities, and we are committed to the following.

1. increasing access for disabled learners to the school curriculum. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school.
2. improving access to the physical environment of schools. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education
3. improving the delivery of written information to disabled learners. This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its learners available to disabled learners. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks, and information about school events. The information should take account of learners' disabilities and learners' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.

As an independent special school, we are aware of the importance of inclusivity and accessibility for all. However, we are also aware that we provide an alternative service to mainstream schooling and that this requires access to the outdoor environment over rough terrain and within woodland settings, all of which pose unique and accessibility issues that require consideration. For each of our sites we have produced an accessibility statement that explains current levels of accessibility and future accessibility improvement plans for the physical environment.

It should be noted that there will always exist on some sites accessibility issues that cannot be overcome, this is due to the nature of the provision and the sites we operate from. We are committed to providing accessibility to all wherever possible and to not seeing physical disability as a barrier to learning outdoors.

Also included in this document is a statement on how we will address accessibility of written information for those that require alternative options for this information.

Accessibility Plan for Shillingford Site

The Shillingford site is the main school site however due to the unlevel terrain of the woodland floor this area would be unsuitable for wheelchair users. It has good parking facilities with a gravel car park and access into the woodland area via a raised wooden boardwalk allowing suitable access regardless of weather, although it can become slippery when wet. Access around the woodland itself varies with weather conditions but is suitable for those who are equipped with proper footwear. There is no specific disabled toilet, and the main toilets have a step to get into them. However, the toilet by the oak tree area has level access.

Accessibility Plan for Tiverton Site

The Tiverton site has easy access for disability; it would be unsuitable for wheelchair users. It is accessed from a level pavement. The toilet does not conform to disabled accessibility and due to it being a rented site our ability to change this is limited. It is not wheelchair user friendly. The site has a tarmac path that runs the length of the site through the woodland allowing access to main areas for those with physical disabilities. However, it is worth noting that the path is steep in places. There are some areas of the site that can get very muddy in poor conditions.

Accessibility Plan for South Brent

The South Brent site has reasonable access for disability; however, due to the unlevel terrain of the woodland floor this area would be unsuitable for wheelchair users. It has good parking facilities with a gravel car park and access into the woodland area via track allowing suitable access regardless of weather, although it can become very muddy when wet. Access around the woodland itself varies

with weather conditions but is suitable for those who are equipped with proper footwear. There is no specific disabled toilet.

Accessibility Plan for Crediton

The Crediton site has steep steps up to the raised site and would be unsuitable for wheelchair users. One end of the site is level; however, the woodland end has unlevel terrain and access around the woodland itself varies with weather conditions but is suitable for those who are equipped with proper footwear. Western Lodge is all on ground level and has suitable access for wheelchair users. There are separate male and female toilets that are suitable for people with disabilities. There is no specific disabled toilet onsite. The site is accessed by a tarmacked lane and there is a disabled parking space outside the front of Western Lodge. All other parking is limited, and visitors will need to park in a nearby road and access Western Lodge by foot.

Accessibility to written materials

The Outdoors School recognises that there is a need amongst some learners to access information in alternative formats to writing; whilst for some this can be as simple as changing the colour of the paper, for others this will require something more involved. As a learning community we are committed to providing good links with parents/carers and referring agencies to help with the transition into our learning community. When this occurs, we will look closely at the needs of the learners and provide alternatives to written information where necessary. This could be in the form of verbal instructions; use of video and audio equipment or specialist support such as signing where required.

We are committed to looking at these options on an individual basis and do not believe that one solution will work for everyone.

Alternative formats to written information can also be made available, if necessary, to those seeking information in relation to The Outdoors School on behalf of a learner.

Where it is necessary to provide information to learners or those applying on behalf of learners in another language this should be requested. The Outdoors School is supportive of those learners for whom English is an additional language and will both alter materials for admissions, policy and procedure to better aid understanding, and will help with learner support throughout a family's engagement with The Outdoors School to ensure that access to education is as comprehensive as possible.

The following table outlines what will be achieved in the next year with regards to ensuring we continue to meet the Disability Equality Duty.

Aspect of the Duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	Success Criteria	Monitoring	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Completion date
Increasing equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people	The parents of disabled children and young people (CYP) may not be aware of how best to support the learning of their child	SENDCos to meet with parents and discuss their concerns to devise a medical care plan or action plan	Parents feel supported and confident in how they can help their child	Monitoring will take place after every session	SENDCO	Ongoing	
Monitor incidents of harassment and bullying of disabled learners. Encourage learners to report and act against offenders.	Ensure our supportive ethos works across the school	All bullying incidents to be reported. Behaviour Logs completed. Incidents placed on SchoolPod Also see Behaviour and Anti bullying policy	Children feel supported by the school environment and enjoy and achieve	All staff and Directors	Headteacher	Ongoing Annually	

Aspect of the Duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	Success Criteria	Monitoring	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Completion date
Review policies in terms of impact on disability equality.	Updating policies in the light of disability equality.	Policies reviewed.	Disability equality an integral part of the school policies	All staff and Directors	Headteacher / Deputy	Ongoing	
Use the school environment to promote positive attitudes to disability. Ensure that disability is represented in work across the school.	Changing community perception of people with special needs.	Positive images of disabled people put up around the school sites.	Attitudes to all are fair and challenging.	Staff to question learners on attitudes	SENDCO	Ongoing	
Celebrate and highlight key events such Children in Need, Paralympics	Changing community perception of people with special needs.	Celebration assemblies to take place.	Attitudes to all are fair and challenging.	Staff to question learners on attitudes	Whole staff	Ongoing	
Ensure that lessons are adapted to allow accessibility for learners with special needs. All sessions adapted to ensure participation	Equality of access to the curriculum	Curriculum plan adapted if needed	Disability equality an integral part of the school policies	All staff	SENDCo	Ongoing	

Aspect of the Duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	Success Criteria	Monitoring	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Completion date
All learners to access lessons	Difficulties with gross and fine motor skills	Support aids, identified and order as needed	Learners will be provided with the correct equipment for them to be able to achieve	Lead Tutors	SENDCO	Ongoing	

This plan also links to our policies on:

- [Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy](#)
- [Staff Behaviour Policy \(Code of Conduct\)](#)
- [Health & Safety Policy](#)
- Curriculum
- PSHE
- Risk Assessment
- SEND