

School Improvement Committee

School Accessibility Plan

November 2025

Review Date: November 2028

Company No. 07560175

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Founder Patron: 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma CEO: Heather McIlroy Interim Headteacher: Chris Cox Patron: The Lady Alexandra Knatchbull

Introduction

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty under the Equality Act 2010, which replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. It follows guidance from the Department for Education's "Accessibility Plans Guidance" and demonstrates our commitment to increasing accessibility for all students, staff, and visitors within the significant constraints of our current building infrastructure.

Critical Building Limitations: Our school building currently presents major accessibility barriers, particularly for wheelchair users. We have no lift access, limited wheelchair-accessible entrances, and multiple floors that are completely inaccessible to those with mobility impairments. This plan acknowledges these limitations honestly while outlining our commitment to improvement within available resources.

Current Building Assessment

Major Accessibility Barriers

- Limited wheelchair accessible entrances – most entrances do not have electronic openers
- No lift provision - Upper floors completely inaccessible to wheelchair users
- Essential facilities on inaccessible floors – IT Rooms, some science labs, some DT rooms, library
- Steps and uneven surfaces throughout the site
- Limited accessible parking
- No hearing loop system
- Reception desk does not have a knee recess to enable wheelchair access

Currently Accessible Areas (Ground Floor Only)

- Main reception area
- The majority of general classrooms
- Science labs (majority)
- DT Rooms (majority)
- School administration areas
- Main hall
- Dining hall
- One accessible toilet facility
- Library (partial access)
- Some outdoor areas

Definition of Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if they have:

- A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'Long-term' means lasting or likely to last at least 12 months

This includes physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning difficulties, mental health conditions, medical conditions, autistic spectrum conditions, and speech, language and communication needs.

Vision and Principles

Our Vision: To create the most inclusive educational environment possible within our current building constraints, while working toward long-term accessibility improvements.

Our Principles:

- **Honesty and Transparency:** Clear communication about current limitations and realistic improvement plans
- **Creative Problem-Solving:** Finding innovative ways to support students and families within existing constraints
- **Partnership Working:** Collaborating with families, local authority, and external agencies to ensure appropriate provision
- **Continuous Improvement:** Making incremental improvements while planning for major changes
- **Individual Focus:** Tailoring support to meet specific needs of each student and family

Legal Framework and Compliance

This plan ensures compliance with:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Accessibility Regulations 2018

Note: We meet our legal obligations through reasonable adjustments, alternative arrangements, and partnership working, even where physical access is currently impossible.

Key Objectives

1. Maximize curriculum participation within current constraints

To ensure students with disabilities can participate in education through creative delivery methods, relocated lessons, and enhanced support.

2. Implement realistic physical improvements

To make achievable improvements to accessibility while planning for major infrastructure changes subject to funding.

3. Enhance communication and information access

To ensure all information is accessible and communication needs are met for students, families, and visitors.

Current Accessibility Provision

Educational Support (What We Can Provide)

- Specialist teaching staff and teaching assistants
- Lesson relocation to accessible ground floor rooms
- Assistive technology and software
- Alternative assessment arrangements
- Personalised learning approaches
- Enhanced transition support
- Partnership with external specialists

Communication Support

- Clear face-to-face communication training for staff
- Written information as alternative to verbal communication
- Quiet spaces for important conversations
- Digital devices for text communication
- Advance appointment arrangements for specific needs
- Alternative meeting locations when required

Current Physical Accommodations

- Accessible toilets
- Clear, obstacle-free corridors
- Slip-resistant surfaces in key areas
- Clear fire exit signage
- Staff assistance readily available
- Flexible furniture arrangements where possible

Action Plan 2025-2028

Objective 1: Educational Inclusion and Support

Action	Timeline	Success Criteria	Responsibility	Monitoring
Ground Floor Teaching Optimisation	Sept 2025	All core subjects can be delivered in accessible rooms when needed	Timetabling Team, SENCO	Termly timetable review
Enhanced TA Mobility Support Training	Ongoing	All TAs trained in supporting students with physical disabilities	SENCO, External trainers	Training records, confidence surveys
Assistive Technology Expansion	Ongoing	Comprehensive AT provision for students who cannot access standard facilities	IT Services, SENCO	Equipment inventory, usage data
Alternative Practical Activities	Ongoing	Modified science, technology, and PE	Subject Leaders	Student participation data

Action	Timeline	Success Criteria	Responsibility	Monitoring
		provision for those unable to access specialist rooms		
Individual Access Plans	Ongoing	Every student with mobility needs has personalized access plan	SENCO, Families	Annual reviews, student outcomes
Partnership School Arrangements	Ongoing	Informal agreements for specialist facility access at accessible schools	SLT, Local schools	Partnership agreements

Objective 2: Physical Environment Improvements

Action	Timeline	Success Criteria	Responsibility	Monitoring
Professional Accessibility Audit	Sept 2025	Comprehensive assessment with costed improvement plan	Facilities Manager, External auditor	Audit report completed
Accessible Entrance Investigation	Dec 2025	Feasibility study for ramped access to at least one entrance	Facilities Manager, Architects	Feasibility report
Portable Ramp System	Nov 2025	Portable ramps available for temporary access where structurally safe	Facilities Manager	Equipment availability
Emergency Access Procedures	Oct 2025	PEEPs for all students with mobility needs, evacuation chair provision	Facilities Manager, SENCO	Drill records, plan effectiveness

Objective 3: Communication and Information Access

Action	Timeline	Success Criteria	Responsibility	Monitoring
Alternative Meeting Venues	Ongoing	Identified accessible community venues for important meetings	Reception	Venue database, usage records
Digital Communication Enhancement	Ongoing	Video calling options and digital document sharing for accessibility	ICT Team	Usage statistics
Staff Disability Awareness Training	Ongoing	All staff understand disability issues and communication needs	HR, SENCO	Training completion rates

Honest Assessment for Families

What We Cannot Currently Provide

- Wheelchair access to upper floors
- Independent access for wheelchair users
- Full inclusion in all practical subjects requiring upper floor facilities
- Accessible toilets on all floors

- Hearing loop systems in all areas

What We Can Provide

- Education delivery relocated to accessible areas
- Enhanced personal support
- Modified practical activities
- Alternative assessment arrangements
- Strong partnership working
- Flexible meeting arrangements
- Creative problem-solving for individual needs

For Prospective Families

We strongly encourage early contact to:

- Conduct individual site assessments
- Discuss realistic educational provision
- Explore partnership arrangements with accessible schools
- Ensure full understanding of current limitations
- Plan appropriate support packages

Consultation and Partnership Working

Regular Consultation With:

- Students with SEND and their families
- Staff members with disabilities
- Local Authority SEND services
- Health professionals and therapists
- Accessible local schools for partnership arrangements
- Community groups and disability organisations

Methods:

- Individual meetings and reviews
- Annual accessibility surveys
- Focus groups
- Parent/carers forums
- Professional network meetings

Monitoring and Evaluation

Quarterly Review Process:

- Accessibility Committee meetings
- Progress against realistic targets
- Student outcomes and satisfaction
- Family feedback and concerns
- Budget and funding progress

Key Performance Indicators:

- Student achievement despite physical barriers
- Family satisfaction with alternative arrangements
- Successful partnerships with other schools
- Progress toward major infrastructure improvements
- Staff confidence in supporting diverse needs

Budget and Funding Strategy

Current Funding Sources:

- Annual capital works budget
- SEN budget allocation
- Pupil Premium funding
- Accessibility grants

Major Capital Requirements:

- Lift installation: £150,000-£200,000
- Accessible entrance creation: £50,000-£80,000
- Comprehensive accessibility refurbishment: £300,000+

Funding Strategy:

- Condition Improvement Fund applications
- Local Authority capital grants
- Accessibility-specific funding programs
- Community fundraising for major projects
- Phased improvement approach

Support for Current Students

Individual Support Plans Include:

- Personalized access arrangements
- Lesson location modifications
- Enhanced TA support
- Alternative activity provision
- Technology solutions
- Partnership school access for specialist facilities
- Transport arrangements where needed

Emergency Procedures:

- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)
- Evacuation chair provision and training
- Clear staff responsibilities
- Regular drill practice
- Individual risk assessments

Alternative Arrangements

When Our Building Cannot Meet Needs:

- Off-site meetings at accessible venues
- Video conferencing for some interactions
- Partnership arrangements with accessible schools
- Enhanced communication and support packages

Contact Information

For Accessibility Support:

Chris Goodrich - Director of Business Services

- Email: info@mountbatten.school
- Phone: 01794 502502
- Response time: 2 school days for urgent needs, 5 days for planning

For Educational Provision:

Judy Godsall and Hayley Herbert - SENCOs

- Individual assessments and support planning
- Partnership school arrangements
- Specialist equipment provision

Complaints and Feedback

Process:

1. Informal discussion with Director of Business Services
2. Formal complaint through school procedures
3. Local Authority SEND team involvement if unresolved
4. External mediation services

We Welcome:

- Suggestions for creative solutions
- Feedback on current arrangements
- Ideas for funding and improvement
- Partnership opportunities

Review and Publication

This plan will be:

- Reviewed annually with major review every three years
- Updated as improvements are completed
- Published on school website with alternative formats available

