



Vernon Primary School

Accessibility Policy

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

(a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and

(b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Vernon Primary School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school. A ‘local offer’ policy for Vernon Primary School is also published on the school website outlining our practice across school in relation to Special Educational Needs and/or Disability for new members of our school community.

The main priorities of the Accessibility Plan are to ensure that disabled people have:

- An accessible school environment
- Equal access to the curriculum
- Equal access to training and personal development
- Appropriate means of information sharing and communication

This is achieved in line with the Strategic School Development Plan.

Access and Physical Environment:

- The school building is all on ground level and accessible by wheelchair.
- There are accessible toilet facilities for disabled use available.
- There is disabled/accessible car parking for three cars at the front of the school near the front entrance and one space in the rear main car park.
- The Main Reception has a hearing loop.
- There is a sound field system in the hall and a portable sound field system for the classrooms.
- An extension to the school in 2009 was designed by architects to enable disabled access.
- Step edgings have been marked in yellow.
- Main corridors throughout the school are carpeted and non -slip material is used on the toilet floor areas.
- There are established quiet areas throughout school.
- There is an area allocated for carrying out physiotherapy.
- Classroom spaces are organised to enable pupils with disabilities to easily access areas of the classroom environment.
- Routes for emergency evacuation are planned and outlined on a ‘personal evacuation plan for disabled pupils’ (where appropriate).
- Internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked.

Pupils and Curriculum Participation

Careful planning and preparation take place prior to a pupil with a disability starting the school or making a transition into another year group. The provision for pupils with SEND is tailor made to the individual child’s needs. Adaptations may have to be made in certain or all areas of the curriculum. (See below)

- P.E for pupils with a physical impairment.
- Music for deaf/hearing impaired pupils.
- Easy language or recorded information for pupils with learning difficulties.
- Pictures and symbols for pupils with communication difficulties.
- Large print for the visually impaired.
- Tables and work tops at a height accessible to wheelchair users.
- Classroom organisation for free and easy movement.
- Clear signs and lighting for visually impaired pupils and in support of lip reading.
- Promotion of positive images of disabled people in books, teaching materials and the wider curriculum.
- A range of bespoke support is also offered by the Pastoral Manager for pupils who require emotional or mental health support where appropriate.
- Additional activities can also be organised during the school day, such as horse riding and swimming where required.
- The Educational Visits Policy ensures equality for disabled pupils and the school uses coach companies which can provide access for wheelchair users or people with walking difficulties.
- Break and lunchtime arrangements are made so that pupils with disabilities are not disadvantaged and can enjoy communal eating and outdoor play.
- The arrangements for activities such as Sponsored Walks and Sports Days are made to take account of the needs of disabled pupils and their families.

There are areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: P.E for pupils with a physical impairment. Reasonable adjustments and adaptations are made in these cases.

Disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extra –curricular activities present challenges, for example: lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction difficulties, after school clubs for pupils with physical impairments, school educational visits for pupils with medical needs.

Additional provision is put in place, to ensure where required that all pupils can participate in all aspects of school life.

Information

Different forms of communication may be made available to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and hear the views of others.

- The school has strong links between the SENDco, Pastoral Manager who includes family support, school nurses. Occupational therapists and physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and the on-site Children’s Centre.
- School records are kept showing all pupils with SEN and/or a disability and there is at least termly liaison with the families, through Teaching Staff, the SENDco and Pastoral Manager, about individual progress and needs. Families are also included in review meetings and transition planning.
- The school promotes an ethos in the classroom where pupils feel able to talk about their lives and feelings and are encouraged to support one another and feel welcome and safe.
- All pupils are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life, including play time and after school clubs and activities.
- Grants for specialist equipment have been applied for and obtained where necessary to enhance the comfort and accessibility of individual pupils. Where possible, specialist equipment is also purchased from the main school budget even if a grant is not available, if it could significantly enhance the pupil’s integration with their environment.

Staff

- There is an Equal Opportunities declaration on school job application forms and if there is any indication on a job application of a person having a disability, this is kept confidential and completely separate from the information forwarded to the interview panel.
- The Governing Body and Headteacher fully support flexible working for staff with disabilities, accommodating hospital visits, phased returns after periods of absence and keeping close links with Occupational Health. The Headteacher has a genuine open door policy and helps staff members to plan ahead around any appointments they may need to attend or any other issues related to their disability.
- The Headteacher fully encourages and personally supports individual staff development and training so all staff can achieve their full potential.
- Staff receive regular training on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- Staff are made aware of pupils with dietary requirements or allergies.

Community/Communication

- On the annual data collection SIMS survey which the school sends out to all new and existing families, parents/carers are encouraged to declare whether their child has any allergies, medical problems or disabilities.
- The school newsletters can be produced in larger or different font on request.
- Procedures for the election of Governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.
- Information is delivered to pupils and parents/carers via the school website, regular newsletter and parent surveys and letters.
- Arrangements can be made for family consultations to take place at the home address if necessary.
- Information leaflets for 'Parent Partnership', are provided for all families of children with SEND.

Anti-Bullying

(Please see Vernon Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy for Staff and Pupils)

In addition:

- The school motto is 'No-one else is quite like me' and as a school we aim to be as inclusive as possible.
- The school has close, positive links with the local PCSOs (Police Community Support Officer).
- Disability is portrayed positively in school materials, displays and discussions such as circle time and assemblies.

Monitoring Attendance

- Registration takes place at the start of every morning and afternoon session and if no call or note has been received to say why a child is absent, the office staff will contact the parent/carer for an explanation.
- Attendance data is monitored during half termly meetings between the Head Teacher, Business Manager and Pastoral Manager.
- Staff absences are fully recorded and monitored, supplemented by self-certification forms, Doctor's notes, Occupational Health referrals and return to work discussions with line managers.

Complaints

The school encourages pupils, staff members and other stakeholders who have a complaint or comment concerning a breach of the scheme, to speak directly or write to the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors.

Policy Date – September 2022

Review Date – September 2025

Ratified by Governors – September 2022