



St Osmund's Middle School

Inspire. Empower. Achieve

Accessibility Plan

Sept 2016 - Sept 2017

1. Introduction

All schools must have an Accessibility Plan. This is required by law (the Equality Act 2010).

Accessibility Plans set out how, over time, a school will:

- a) increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils;
- b) improve the physical environment of the school to increase access for disabled pupils; and
- c) make written information more accessible to disabled pupils by providing information in a range of different ways.

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**.

This is the Accessibility Plan for St Osmund's Middle School, Dorchester.

2. Other policies

Our Accessibility Plan complements and supports our:

- *Special educational needs and disability* policy and related *SEN information report*,
- *Policy for Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions*; and our
- Equality Information and Equality Objectives.

It should also be read alongside the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Health & Safety Policy (including off-site safety)
- Policy relating to Behaviour
- School Development Plan

3. Our vision and aims

St Osmund's Middle School wants everyone within our school to feel welcome, valued and included in the school community. We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment to enable this to happen.

Our pupils are provided with high quality learning opportunities so that each child achieves all that they can. We want all our pupils to feel confident and have a positive view of themselves.

We want our pupils with a disability to access all elements of school life, including school clubs, activities and trips. We recognise that we may have to do things a little differently to make this happen.

We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010, by removing disadvantage faced by pupils with a disability and eliminating discrimination.

We will ensure that through whole school training, all staff and governors will be aware of our duties to support children with disabilities, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

In implementing our Accessibility Plan, we will take into account the views, wishes and feelings of our pupils and their families.

4. Current good practice

Identification

St Osmund's Middle School asks for information on any disabilities or health conditions in early communications with new parents and carers. We also carefully observe our pupils' progress and behaviour and will discuss any concerns with parents and carers, as necessary.

We discuss pupil's needs with our feeder schools to aid a smooth transition and take advice from external professionals when considering any reasonable adjustments to our environment.

Curriculum

St Osmund's Middle School has improved access to the curriculum for disabled pupils through the following means:

- using multimedia activities and interactive ICT equipment (Interactive Whiteboards and iPads) to support specific curriculum areas, e.g. numeracy and literacy;
- providing a differentiated curriculum, designed according to need and where necessary with specialist input, for those pupils that require this;
- offering a Continued Professional Development (CPD) programme to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable of the impact that disability can have on learning;
- organising classrooms so that they promote the participation and independence of all pupils;
- staff INSET training regarding learning barriers and the school environment;
- modifying worksheets and curriculum content into large font for pupils with a visual impairment (VI).

Physical Environment

St Osmund's Middle School has already improved the physical environment of the school to increase access for disabled pupils by:

- providing flat or ramped access to all school entrances;
- dedicating parking bays outside the main school entrance for pupils and families, and visitors with a disability;
- providing an accessible toilet with changing facilities;
- adding highlighting tape on all thresholds and steps, and yellow paint to the edges of pathways for pupils with reduced vision;
- ensuring that there is good lighting throughout school, making use of natural light where possible and reducing glare through the use of roller blinds in the hallway and classrooms;
- removing and fixing of potential trip hazards and keeping all floor spaces uncluttered;
- applying acoustic panels to walls and ceilings where necessary to improve sound quality for pupils with a hearing impairment;

- ensuring data projectors, plumbing and heating are regularly serviced and not too noisy wherever possible.

Information

St Osmund's Middle School already makes written information more accessible to disabled pupils through:

- modifying written information so that this is available in large print for pupils with a visual impairment;
- adhering to guidelines from specialists (such as the Hearing and Vision Support Services) regarding the presentation of all written information, paying attention to layout and colour;
- using social stories and picture symbols to explain school rules for pupils who benefit from this.

5. Implementation

Our Accessibility Plan shows how access to St Osmund's Middle School will be improved for disabled pupils (and for staff and visitors to the school) and anticipates how we will make reasonable adjustments to support them whenever possible. We will ensure that we do so within a reasonable timeframe.

Reasonable adjustments are positive actions that help pupils with a disability to fully participate in school life.

In doing this, we have thought about:

- how to ensure disabled pupils are as prepared for life as their non-disabled peers;
- how we can encourage pupils with a disability to take part in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and school visits;
- how we might provide auxiliary aids and services (something or someone that provides help or support) to pupils with a disability to support their access to the curriculum;
- adding specialist facilities to our school as necessary and improving the physical environment;
- how we can improve the delivery of written information, including making this available in various preferred formats and within a reasonable timeframe.

Our Accessibility Plan has been written based upon information from the Local Authority (or site surveyor) and in liaison with pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school. It will advise other school planning documents.

St Osmund's Middle School will work in partnership with the Local Authority in developing and implementing this Accessibility Plan and will adopt in principle the *Local Authority Strategy for Accessibility*.

Environmental or physical works undertaken in the school to improve access will follow and be guided by the relevant building regulations as advised by the Site Surveyor and the *Local Authority Strategy for Accessibility*.

We will consult with experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced. St Osmund's Middle School's Accessibility Plan will be implemented by Paul Absolom (SEN Lead) and Nita Dooley (SENCO). Sufficient resources will be allocated by the school to implement this Accessibility Plan.

6. Monitoring

The St Osmund's Middle School's Accessibility Plan covers a three year period but will be reviewed regularly and updated if needed. It will be monitored through the Finance and Premises Committee..

The governing body, or proprietor will monitor St Osmund's Middle School's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility and Schedule 13 regarding Reasonable Adjustments) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.

The school's Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during Inspection processes in relation to Schedules 10 and 13 of the Equality Act 2010.

The school's complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

Policy due to be ratified: March 2017