



Merchant Taylors' Schools, Crosby

## Three Year Accessibility Plan 2025-2028

<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>Deputy Head Pastoral (from Sept 2025) Director of Estates &amp; Operations</b>
Last reviewed by Date	Director of Estates & Operations March 2025
Last approved by <u>Date</u>	Executive Management Team March 2025
Frequency of review	3-Years
Next policy review by owner	Deputy Head Pastoral/Director of Estates & Operations February 2028
Next policy approved by Board of Governors (if applicable)	
Circulation:	✓All Staff & Governors ✓Inspection Portal ✓School Website ✓Parent Portal <input type="checkbox"/> Senior & Sixth Pupils
Related Policies:	SEND Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Educational Visits Policy First Aid Policy EDI Policy Exams Policy
Regulatory Body (if applicable)	ISI/HSE
Relevant legislation/guidelines	ISSR September 2022 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Equality Act 2010

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## **1 Introduction**

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Equality Act 2010 and has regard to the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (0 to 25 years): Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities*.

The plan also takes into account the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) that became law on 11th May 2011. The Act amended the existing Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The SENDA came into effect on January 2002 and was revised in 2005. The Act defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a “substantial and long-term adverse effect on (the individual’s) ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. The SENDA policy is informed by the Equality Act 2010. The School is also informed by the Children, Schools and Families Act 2014 and by the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

## **2 Definition of SEND**

The 2015 SEND Code of Practice 0 - 25 years, pages 15 to 16, states that:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she 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

## **3 SEND Code of Practice 2015**

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 gives practical guidance to Local Education Authorities, Governing Bodies of schools, and all those who work in them, on their responsibilities to all children with SEND.

This policy accepts the definition of special educational needs as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children must 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 are taught.

Special educational provision means educational provision which is additional to or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools.

Children will have needs and requirements which may fall into at least one of the following four areas of need:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

- Sensory and/or physical needs.

Merchant Taylors' School has regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2015 when carrying out its duties towards all learners with SEND and ensures that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEND provision is being made.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act requires schools to examine all aspects of their provision of educational and associated services and to ensure that appropriate responses are made to meet the needs of those with SEND needs. Merchant Taylors' School is wholly guided by these

principles in planning and designing its educational provision and is committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to learning and to the curriculum.

### **3.1 Access to the Curriculum and Aspects of Everyday School Life**

The School has a duty under SENDA to ensure that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas:

1. Curriculum
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Timetabling, classroom and school organisation and setting
4. Homework
5. Serving of school meals
6. Interaction with peers, school clubs and activities
7. Assessment and exam arrangements
8. School discipline
9. Exclusion/suspension procedures
10. Preparation of pupils for their next phase of education

All of these are bound by the limits of reasonable adjustment as detailed in the DDA 2005/Equality Act 2010 and Children, Schools and Families Act 2014.

### **3.2 Access to Out of Classroom Activities**

Merchant Taylors' School will wherever possible make reasonable adjustment to allow SEND pupils to access the full educational and learning experiences that the School provides. However, under the reasonable adjustments duty the School would also have to consider:

1. The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards
2. The financial resources available to the School
3. The health and safety requirements – SENDA does not override the Schools' duties under Health and Safety legislation
4. The interests of the other pupils and persons who may be admitted to the School as pupils

In the event that a student's extra-curricular or recreational activities are limited by their SEND profile, alternative opportunities will be made available wherever possible. To this end, there is liaison between the Learning Support Department, SMT, Pastoral and Physical Education staff as appropriate.

### **3.3 Accessibility**

Under the SENDA the School has a planning duty to audit access to buildings and facilities. Such access audits are incorporated in the School's plans for future development (see Accessibility Plan).

### **4 INSET**

The School recognises the needs for staff training on issues of SEND provision and incorporates this within the plans for full staff INSET and in advice given in the SEND Policy. In addition, an awareness of SEND issues is part of all new staff induction.

### **5 Review**

Merchant Taylors' School is committed to reviewing regularly both admissions procedures and policies and issues of access to learning to ensure that a continuous responsibility is exercised. Other areas of policy and provision are in addition where appropriate reviewed with SENDA in mind.

### **6 Claims of Unlawful Discrimination**

Any claim for unlawful discrimination under SENDA must come from the parent not the child. In the first instance the complaint should be made to the School and follow the School's complaints policy. However, parents have the right to refer a complaint to the appropriate Health, Education and Social Care (HESC) tribunal if they believe unlawful discrimination has taken place.

### **7 Definition of Disability**

The Equality Act 2010 retains the previous definition of disability as someone who has '*a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities.*'

## KEY OBJECTIVES

To increase over time the accessibility of the School for SEND pupils. **For Merchant Taylors' School the current three-year period is from 2025 to 2028.**

## PRINCIPLES

The School complies with The Equality Act 2010 to support SEND pupils by making 'reasonable adjustments' and not treating people 'any less favourably because of their disability'.

Merchant Taylors' School is committed to making 'reasonable adjustments' to improve accessibility and equality of opportunity to the curriculum and school life for all pupils regardless of SEND needs.

1. Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is consistent with the School's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the School's SEND policy
2. The School recognises its duty under the Equality Act 2010 (as amended by the SENDA):
  - not to discriminate against SEND pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services;
  - not to treat SEND pupils less favourably;
  - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting SEND pupils at a substantial disadvantage;
  - to publish an Accessibility Plan.
3. The School recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's SEND needs and its effect on a pupil's ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.
4. The School provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
  - setting suitable learning challenges;
  - responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
  - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual and groups of pupils.

## ACTIVITY / ACTIONS

We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

Merchant Taylors' School plan, over time, to increase the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the School with SEND needs.

The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

1. Increase access to the **curriculum** for our pupils with SEND needs, reviewing and expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that SEND pupils are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the School such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.

The relevant School staff receive training in making the curriculum accessible to all pupils and are aware of its importance.

2. Improve access to the **physical environment** of the School. The School will take account of the needs of pupils and other users with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.
3. Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with SEND/EAL needs. Whenever possible, any information will be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

Attached are action plans for the three-year period 2025 - 2028, relating to these key aspects of accessibility. These plans will be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis. New plans were drawn up for September 2021, and the process is repeated every three years thereafter.

The plan is also available in the following formats, on request: email; enlarged print version; other formats by arrangement.

**OBJECTIVE 1 – To increase the extent to which SEND pupils can access the curriculum.**

Target	When by	Who	Resources	Success Criteria
<p><b>Staff training:</b> Teaching and learning – High Quality Inclusive Teaching</p>	Review June 2023, 2024, 2025	SMT  Director Finance + Resources  Learning Support Department	CPD focusing on teaching strategies  Pupil Profiles  Feedback from insets/reading disseminated to staff	Staff use a variety of teaching strategies in the classroom which meets the needs of pupils.  Classroom observations / Learning Walks/ Pupil Voice
Exam Access Arrangement	Annual on JCQ update 31st Aug	Head of Learning Support/ SENDCo  Exam officer	Information acquired from annual JCQ exam update	All staff aware of access arrangements for SEND students. All external invigilators are trained to successfully carry out the exam regulations. Successful/compliant JCQ inspection.
Specialist training for Learning Support Department	Level 7 qualification completed by April 2023  External CPD opportunities reviewed Sept 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	Learning Support Department	1 LS Teacher completing the Level 7 SpLD Assessor & Teacher qualification  LS Department attend external CPD opportunities / read research literature and disseminated information to the department	LS Department use a variety of inclusive teaching strategies to support the learning of SEND pupils  LS Department provide advice on inclusive teaching strategies to all school staff
Staff training on medical needs of pupils	Review Sept 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	School Nurse	Staff provided with information and training on the medical needs of pupils	Staff support pupils' medical needs



<p><b><u>Prospective students:</u></b></p> <p>Access arrangement</p>	<p>Review Aug 31<sup>st</sup> 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025</p>	<p>HoD of Learning Support</p>	<p>Info from prep/primary school SENCO.</p> <p>HoD of Learning Support is qualified to complete AA testing</p>	<p>Appropriate access arrangements implemented</p>
<p><b><u>Updated SEND info:</u></b></p> <p>Register updates</p> <p>Individual Learning Plan updates</p>	<p>Start of each term</p> <p>Feb 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and Sept 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025</p>	<p>Learning Support Department</p> <p>Learning Support Department</p>	<p>Data from screening tests, staff, parents, students and prof reports.</p> <p>Learning Support Department liaise with teachers and complete ILP review</p> <p>Teacher, student parent input after Parent Teacher Meetings</p>	<p>Staff aware of student needs and cater for them in their teaching.</p> <p>ILP updated and sent to parents, inviting parent for a Parent Teacher Meeting</p> <p>Teachers updated on changes to Pupil Profiles as soon as any changes are made</p>
<p><b><u>Assessment and screening:</u></b></p> <p>School screening</p>	<p>Review Sept 2023, 2024, 2025</p> <p>Assessments completed as and when required during the year</p>	<p>Learning Support Department</p>	<p>Referrals may be made by all staff – follow SEND Cause for Concern Form (online) and process</p> <p>Lucid EXACT online tests</p> <p>Literacy Assessment (WRAT-5, TOWRE-2, DASH, TOMAL)</p> <p>ASD / ADHD Neurodiversity Screeners</p>	<p>Strengths and weaknesses highlighted in results.</p> <p>Student added to SEND/Monitoring register or on monitoring list - staff made aware.</p> <p>Referral to appropriate external professional made – e.g. Educational, clinical psychologist, medical, specialist teacher.</p>

<p>Professional Assessments</p>	<p>Review ongoing</p> <p>Assessments completed as and when required</p>	<p>Specialist teacher assessor (KHo)</p>	<p>Data from CEM tests, screening test results, internal academic database</p> <p>Cognitive educational tests</p>	<p>Appropriate provision put in place.</p> <p>Professional report - better understanding of cognitive profile of student.</p> <p>Complete picture of student profile with areas of strengths and areas of difficulties gained. Information used to create a Pupil Profile, together with input from pupil/parents and circulated to teachers to implement.</p>
<p><b>Parents:</b></p> <p>SEND information for parents</p>	<p>Review Sept 2023, 2024, 2025</p>	<p>Learning Support Department</p>	<p>Open-Door Policy</p> <p>Information available to parents</p>	<p>Parent awareness of student needs and how to support these needs at home.</p> <p>Potential Padlet for parental information.</p>

**OBJECTIVE 2 – To improve the physical environment of the School to increase the extent to which SEND pupils can take advantage of education.**

Target	When by	Who	Resources	Success Criteria
Access to the site and building	Review Sept 2024, 2025 and on an individual's needs basis	Exec/Board of Governors, Director of Estates + Operations	<p>Ramp access at the front on site</p> <p>Level access via rear gate to outside site facilities and ground floor classrooms</p> <p>Disabled toilet facilities</p> <p>Minimal number of classrooms on 1<sup>st</sup> floor level</p> <p>Timetable changes to facilitate ground floor classroom use</p> <p>Timetabling consideration given to individuals with physical disability when required to move between school sites</p>	Accessibility for individuals with physically disability
Improve working environment for pupils with SEND	As needs identified	Exec/Board of Governors, Estate Manager	As required, access considered in all refurbishment and new build.	Accessibility for pupils increased taking account of DDA e.g Hall Road pavilion and facilities, Sixth Form Centre

Plan for specific adjustments required to meet the needs of a prospective pupil with SEND	Before entry with Registrar	Exec/Board of Governors, Estate Manager	Budget allocated to enable reasonable adjustment to facilities.	Reasonable adjustments completed to allow access
Review in line with legislation to ensure that planning and site developments take into account the needs of people with disabilities.	Sept 2024 And as and when required on an individual basis thereafter.	Exec/Board of Governors	Budget allocated to enable reasonable adjustment to facilities.	Reasonable adjustments completed to allow access

**OBJECTIVE 3 – To improve the delivery to SEND/EAL pupils/parents of written information**

Target	When by	Who	Resources	Success Criteria
<p>Availability of written material in alternative formats.</p> <p>Translation of the School materials on request</p>	<p>Review Annually</p>	<p>Admin Team</p>	<p>The School will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats/languages</p>	<p>Provide reasonable facility for communicating to parents of students with SEND/EAL needs.</p> <p>Feedback from parents</p>

**SCOPE OF FREE PROVISION WITH REGARD TO SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEND)**

Merchant Taylors' School is set up to provide what might be defined as 'light touch' provision, such as is suitable for pupils with a range of relatively straightforward needs such as dyslexia, autism or slow cognitive processing. All such provision, whether weekly small group lessons or weekly one-on-one support sessions in any year, is free of charge. As part of our admissions process we would always make it clear to parents – if the requisite information is available – whether their child's particular set of needs are such that ours would not be the best school for them.

**Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum:**

Action required	Lead	Resources	Timescale	Review	Completion Date
Transition from the Junior to Senior school - systems are in place for any pupils, including an orientation day if required, and briefing between staff at both schools and parents.	Admissions Officer/ DH(Ac)		Annually		Sept each year for new intake
Increasing the availability of technology for use by pupils with literacy or processing difficulties, such as bring their own ICT device into school (BYOD) and roll out 1:1 devices.	Head of e-Learning/ IT dept		2 years		Sept 2023 for full roll out.  Refresh due 2025 /2026.
Update separate Disabilities and Allergies Lists annually including Individual Health Plans – annual task by School Nurse.	Nurse/ Health Assistants		Ongoing		Sept each year for new intake/ as necessary
To improve the provision and review of appropriate healthcare plans and IEPs.	Nurse/ SENCO		Annually	ILPs updated Autumn 2022	Sept each year for new intake/ as necessary
Regular review of individual pupil needs and raise staff awareness of individual access needs and how they impact on the curriculum.	SENCO, Exams Officer	INSET	Termly updates as required	Review termly	Updates as required
Request information on disabilities from the new intake: (annual task Admissions).	Admissions Officer/ SENCO		Annually	Annually	Sept each year for new intake/ as necessary

Where necessary, pre-Admission meetings with parents of children who need learning support or are disabled (Admissions Officer to inform Director of Estates and Operations).	Admissions Officer Director of Estates and Operations		As required	As required.	Ongoing
Raise staff awareness of disabilities and special educational needs and how staff should differentiate appropriately for existing and new pupils.	Nurse/ SENCO	INSET	As required	Termly review	Ongoing fortnightly via SEN bulletin
Classes can be relocated to allow ground floor access.	Timetabler,	Rooming for certain sbjts	As required	As required	As required
Review relevant policies to include reference to disability.	Various		Annually	Annually	Annual updates
H.E. advice for students re Disability allowance (Careers: Student Finance briefing).	Careers Officer		As required	Annually	As required

**Improve the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in writing for pupils who are not disabled:**

Action required	Lead	Resources	Timescale	Review	Completion Date
Improve resources for pupils with literacy difficulties, such as creating a bank of subject based podcasts. Use of VLE – Firefly to support pupils.	Head of eLearning / SENCO/ DH (Ac)	Time, following curriculum review	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing KJA literacy specialist
Examination papers will be enlarged or produced on coloured paper as appropriate.	Exam Officer	Photocopy of scripts and materials	As required	Ongoing	As required for each exam sitting
Provide reading material as appropriate for those with visual impairment.	Teaching staff	Photocopies of materials	As required	Ongoing	Ongoing, as required
Support for pupils with learning difficulties, to ensure that they can participate fully in lessons.	SENCO	Learning Support staff	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing, but as required.



**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:**

Action required	Lead	Resources	Timescale	Review	Completion Date
Accessibility included on agenda on Executive and Governors Operations Committee Meetings.	Director of Finance and Operations	Estates strategy	Termly meetings – Jan/ May/Sept	Review ongoing	Ongoing, but annual reviews
Prepare an Estates Strategy, which incorporates an updated plan/takes into consideration future DDA requirements across the Estate.	Director of Finance and Operations / Board of Governors	External consultants/ financial planning	Ongoing	Ongoing review process	Ongoing
New pavilion/changing facilities at Hall Road playing field, taking into account DDA requirements.	Director of Finance and Resources Operations/ Director of Estates and Operations	External architects & building contractors/ financial planning	1 Year	Ongoing review process	Completed.
New Sixth Form area at MTBS site, taking into account DDA requirements.	Director of Finance and Resources Director of Estates and Operations	External architects & building contractors/ financial planning	1 Year	Ongoing review process	October 2025

Refurbishment of on site facilities to create a dedicated Welfare Centre for pastoral care.	Director of Estates and Operations Director of Finance and Resources	External architects & building contractors/ financial planning	3 months	Ongoing	June 2025
Request information on disabilities from the new intake.	Admissions Officer	Intake application forms	Start of each new term	Ongoing	Sept each year for new intake/ as necessary
Classroom refits to take into account needs of pupils with SEN, e.g refit of audio-visual equipment in classrooms.	Director of Estates and Operations IT Manager Director of Finance and Resources	Finance and Estates and IT strategies.	Annually – Dec for financial planning or as required	Ongoing	Ongoing planned refits
Monitoring of Estates SEN needs and requirements.	Director of Estates and Operations Director of Finance and Resources	H&S audits/ Financial planning.	Annually – Dec for financial planning/ as required	Ongoing	Ongoing, but annual reviews
DDA audit, review and recommendations	Head of Estates and Facilities Management	External consultants as required.	During project / significant change works.	Ongoing	Ongoing, but annual reviews