

COGNITA

Accessibility Plan



North Bridge House Senior Canonbury

September 2023

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The document outlines our Accessibility Plan as required by the Equality Act 2010. The Act makes it unlawful for Cognita, which is the responsible body of a school, to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil or staff in relation to:
- admissions;
 - the way we provide education for pupils;
 - the way we provide pupils access to any benefit, facility or service;
 - by excluding any pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 1.1 The Act outlines some protected characteristics (below) and we pay due regard to these:
- Sex
 - Race
 - Disability
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy or maternity
- 1.2 This plan fulfils the requirements of the Independent School Standards.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 This Accessibility Plan outlines how we ensure that we are working to remove barriers to learning and access in our school. The plan is reviewed every three years.
- 2.2 The school aims to treat all its pupils, staff and visitors fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind
- 2.3 The school ensure all staff are trained in understanding equality and disability issues in line with the Equality Act 2010

3 Reasonable Adjustments

- 3.1 We aim to ensure that nothing we do as a school places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils. However, where we have to do so, we make sure that we take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- 3.2 When it is reasonable to do so, we provide auxiliary aids or services for a disabled pupil, when such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces compared to other non-disabled pupils.
- 3.3 Where an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN system (i.e. via a Statement/EHC Plan) there should be no assumption that it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Any decision would be taken on the basis of the facts of an individual case, including cost implications.
- 3.4 There is no legal definition of auxiliary aids. We interpret this to mean any or all of the following: helpful; providing support or assistance; and that these can be things or persons which help. We include hearing loops, adaptive keyboards, and special software.
- 3.5 Our SEN Policy defines what provision we make available including reasonable adjustments in our school. We will consider what is reasonable in the context of our school, given the circumstances of each individual case.

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- 3.6 Where the auxiliary aid has a benefit to the rest of the child's life outside of school, it would be unreasonable for our school to make such provision; e.g. hearing aids.
- 3.7 We consider that effective and practicable adjustments for disabled pupils will involve little or no cost or disruption, and will therefore be considered as reasonable. Where substantial adaptations are required which are not contained within our three year accessibility plan, we reserve the right to deem these as unreasonable.
- 3.8 It is our aim to ensure that disabled pupils play as full a part as possible in school life and our accessibility plan and reasonable adjustments help support that aim. Where any adjustment would have a detrimental effect on other pupils, we would not consider it to be *reasonable*. For example, if a geography field trip were planned to involve climbing and a wheelchair user could not take part, we would carefully consider how the disabled pupil could participate viably, but we would not cancel the trip because to do so would be detrimental to other pupils

4 Aspects of the Plan

- 4.1 Our Accessibility Plan focuses on the following areas:
- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
 - Improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
 - Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

5 Responsibility

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that the school has an Accessibility Plan which matches the needs of the school and to ensure that it is available on the school's website.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the Proprietor (via the Director of Operations) to ensure that the plan is reviewed annually and is fit for purpose.

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Actions to increase access to the curriculum and learning

	Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Short Term	To increase staff awareness of definitions of disability and potential barriers to learning for pupils with specific educational needs & disability: identify current pupils with disability and identify barriers to learning. Use Staff INSET. Audit staff uptake with survey.	Summer term 2024	CSE/SVA	Teachers more aware of the needs of existing pupils and of how to identify barriers to learning.
Short Term	To ensure wider application of the information currently on the Learning Support Register and compliance with Equality Act 2010 in planning processes e.g. in the planning of trips, extra curricular activities and curriculum. Identify staff training opportunities, introduce checking steps within Evolve procedures, items on Heads of Subjects and Faculties agendas.	Summer term 2024	CSE/CTA/ SVA	Increases accessibility for all pupils in trips, extra curricular and the general curriculum.
Short Term	To improve forward planning and to comply with our Anticipatory Duty in relation to pupils with SEN and Disability at an early stage of the Admissions process. Close liaison between Learning Support and the Admissions Team: training sessions and regular reviews.	Autumn Term 2023	CSE/Admissions Team	All pupils with SEN and Disabilities have Pupil Profiles before starting at school and reasonable adjustments within the first half-term to facilitate successful Transition.
Short Term	To ensure that the School Library reflects the ethos of equality in its representations of race, disability and gender.	Summer term 2024	Librarian	Pupils will have access to literature and reference books that reinforce diversity and equality.

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Medium Term	In response to our Anticipatory Duty, take steps to increase access to off-site P.E lessons: give consideration to transport (I.e. the availability of wheelchair accessible coaches) and identify opportunities to increase access at Sobell and other external locations used.	Academic year 23/24	Head of P.E / Learning Support Team	A better understanding of how to increase access to P.E. For pupils with SEN and disability.
Medium Term	Plan for possible increased access to full curriculum on the ground floor through amended timetabling and switch to teachers visiting classroom protocols.	By Sept 2023 and as required.	LKO/Learning Support Team	Potential to provide full curriculum access to disabled students vs ground floor classroom only, properly evaluated.

Actions to improve the physical environment to enable those with disability to take better advantage of the education and facilities

	Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Short Term	To provide one variable height lab stool to enable students with joint problems to move more easily during lessons.	As required	LKO/CSE	Pupils with disability feel more comfortable thus more able to learn in science lessons.
Long Term	To incorporate disability awareness within the planning process and Improve access to science laboratories following refurbishment: investigate lab benches and lab chairs with variable height adjustment.	Rolling Programme as furnishing and technologies updated	LKO/Learning Support Team	Better access to the science curriculum for pupils with disability.
Long Term	To increase access to the Ground Floor Reception and classrooms for pupils and visitors with disabilities. Research options for widening doorways, new ramps and choosing colour schemes to benefit pupils and visitors with visual impairment or	Academic year 2023 - 2024	Facilities team	Better access to ground floor classrooms for pupils and visitors with disabilities.

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	needing wheelchair access.			
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Actions to improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

	Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Short Term	To improve access to Admissions information for prospective pupils and parents: Review of website accessibility and range of formats that can be provided by printers and local service providers.	Autumn 2024	Admissions Team + Cognita/ Printers	Better understanding of available technologies and formats & improved dissemination of information.
Short Term	To increase access to books in the School Library: The Librarian to include dyslexia-friendly texts and formats for visually impaired students	Autumn Term 2023	CSE/Librarian	More pupils can enjoy the benefits of the School Library.
Medium Term	To research alternative book and exam formats e.g. electronic exam papers for laptop users and electronic versions of text books	Summer Term 2024	Exams Officers/ Learning Support Team/HoFs	Access to exams and textbooks increased.
Medium Term	Review costs of purchasing and implementing use of assistive technologies such as reading software, enlarging cameras, induction loops.	Autumn Term 2023	Learning Support Dept with IT Support Team	Increased readings to implement technological solutions to support pupils with specific learning needs and disabilities

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Ownership and consultation	
Document Sponsor	Director of Education Europe
Document Reviewer	Director of Education Europe and Head of H&S Europe
Consultation & Specialist Advice	
Document application and publication	
England	Yes
Wales	Yes
Spain	No
Switzerland	No
Italy	No
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Related documentation	
Related documentation	Health and safety policy and related documentation Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy Equality Act 2010