

TORFIELD SCHOOL

Accessibility Plan October 2017

Introduction

At Torfield School we are determined to make access to the school as open as possible for every pupil, staff member and visitor.

If pupils can engage in the curriculum and related activities and can benefit from all the school environment has to offer, and staff can fulfil their role within the school effectively and safely, then we feel that every effort will have been made to accommodate their needs.

The aim of our plan is to:

- **Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum**
- **Improve its physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided**
- **Improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils**

What has been done already?

Although the school is built on a hill, the more recent extensions and the old building have been modified to allow wheelchair access within each of the three levels. Stairs with handrails provide access to each of these levels, and allow access by those using walking aids. The Early Years Centre is on a single level and although there are some restrictions to its accessibility, it is accessible to most disabled visitors and we have no examples where a user has not safely accessed the site.

Corridors have been deliberately cleared of furniture wherever possible as this is both good ASD practice and also allows more space for wheelchair users. Stairs have high visibility nosings to support safe use for those with visual impairments.

Classrooms are generously sized to allow room for wheelchairs etc. and teaching groups are small enough to allow room around the tables. Carpets are low pile.

All areas of the playground and the field and the external areas at the Early Years Centre are accessible to disabled persons although, again, the sloping site is not conducive to easy access. The site is secured by perimeter fencing.

All areas are well lit and paintwork bright and clean. The environment is ASD friendly, low arousal and predictable. It is kept in a very good state of decoration and repair.

There are disabled toilets on the middle level and at the EYC.

Every effort is made to ensure that visual or hearing impaired pupils can sit near to the teacher.

Around the school there are many visual signs so that pupils with literacy impairment can access information. Visual time-tables are also used as are consistent use of signs within class areas. We have also purchased visual aids for pupils with sight problems i.e. magnifying reading stands.

Additional Needs

Provision is made for all children at Torfield. Sometimes children require additional support and this is usually planned and accounted for by our additional needs team.

Children with emotional/family problems can be given time to talk by our staff in a quiet environment which is suitable for children with complex learning needs. Classes are provided with smaller break out rooms which are available for a range of support uses, including at breaks and lunchtime.

There is a well-qualified additional needs team and a school nursing service and a linked social worker who can help to support and advise staff about working with children with emotional, behavioural and health related difficulties.

Speech Therapists work in the school to help our pupils with communication problems and they can offer both regular, formal sessions and more informal help and advice to staff, pupils and parents. Other therapists work in school according to individual needs identified on a child's statement or EHCP.

Future planning

We are constantly trying to improve the building, environment, resources and staff skills to make the school even more accessible.

Recent improvements since the last plan review in 2016 include:

Improved lighting has been installed in further areas as well as window blinds to give a versatile and flexible environment.

Smartboards have been installed in additional areas to support interaction and because they are clear visual display screens.

A Curriculum Learning Centre was developed in 2013 and staff are developing the use of this across the school curriculum including to support after school clubs. We have provided additional banks of laptops and tablet pcs so that more computers than ever are now available to pupils in school including a new learning centre within the AS facility at Croft Road.

Carpets have been fitted to more and more rooms and corridors to reduce noise pollution and make for a calmer, warmer and safer environment and there is an ongoing replacement cycle.

Non slip safety flooring has been replaced around the school and a cycle for repair and replacement is in place. The Croft Road Additional Support Facility has been refurbished July 2017, providing larger areas of non-slip surface.

Pupil washrooms are adequate but are due for refurbishment on the Croft Road site in order to provide greater accessibility, particularly to pupils who are reluctant to use toilets at school

Outdoor learning and play areas at both sites have been refurbished with accessible and ASD friendly equipment and there is an ongoing improvement and refurbishment cycle for all outdoor areas. In addition, the school car park, has been refurbished and re-lined in terms of safe parking for disabled users, traffic flow and lighting. Footpaths are non-slip.

Our NAS accreditation ensures the school is fully accessible to pupils with autism. We are constantly aware of the need to be more accessible to the differing needs of the pupils and adults who work here and CPD planning occurs to take account of this.

All new building or modifications to the environment and provision at Torfield will take into consideration the needs of all abilities and disabilities. We want this school to be “open to all” and to be a truly inclusive environment able to support the complex needs of the pupils in our care.

Further considerations in progress are::

All classroom areas to be refurbished over time, a number have been completed already.

Following the completed refurbishment of all outdoor play areas and learning areas, further consideration will be made to improving the grassed areas at Croft Road.

Refurbishment of the swimming pool changing area and windows to improve lighting

Refurbishment of the school hall

Review footpath markings and signage to ensure pupils, staff and visitors can travel safely around the site.

All new building or modifications to the environment and provision at Torfield will take into consideration the needs of all abilities and disabilities. We aim for this school to be “open to all” and to be a truly inclusive environment that is able to support the complex needs of the pupils in our care.

Accessibility is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the head of school and considered by the Health and Safety management group.

Chair of AAB..... Date.....

Executive Headteacher..... Date