



King Alfred School Disability Access Policy

1. Introduction

The SEN and Disability Action 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to cover education. The Disability Discrimination Act has since been superseded by the Equality Act 2010. King Alfred School has three key duties towards pupils who are disabled, under the Equality Act:

- not to treat pupils who are disabled less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for pupils who are disabled, so they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to draw up plans to show how, over time, we will increase access to education for pupils who are disabled.

This policy sets out the proposals of our school to increase access to education for pupils who are disabled in the three areas required by the planning duties of the Equality Act:

1. increasing the extent to which pupils who are disabled can participate in the school curriculum;
2. improving the environment of the school so pupils who are disabled can take greater advantage of education and associated services;
3. improving the delivery of the curriculum to pupils who are disabled.

2. What defines 'reasonable adjustments'?

In determining what is reasonable the school will have regard to:

- The financial resources available to the school
- The costs of any particular alteration to the premises, staffing arrangements, or special equipment required
- The practicality of making reasonable adjustments
- The extent to which aids and services will be provided via a Statement of Educational Needs statement, or by provision paid for outside the school's resources
- Health and Safety requirements
- The interests of other pupils

3. Statement of Intent

The King Alfred School is committed to resourcing, implementing, reviewing and revising the Disability Access Policy tri-annually. Regular disability Access Audits are undertaken as part of this process. Any future building developments or renovation projects will be compliant with the regulations and guidance for Disability Access.

4. The KAS Ethos

Our purpose is

- to be sensitive to the needs of every child
- to reduce barriers to learning in every area of school life
- to ensure the curriculum is accessible to every student
- to keep equality of opportunity enshrined in our practice
- to adhere to the principles of 'Every Child Matters'

5. What constitutes a disability?

The Equality Act describes a person who is disabled as having

'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term¹ adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

Physical impairment covers all mobility difficulties and sensory difficulties such as hearing and visual impairment, and medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or HIV.

Mental impairment includes neurological deficits such as specific learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions (ASC), speech and language difficulties, mental health conditions and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

A very large group of children is included within the definition of disability, including children with significant behaviour difficulties which relate to an underlying impairment.

6. Identifying the needs of pupils

Parents, carers and teachers collaborate to identify and provide for the needs of individual pupils, as outlined in pupil profiles, individual educational plans and pastoral support plans. This process is managed in Lower School and Middle/Upper School by the respective SENCO in conjunction with the Head and deputies. The views and aspirations of pupils who are disabled, their families and designated professionals are an important part of our development planning.

¹ Long term – means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months.

Parents or guardians of children with disabilities or additional needs are expected to notify them to the school at the point of registration. If these are not known at the time, the school should be notified as soon as they are recognised. Prior to any interview or visit, parents will be asked to complete an "Additional Needs Form" and will be asked to provide copies of any professional reports e.g. Educational Psychologist's report or professional reports from other agencies or a Statement of Educational Needs (if applicable). Early notification is of great value, as it will enable the school to liaise with parents and/or existing schools to establish what reasonable adjustments can be made at KAS to support the child's future education.

As part of the admissions process, staff will meet with parents to discuss whether or not a prospective pupil will be able to access the curriculum and what reasonable adjustments can be made to facilitate this. In determining this, the school may advise additional assessments for further clarification. If after consultation the school decides that it would not be able to discharge its legal and moral responsibilities to educate the prospective pupil and/or its contractual duties to the parent(s), KAS will be unable to offer a place.

Most pupils stay at KAS for many years. It is possible that during their education a pupil may become disabled or his or her additional needs may first be identified, or become more serious. Continuing communication between parents and staff is vital for ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to facilitate the pupil's participation in school. Should a child fail to thrive at school, despite support in class, and, if necessary, additional specialist teaching, the parents will be advised on the appropriate assessment process for their child. Parents would have to pay for private external assessment and any subsequent recommended intervention necessary to support the particular needs of their children. Extra provision not met through a subsequent Statement of Special Need or the school's own resources would have to be met by the child's parents or guardians, in addition to fees. If the school can no longer provide an environment suitable for the student to participate and thrive, it will consult with parents and where appropriate KAS will request and support the move of the student to another educational establishment.

7. School Development Priorities relevant to the Equality Act

7.1 Increasing the extent to which pupils who are disabled participate in the school curriculum:

- short, medium and long term planning to meet the needs of every child
- continued collaboration with external agencies
- raised whole school awareness
- support and commitment of all staff
- peer support
- high expectations
- shared good practice
- full access to curriculum and extra curricular activities

- progressive use of ICT
- intelligent timetabling

7.2 Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils who are disabled can take advantage of education and associated services.

- installing ramps, lifts and improvements to doorways insuring suitable and sufficient access and egress
- improving lighting, signage, colour contrast, acoustics and floor coverings
- improving toilet, washing and changing facilities
- adapting playground environment
- providing a wheelchair accessible minibus
- exploring sources of funding to enhance the general provision for pupils who are disabled through Statementing and charity funding
- consulting with experts on the best use of resources and funding

7.3 Improving the delivery of the curriculum to pupils who are disabled.

A wide variety of strategies and support material will be used, as identified in individual plans and profiles. These will include, as appropriate:

Timetables, key word lists, support materials, visual timetables, writing frames, lesson notes, differentiated tasks or outcomes, enlarged print, laptops, audio books/dvds, mentoring, special exam arrangements for instrumental, internal and external exams, LSAs, specialist support tuition.

At all times, The King Alfred School will take full account of:

- specific impairments
- pupil and parental views
- advice from teachers
- advice from other designated professionals

The school will maintain a Disability Access Plan to ensure that current and future planning requirements are addressed. The Plan will be reviewed on a termly basis by the Disability Access Group (see below) and reported to Council on an annual basis.

8. Coordination and Implementation

This is the responsibility of the Head, the deputies and the SENCOs, and all teachers, according to The Special Needs Code of Practice 2001.

This policy is available on the school website. It covers 2010-2013 and will be reviewed in 2013.

9. Responsibility

In order that The King Alfred School is fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act, all staff are made aware of the duties towards children who are disabled and the 'reasonable adjustments' needed for particular children. These are outlined in Pupil Profiles prepared by the school's SENCOs. From 2010, Pupil Profiles include a photograph for easy identification.

10. Responding to discrimination

The King Alfred School has an internal complaints procedure (see policy document), which starts by asking parents to raise any difficulty with the person in charge, then the management group, then the governing body. Beyond this, the Disability Rights Commission (www.drc-gb.org; 08457 622 633) provides a confidential help line and a conciliation service.

A claim of unlawful discrimination may be made to the SEN and Disability Tribunal (or an exclusions appeal panel) by the parent of a child who is disabled. If there has been unlawful discrimination, the Tribunal can order any remedy it sees fit, but no financial compensation is available.

11. The Disability Access Group

The school has a Disability Access Group, which consists of the Bursar, the Heads of the Lower and Middle Schools, the Head of Curriculum Support in the Middle and Upper Schools, the Lower School Head of Learning Support, the Estates Manager and the School architect. The Group meets once per term and reports directly to the senior management team and Council. The Group's responsibilities are:

1. To review the school's policies, procedures and facilities to maximise accessibility to the school by those with additional needs
2. To make recommendations to improve accessibility by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning future improvements
3. To maintain and review the school's Disability Access Plan on a termly basis
4. To monitor the implementation of this Plan and report to Council on an annual basis
5. To review this policy as necessary, and at least every 3 years.

This policy is available on the school website and will next be reviewed in 2014.