



Accessibility Plan

Owner: Deborah Ellis , Vice Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date Ratified: January 2023

Signed:

Date to be reviewed: January 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Dartford Science and Technology College (DSTC) is a diverse and inclusive community that focuses on the wellbeing and progress of every student, where members of our community are of equal worth.

We value diversity and seek to give everyone in the school an equal chance to learn. Our guiding principle is to identify and break down possible barriers to learning so that all students 'achieve their very best'.

DSTC will be a centre of excellence in learning, where all students, including those with disabilities, are supported and challenged to fulfil high ambitions. The school's SEND policy plays a substantial role in guiding the school's developing provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities.

2. CONTEXT

The Accessibility Plan addresses the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice of September 2014. These acts place a responsibility on the Governing Body to ensure that the school is socially and academically inclusive. In particular, the Equality Act requires the school to develop a plan to show how it will develop services in the following three areas:

- To increase the extent to which SEND students can participate in the school's curriculum.
- To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure SEND students are able to take advantage of education and other benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.
- To improve the delivery of information to SEND students.

3. AIM OF PLAN

All students will have access to appropriate education and will develop the skills and resilience to meet the demands of working, family and community life. Students will demonstrate the empathy and confidence to work with others to achieve a better future.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this plan are:

- To ensure all SEND students are fully involved as possible in school life and are making good progress.
- To identify barriers to participation and find practical solutions to overcoming these.
- To work collaboratively with SEND students and their parents/carers to create appropriate provision.
- To increase the confidence, sensitivity and expertise of teachers and support staff when teaching or supporting a wide range of SEND students.
- To meet the requirements of the Equalities Act and the SEND Code of Practice in respect of SEND students.

5. DEFINITIONS

Definition of Disability (Equality Act 2010): “A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to perform normal day- to-day activities.”

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND Code of Practice September 2014) - A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child or 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 the kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. This will include students with medical needs.

6. THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

This plan summarises our development priorities in the three areas specified by the Disability Act (see introduction above). The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments for individual students to ensure all students can be involved in every aspect of school life, in partnership with their families, and that barriers to learning are removed.

TO INCREASE THE EXTENT TO WHICH SEND STUDENTS CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM.

Students with SEND (special educational needs or disability) are given equal access to the curriculum supported by the school's specialist SEND provision and in line with the needs of the individual and the wishes of their parents/carers. Every effort is made to educate students with SEND alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENDCO consults the student and parents about proposed flexible arrangements. The school curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Local Offer outline the provision the school already has in place to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

This includes:

- Identification of SEND at a very early stage through close liaison with Primary Schools, supported by individual provision maps, strategy sheets and the SEND register.
- Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs/disability of any student in their charge, including sharing progress reports, medical reports and student/parent feedback.
- Listening to student and parent/carer views and considering them in all aspects of school life.
- Awareness raising programmes for all students about the range of disabilities in the school, in particular creating a very supportive base for each SEND student within their tutor group.
- Regular training opportunities for staff on SEND and appropriate teaching and learning strategies and how to adapt strategies to enhance student progress.
- Increasingly specialised, if needed, in-class support or guidance from trained LSAs (Learning Support Assistants) and ISAs (Independent Support Assistants.)
- Specific specialist intervention to build skills (particularly for literacy and numeracy) in small groups and/or adapted timetables.

- Specialist advice from other professionals (e.g. speech and language therapist, school nurse, occupational therapist, hearing impaired service, physiotherapist) on how to adapt the curriculum and teaching strategies for individuals.
- Special access arrangements for internal and external exams.
- Specific target setting and monitoring to ensure all students with SEND make at least sufficient progress and accelerated progress in intervention groups.
- Effective channels for home-school liaison.
- A structured and dedicated Y6/7 transition programme and summer school (when available) for vulnerable students.
- Specialist advice and guidance from the SEND Team to support a smooth transition between Y8/Y9, Year 10/11 and Year 11/Post 16 transition.
- Multi-agency support coordinated by the school's Pastoral and SEND Teams.

TO IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE SCHOOL TO ENSURE SEND STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EDUCATION AND OTHER BENEFITS, FACILITIES OR SERVICES PROVIDED OR OFFERED BY THE SCHOOL.

The school environment already incorporates many features to ensure accessibility to students with disabilities. These include:

- A lift giving access to the first/second/third floors.
- Ramps and handrails to the Hub - SEND location.
- Clearly defined yellow stairs markings suitable for visually impaired students.
- Location notices in braille.
- Evac-chairs in each stairwell to ensure evacuations are safe.
- Ramps at the front of the school to allow independent access. Ramps have been installed internally to give access to all areas.
- Accessible toilets on all floors.

TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF INFORMATION TO SEND STUDENTS, SO INFORMATION IS AS AVAILABLE AS IT IS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT SEND.

Teachers and LSAs / ISAs consider the needs of each SEND student and provide accessible learning resources for them. In addition, the school makes the following available as appropriate:

- Differentiated resources with particular attention to reading age, plain English, images and layout.
- Laptops and other digital technologies.
- Coloured overlays for text.
- Reading pens.
- Tactile resources.
- Readers and/or scribes in exams, where appropriate.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

- All staff have a responsibility for identifying any concerns and referring them to the SEND Team or Safeguarding Team via internal procedures.
- All teaching staff are responsible for using information regarding individual needs from the SEND Team and implementing them in lessons and planning.
- All leaders are responsible for improving accessibility within their area of responsibility.
- The Governing Body is responsible for the approval of this plan.
- The Principal is responsible for ensuring the resourcing, implementation and updating of this plan.
- The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that all current students' needs are covered by this plan and for monitoring the effectiveness of the plan in meeting SEND students' needs.

8. REVIEW

This Accessibility Plan has the status of a policy of the Governing Body and is reviewed every 3 years. The views of SEND students and parents will feed into the review. The Vice Principal (Pastoral) oversees this.

9. RELATED POLICIES

- Equality Policy
- Equality Objectives
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Local Offer
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy