



## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY ACCESS POLICY**

| This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation |                |  |
|--|----------------|--|
| Created  | December 2007  | Director of Administration   |
| Last Review  | September 2023 | Policy Leads - Heads of Learning Support / Learning Enrichment Leaders, Head of Compliance |
| Approved   | September 2023 | Education Board  |

This Policy applies to all year groups at Thomas's Schools, including the EYFS.

Thomas's London Day Schools operates as a united group of schools with a similar ethos and values and as such is referred to as a singular body. However in some areas, it is appropriate for each school to adopt discrete procedures, acknowledging the individual identity of each school and its specific personnel and systems. These supplementary procedures can be found by clicking the name of the relevant school below the contents list of this Policy.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Thomas's Anti-Bullying Policy, Complaints Policy, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, EVOSA Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Medical Care Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy).

### ***SCHOOL SUPPLEMENTS***

[Thomas's Battersea SENDA Policy Supplement](#)

[Thomas's Clapham SENDA Policy Supplement](#)

[Thomas's Fulham SENDA Policy Supplement](#)

[Thomas's Kensington SENDA Policy Supplement](#)

### ***1. THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY***

The School's philosophy is that inclusion is:

- about creating and maintaining inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices, which lead to quality education for all children;
- about developing a culture of acceptance, in which all children are valued equally, treated with respect and provided with equal opportunities;
- concerned with developing inclusive values, shared by all new members of the School;

- about developing an inclusive orientation, where staff, pupils and parents together with support services work towards removing barriers which restrict full access to education for all pupils;
- about giving equal importance to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

It is recognised that for inclusion to take place successfully, attitudes must be positive and appropriate resources, training and support must be accessible. Staff, children and parents must feel confident that inclusion presents benefits for the child.

## **2. DEFINITION OF DISABILITY AND SCOPE OF THE PLAN**

A person (including a child or young person) is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

This has some overlap with the definition of 'Special Educational Needs' in the Children and Families Act 2014 (which includes pupils with significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children their age, or a disability which means that a pupil cannot make full use of the general educational facilities provided for pupils of their age in mainstream state schools) but not all pupils are disabled by their SEN. However, the school extends the ethos of this plan to those with special educational needs.

Each school has their own accessibility plan and they all contain relevant actions to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the School's curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School;
- improve the provision to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

## **3. ADMISSIONS**

The School must feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop a prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at the school.

The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

The Schools ask parents of prospective pupils to provide essential information in respect of their children at the time of application. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the Schools may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the Schools will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

## **4. ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING**

The Heads of Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leaders and staff who have designated responsibilities for equality at each school location liaise closely with

parents, staff and Educational Psychologists to ensure that the Individual Educational Plan or Provision Map for each child with special needs is relevant.

Training is provided to teachers to enable them to teach and support disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs. This training is on-going and is reviewed and adapted to suit current needs.

## **5. ACCESSIBILITY AND CONSTRAINTS**

One of the obvious problems which the individual Schools have (in common with many other schools), is their lay-out which covers a wide area and consists of many separate, historic and even listed buildings of several storeys, without lifts, which have grown up since the school was founded. Another is the system, again common to many schools, of having fixed classrooms for each subject, based on the valid grounds of having all the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires pupils to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts. Pupils with impaired mobility may be challenged and may be unable to access some or all of the educational and other facilities that the Schools offer. In many areas of the schools, these matters cannot be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to physical features of the Schools at prohibitive cost. The fruition of long-term plans can only go some way to improving the position.

The School will, however, endeavour to make the schools accessible, wherever possible, taking into account school fee income, which is the School's only source of revenue and the subsequent budgetary and planning constraints associated with listed buildings. A description of each school can be found in the School Supplements.

Each school has an Individual Accessibility Plan which covers a three year period.

## **6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The Accessibility policy will be monitored by the Head of Learning Enrichment/Learning Support at each school and the SLT (Senior Leadership Team). Plans will be drawn up in response to the specific needs of learners who have been identified as having a disability or have special educational needs.

When developing and reviewing the plan, consideration should be given to the following areas together with the policies listed below:

- Admissions;
- Attainment;
- Attendance;
- Child specific needs;
- Context specific needs;
- Exclusions;
- Education;
- Extra-curricular activities;
- Physical school environment;
- Reasonable adjustments;
- Sporting education and activities;
- Staff training;
- Welfare.

## Policies

- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- EVOSA Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Medical Care Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- SEND Policy.

The Head of Learning Enrichment/Learning Support will ensure that the schools' Accessibility Plans cover a three year period. The plans will be reviewed during this period and will be revised as and when it is required during this time.

## **7. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

This Policy bears due regard to the following statutory guidance and other advice.

DfE Statutory Guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2023)

DfE Statutory Guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (Dec 2015)

DfE Statutory Guidance 'SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 years' (January 2015)

DfE Departmental Advice 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools' (May 2014)

HM Gov 'Children and Families Act' 2014

HM Gov 'The Education Act' 2011