

Oliver Thomas Nursery School and Children's Centre Accessibility Plan Review

3-year period covered by the plan: May 2022 – May 2025

Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled children -

- Not to treat disabled children less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled children, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled children.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled children in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled children can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled children can take advantage of education and associated services;
- Improving the delivery to disabled children of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary.

May 2022

Next Review Date – May 2025

The priorities are continuous over each of the 3 year periods

1. Starting points

1a: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

Our Inclusion statement outlines the philosophy held at Oliver Thomas. It states that:

'The term inclusion is increasingly used in all areas of society to describe the removal of barriers. To include is to embrace all people regardless of race, creed, gender, disability, sexuality or age.

In our centre we value diversity and regard different talents and abilities in people as a source of strength. We see inclusion as an opportunity to listen and learn from each other, sharing our strengths and experiences.

We recognise the need for flexibility and a willingness to embrace change so that we are able to grow and develop alongside our community. We strongly believe that inclusion is about changing structures to meet the range of difference and diversity we encounter and not about making people fit into existing structures.

We believe that inclusion is all about relationships with people. It permeates everything we do and enriches society by the relationships that grow from children and families being together.

We believe in the importance of social justice and encourage active participation of people in our centre and in the community. We are proactive in supporting children and families who may experience difficulties in understanding their rights and in accessing services.

In Oliver Thomas we recognise that inclusion is not just an educational issue but something which affects all aspects of the organisation's daily life. We acknowledge that this represents a challenge to all our attitudes, established practices and ways of working. It demands that we examine and reflect upon our own practice in order to provide for all our users. We recognise that inclusive practice requires flexibility of approach as inclusion is a process and never a fixed state.'

Aims and Ethos

We aim to promote inclusion by:

- Welcoming all children and families to our centre
- Ensuring that staff and governors are aware of issues surrounding disability
- Recruiting staff who are committed to the inclusion of all people
- Including inclusion as an integral part of our organisation's improvement plan

Curriculum

We provide a broad curriculum experience for all children that values the contribution of children and their families and aims to include all children in every aspect of school life and children's centre services. We do this by training staff to meet individual needs, finding ways to overcome any restrictions caused by the physical environment or routines, and having high expectations for all.

Meeting the needs of all users and stakeholders

We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers, centre users and other stakeholders to develop and improve services and to ensure the services we provide are accessible to all local families with children under five. We do this through our Parents' Coffee Mornings, Parent Questionnaires, Children's Centre Manager meetings, Nursery Heads meetings and informal consultation. These findings feed into the school and children's centre development plans, which provides a strategic overview of resourcing, staffing, premises, partnership, leadership issues and future planning.

Review of priorities for action since 2019:

1a: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

Priority	What action we took for 2019-22 (review)
Further promote the philosophy of inclusion in its broadest sense throughout the school and centre community	Support for children with SEND and their families is embedded into our School Development Plan and our Children's Centre Development Plan. Governors and School Leaders have worked tirelessly with the local authority to ensure that our children receive the funding and support that they need. The school has had block funding reduced from 24 children with high needs to 16 assessment places. We have prioritised developing a culture where families and children with SEND are pro-actively welcomed and supported within

	<p>our school community. In 2021 we were awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark, a great marker of our inclusion work.</p>
<p>Through partnership working with other agencies, monitor the needs of priority groups and ensure we make our services as accessible as possible to these groups</p>	<p>The school works closely with partner services to ensure that we get the very best advice to help us support our children and families. We consider having a personalised understanding of the needs of each child and their family to be fundamental to supporting them effectively.</p>

1b: Information from pupil data and school audit

Oliver Thomas Nursery School and Children’s Centre caters for children aged between 0 and 5 years and their families. We are located in East Ham, which is a culturally mixed area with overall high levels of deprivation. The majority of families accessing the school and centre are of ethnic minority heritage, the largest groups being of Sri Lankan, Indian, Pakistani and Bengali origin and an increasing number of families from Eastern European countries.

The school has places for 212 children on a part time basis. Some 30 hour places are now offered to children of working parents. Children with additional needs and disabilities enter through the open waiting list although many are already known to specialist services who have supported families in accessing a place. The children’s centre is open to children aged 0-5 and their families through a variety of activities and courses. The percentage of children with additional needs is typically above 25%.

As an inclusive organisation, all children play and learn together and all practitioners are trained in the education and care of children. Individual programmes and learning priorities are delivered through a well planned curriculum. This is differentiated to enable all children to have access to it and our environment is continually monitored to ensure accessibility. Our philosophy is about adapting the routines and the environment to suit the child and reasonable adjustments are continuously made according to circumstances. Communication channels such as the safeguarding meetings and health care planning enables all practitioners to be aware of ongoing strategies to support individual children.

Our commitment to inclusion means that to date no child has ever been denied admittance due to disability. We are aware of the need to consider health and safety requirements however and would discuss with parents and professionals any difficulties in adhering to this if there was a high

demand for places for children with specific needs and we felt unable to provide a safe level of support. On occasions we have looked at flexible ways to meet families' needs, such as altering attendance patterns.

Outcomes for disabled pupils are mainly monitored via termly child progress reviews and support plan reviews with the SENDCO where targets, support required and interventions are reviewed. Children with disabilities are fully included in the learning priority setting, parent and child consultation processes and tracking systems that take place within the school.

Priority 1b	What action we have taken for 2019-22 (review)
Continue to track progress of children with additional need to compare against whole cohort and consider individual progress against baseline	Children with additional needs are part of the child progress review system and progress is celebrated through the use of B-Squared, a data system designed specifically for children making smaller steps of progress. This means that learning can be captured robustly for these children relative to their own unique starting points and next steps and progress can be meticulously planned.
Deliver training to build all practitioners confidence and skills in supporting children with additional needs	Training is regularly updated: Autumn 2021 the team were trained in Adult Child Interaction techniques delivered by NHS speech and language specialists with further training to be delivered next term. The early years conference focused on Froebel and his principles of working from the child's level of ability and own unique interests, a truly inclusive approach. All staff were trained in his pedagogy throughout 2021. Two members of the school team will undertake Level 3 SENDCO training in 2022.
Review resources available to extend learning opportunities for children with additional needs	Through the use of the Inclusive Classroom Profile we are ensuring that resourcing is provided to extend learning opportunities. School development priorities have included core book home learning packs to be specifically designed for children with additional needs. Planning is embedded and uses the individual child's ability as a starting point with children making progress from their own unique point. Children's interests are used as a motivator and staff are skilled at providing well matched learning resources to ensure the very best progress for children with additional needs and all children.
Review children centre services to consider take up by families who have additional needs or whose children have additional needs	Meeting the needs of families with children with SEND is now an integral part of the children's centre plan. One of our practitioners has a strong background in complex needs provision and another member of the team has completed a level 3 SENDCO training. We run specialist sessions including: Stepping Stones parenting programme; Little Champions Stay and Play and targeted sessions and a regular SEND Coffee morning.

Use our admission form as a means of information gathering about a family's needs in order to provide appropriate early support.	All staff have a very good understanding of the importance of gathering as much information as possible on our admissions form and then using this to inform our next steps. These next steps may involve additional conversations, working in collaboration with specialist agencies, health visiting and our children's centre to ensure comprehensive settling in plans and health care plans are in place.
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1c: Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

Priority	What action we took for 2019-22 (review)
Promote parental questionnaire to parents whose child has a disability to gather their views and perspectives on how they feel their child has been included	Practitioners are successfully ensuring that these families are pro-actively supported to complete the parent questionnaires at each Parent Conference meeting. Targeted coffee mornings have been successfully set up and attended for parents of children with additional needs.

Disabled children's perceptions of the nursery are best identified through work with child, parents, key person and using each child's special book. Parents of disabled children are consulted on entry to help us gain as much information as possible. They are partners in planning for their child's individual provision plan and are invited to attend review meetings. Their views are sought in these meetings and strategies are put in place for them to use at home so that both nursery and home are working in partnership to support the child.

Advice from wider bodies is sought including speech therapists, educational psychologists, representatives from occupational health and physiotherapy, specialist advisors and experienced practitioners from the advisory services.

2 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

Priority	What action we took for 2019-22 (review)
<p>Review and extend resources that promote a positive image of disability and support learning</p>	<p>Through the use of the Inclusive Classroom Profile we are continuing to strengthen our resourcing. We are also beginning to visit other settings with a strong ethos of inclusion to learn from strong practice at other schools. School development priorities have included core book home learning packs to be specifically designed for children with additional needs. Priorities have included a specially designed curriculum offer promoting open ended experiences chosen in consultation with the community which are inclusive and open to all children. The 20 Things to do before you are 5 are homage to our inclusive practice and celebrate positively the approach of education and learning open to all. We know that our most valuable resource is our staff team. We continue to buy in expert NHS speech and language therapists offering sessions to children and families on site whilst also offering the staff team training and advice specific to our cohort and the particular needs of our community.</p>
<p>Review of curriculum policies to include all equalities issues</p>	<p>As we develop our work on our curriculum, initially through ECERS we are ensuring that equalities are central to this work. Our work on Froebel and his pedagogy serves to further imbed our approach to equality and delivery of a truly inclusive curriculum for all children. Our curriculum offer of the 20 Things an offer of open ended experiences for all children to have access to, serves to further deepen our approach to equality and inclusion.</p>
<p>Develop the confidence and expertise of all staff to support children with additional needs</p>	<p>Through ongoing training we continue to embed and extend our inclusive approach.</p> <p>To continue with the use of picture/symbol systems throughout the nursery and train all new staff on this approach.</p> <p>To continue with the use of ‘objects of reference’ techniques – our SENCO and external specialists work closely with staff to ensure that this technique is used for those children who benefit from this approach.</p> <p>To continue to develop a whole provision approach to the ‘I want...’ communication board and the ‘sabotage resource shelves’ to promote communication and include those children with delay or who are non-verbal.</p> <p>To continue our partnership working with the NHS speech and language therapy specialist services and their bespoke training offer given to all of our team.</p>
<p>To remove any barriers including attendance, anxiety etc due to the</p>	<p>The whole team worked relentlessly through the whole pandemic ensuring that all children including our most vulnerable were able to access education whether it was face to face according to government</p>

COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that our most vulnerable groups access education here at Oliver Thomas	guidelines or via the world wide web as online learning. All children and families staying at home during lockdowns were telephoned by their keyperson weekly creating a constant communication making sure children and families stayed safe and had support both with their education and their mental well being. Moving forward, there is still considerable impact of the pandemic which we continue to be aware of and offer bespoke support to our children and families at Oliver Thomas and in our children's centre reach.
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3a: Management, coordination and implementation

The governing body, informed by the Senior Leaders, is responsible for monitoring the implementation and impact of this scheme. It must be reported on annually as a governing body meeting agenda item.

The plan will be reviewed every three years in line with the equalities scheme. This is the responsibility of Senior Leaders and the governing body through observations, data analysis and verbal feedback. Priorities will remain the same for each three year period.

The SENDCO is responsible for overseeing that all children receive the level of support they require. The school employs additional early years educators enabling the school to improve adult to child ratios and all staff are trained to support the needs of all children attending our setting.

The effectiveness of the plan will be evaluated by;

- Analysing individual data with particular reference to children with additional needs.
- Ensuring children's needs are met through the monitoring of classroom practice.
- Scrutinising evaluations from parents' who have children with additional needs.

3b: Getting hold of the school's plan

This plan and review will be available for parents and visitors on our website and paper copies will be made available on request.