



Opportunities, Aspirations, Knowledge, Success



Disability & Accessibility Policy

September 2024

Disability and Accessibility Policy

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1. Characteristics of the School

The Oaks, Amberleigh School is an Independent Special School and the underpinning ethos of the school is based on a student centered curriculum framework that is currently expanding to encompass a broad, balanced and alternative learning provision that provides flexible learning opportunities. The curriculum has been designed and tailored to meet individual learning needs in line with the Equality Act 2010, National Qualifications Framework, DfE and OfSTED recommendations.

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001. It draws on guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Admissions to the school come through Amberleigh Care Ltd, to whom the school belongs. Students who attend are in their local authority care and have often been permanently excluded, are at risk of exclusion or are currently without a school placement.

The cohort of students at our school are quite often permanently excluded from mainstream school and have often suffered severe disaffection. The variety of programmes that are on offer both on and off site are broad and balanced with innovation constantly developing.

All students at our school will have the opportunity to develop skills, attitudes and acceptable behaviours through a range of flexible and creative educational and social experiences. In turn this will support development of independence and citizenship to progress to adulthood appropriate to the needs of each student.

2. Values

Amberleigh School is committed to improving access to education and educational achievement for all students in order to meet their needs. This supports the Government's Policy of ensuring equality of opportunity and full participation in society and the economy.

Our hope is that young people, families and communities have access to theoretically informed assessment and intervention to promote healthy relationships and development, thus reducing the incidence of abuse.

Our approach is to apply researched and evidence based practice to the understanding of and response to harmful sexual behaviour. We will use assessment to inform our work and base our approaches on the deliberate and planned use of relationships and environments to support the therapeutic task. We will do this in the context of formal Therapeutic Communities. We will engage with a wide range of external agencies to promote safety and add to the body of “what works”.

Values:

Our Values are drawn from the Core Values that underpin therapeutic community practice:

- Attachment: Healthy attachment is a developmental requirement and a basic human right.
- Containment: Everybody needs a safe and supportive environment to develop, to grow, or to change.
- Respect: People need to feel respected and not defined or described by his or her problems alone.
- Communication: All behaviour has meaning and represents communication which needs to be understood.
- Interdependence: Personal well-being arises from relationships which recognise mutual need.
- Relationships: The quality of relationships determines one’s quality of intimate, family, social and working life.
- Participation: Ability to influence one’s environment and relationships is necessary for personal wellbeing.
- Process: It is often better for individuals, groups and organisations to reflect than to act immediately.
- Balance: Positive and negative experiences are necessary for us all.
- Responsibility: each individual has responsibility to others, and others to him or her.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person’s disability
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

- This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.
- Schools are allowed to treat disabled children / young people more favourably than non-disabled children / young people, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with children / young people without disabilities

The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

School governing bodies and proprietors must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

Although the production of an accessibility plan is not part of the requirements of the independent school standards, it should be noted that there is a requirement for such a plan to be prepared, published, reviewed, revised and implemented by the proprietor of an independent school under paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010. Accessibility plans should include intentions for improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided or offered by a school. Plans must also cover matters other than premises relating to participation in curriculum by, and delivery of information to, disabled pupils, for instance by appropriate provision of equipment (see section 4). This will be reviewed every three years.

Other relevant legislation, regulations & guidance;

Children & Families Act (2014)

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Regulations (2014)

The SEND Code of Practice (revised April 2015)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2015)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)

Disability Discrimination Order (1995)

The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 & 3

Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003

This accessibility strategy aims to:

1. Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
2. Improve the physical environment to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.
3. Improve redelivery to disabled students of written information which is provided to students who are not disabled.

This strategy will be reviewed and revised annually and will be publicly available for inspection.

3. Consultation

Amberleigh School has consulted with:

- All Senior Managers within Amberleigh Care.
 - All teachers/staff currently at Amberleigh School.
1. Amberleigh School strategy focuses on increasing the accessibility of the curriculum to disabled students by securing appropriate staff training and engaging schools and agencies to work together.
 2. Amberleigh School plans to make the written information, normally provided by the school to its students, available to disabled students. This information will take account of students' disabilities, students' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.
 3. The curriculum is not only school based teaching and learning, but the wider curriculum of the school such as Outdoor Education, P.E and Cultural Activities of School Visits.
 4. Amberleigh is an equal opportunities employer and mindful of the needs of staff who have a disability, as far as practicable given the nature of their jobs and the students we support.

4. Disability Discrimination Act Accessibility Strategy

September 2024- September 2027

Action Plan

<u>DDA Planning Duties</u>	<u>Current Practice and Action Required</u>	<u>By When</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.	<p>The current curriculum is not only inclusive but designed with flexibility and consideration for those with additional needs.</p> <p>We explicitly consider the content and delivery of our personalised curriculum.</p> <p>The curriculum includes a full range of issues, ideas and materials in our schemes of work to expose students to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial. Issues are delivered inclusively and do not subject individual students to discrimination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School offers a differentiated curriculum (Pathway 1-4) for all students. - School uses resources tailored to the needs of individual students to access the curriculum. - Curriculum progress is tracked for all students including those with a disability. - Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students with additional needs. - High expectations of all students. - The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all students. - Introduction of new / adapted courses to meet needs of the students. 	As and when referrals are made to Amberleigh Care, individual needs will be considered and necessary adjustments made to ensure full participation in the curriculum.	<p>School to be consulted at referral stage to ensure needs and requirements will be met in time for the placement.</p> <p>Maintain current accessibility.</p> <p>Access to Telford and Wrekin Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS), BeeU (CaMHs) and Educational Psychology Team for further advice and guidance if required.</p> <p>All students are members of the school council and have opportunities to make contributions or suggestions for improvements.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom organization and deployment of aids e.g. reader pens, overlay. - Intervention as required – dyslexia, literacy, Maths, careers. 		
<p>Schemes of work, medium term planning, accreditations and subject action planning are adequately differentiated to take account of ability and learning styles of all students.</p>	<p>SLT and teachers adapt and ensure schemes of work are appropriate. SLT assess effectiveness through student progress, learning walks, book scrutiny and lesson observations.</p> <p>All teachers to make themselves fully aware and utilise Pupil Centred Plans (PCPs), one-page profiles and EHCPs where appropriate to inform of individual areas of need/provision in order to support inclusion of all students.</p> <p>Adhere to student individual risk assessments.</p> <p>Regular CPD to support understanding e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Autism awareness - ADHD awareness - FAS awareness - Enabling Environments - Attachment styles & Group supervision - Effective characteristics of teaching. 	<p>On going and as required.</p>	<p>Students of all abilities have their needs met. All planning differentiated to for a wide range of abilities.</p> <p>All students are members of the school council and have opportunities to make contributions or suggestions for improvements.</p>
<p>All school trips/educational visits planned appropriate for all students well in advance to allow for risk assessments and adjustments for student needs.</p>	<p>SENCo/Education Visits Co-ordinator and teacher collaborate to organise and plan the trip to ensure inclusion of all students including those with disability or additional needs. .</p>	<p>On going and as required.</p>	<p>All students to access school trips and receive recommended support, as required.</p> <p>All students are members of the school council and have opportunities to make contributions or suggestions for improvements.</p>

<p>Improve the physical environment to enable disabled students to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services we provide.</p>	<p>The current physical school environment is accessible.</p> <p>The building provides flexible modifications should physical alterations need to be made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The environment is currently on one level – at ground with easy internal and external access. - The environment has appropriate corridor width, table/shelf heights and disabled toilet/first aid facilities. - Sound proofing specific rooms e.g. D&T room. - Annual Health & Safety audits. - Annual PAT testing. 	<p>As and when referrals are made to Amberleigh Care, individual needs will be considered and necessary adjustments made to ensure access to the physical environment.</p> <p><i>*Physical disabilities are considered at referrals stage as home environment is not suitable for wheelchair users (Three-storey building, no lifts/ramps).</i></p>	<p>School to be consulted at referral stage to ensure needs and requirements will be met in time for the placement.</p> <p>All students are members of the school council and have opportunities to make contributions or suggestions for improvements.</p>
<p>Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students.</p>	<p>Required information will be prepared on a needs led basis as the current curriculum is not only inclusive, but designed with flexibility and consideration for those with additional needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School uses a range of communication methods to make sure information is accessible. This includes internal signage, large print or coloured resources, pictorial or symbolic representations, Makaton signing. - Modified resources and worksheets. - Modified examination processes and papers as required. 	<p>As and when referrals are made to Amberleigh Care, individual needs will be considered and necessary adjustments made to ensure written information is tailored to include and</p>	<p>The Head Teacher is fully consulted at referral stage to ensure needs and requirements will be met in time for the placement.</p> <p>All students are members of the school council and have opportunities to make contributions or suggestions for improvements.</p>

	- All students are members of the school council and have community spaces (meetings/dynamics) to share student voice – be heard and receive information.	meet the needs of new students.	
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Supported by:

DfE's Advice for schools on the Equality Act (paragraph 4.29)