



Policy:	Accessibility Policy
Date adopted:	March 2022
Date to be reviewed:	March 2025
Signed:	Ian Roe
Position:	Chair of Governors On behalf of the Full Governing Board

Dorchester Learning Centre

Accessibility Plan

1. Introduction

All schools must have an Accessibility Plan. This is required by law (Equality Act 2010).

Accessibility Plans set out how, over time, a school will:

- a) increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability
- b) improve the physical environment of the school for pupils with a disability
- c) make written information more accessible to pupils with a disability by providing information in a range of different ways.

This is our school Accessibility Plan.

2. School context

The Dorchester Learning Centre (DLC) is a Pupil Referral Unit with SEMH places. Students who attend the centre come from a variety of backgrounds – dual registered, permanently excluded, SEN needs and medical referrals. Our pupil number is 64. The cohort ranges in age from 5 – 16.

We share one common purpose: to provide the very best in education and support for all children who (for a variety of reasons) find themselves outside of mainstream school education.

DLC is located at Monkton Park, just outside of Dorchester. The school consists of a primary unit and separate playground area, A secondary space and playground area and a bikes workshop and track.

The main school is split between two buildings, accessed through an indoor corridor. The main teaching area is mainly on one level with small steps between sections. 'Woodside' is our second teaching space and the majority of classrooms are upstairs, including the dedicated 'Nurture' classroom for KS3 pupils.

3. Vision and aims

Our aim is for everyone at Dorchester Learning Centre to feel welcome, valued, confident and included in the school community. We are committed to

providing an accessible curriculum and environment to make this happen. We want our pupils with a disability to:

- be fully included in school life
- actively take part in high quality learning
- thrive and enjoy their learning
- develop the skills to go on and lead fulfilled lives as adults
- be empowered, confident and able to function as independently as possible.

We want our pupils with a disability to access all elements of school life, including school clubs, activities and trips. We recognise that we may have to do things a little differently to make this happen.

4. Objectives

At Dorchester Learning Centre, all staff and governors will be aware of the duty to support pupils with a disability, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Staff will work to remove disadvantage faced by pupils with a disability by adopting a 'can do' attitude, having a flexible approach to teaching and by incorporating modifications into the curriculum and environment.

Person-centred systems will be in place to support the inclusion of pupils with a disability, for example, Moving & Handling Risk Assessment and Care Plans, Individual Healthcare Plans and Transition Plans.

We will continue to improve the physical environment and facilities on offer to enable pupils with a disability to fully access the school site.

As an SEMH provision we will work to ensure the individual needs of our students are addressed.

5. Other policies

Our Accessibility Plan complements and supports our:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and SEN Information Report

- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy
- Equality Information and Equality Objectives.

It can also be read alongside the following school documents:

- Child Protection Policy
- Curriculum Plan
- Health & Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- School Development Plan

6. Pupil data

We ask for information about any disabilities or health conditions in early communications with new parents and carers, in addition to carefully observing our pupils' progress.

A whole school audit of pupil data is undertaken on a regular basis due to the regular change in cohort.

Our pupils have the following areas of need:

- Impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as chronic fatigue syndrome and epilepsy.
- Organ specific conditions such as asthma.
- Developmental impairments.
- Learning difficulties.
- Mental health conditions or mental illness.

Individual risk assessments are undertaken before any off-site trip.

7. Audit

To help us develop our Accessibility Plan, we undertook an environmental audit of Dorchester Learning Centre.

8. Consultation

In developing our Accessibility Plan, we have consulted with:

- our pupils
- parents and carers
- our SEND support staff
- other staff at the school, including the leadership team
- our governing body
- relevant specialist services.

9. Current good practice

Access to the curriculum

At Dorchester Learning Centre, we have improved access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability through the following means:

- Bespoke timetables and pathways that are regularly tracked.
- No pupil is excluded from any aspect of the curriculum due to their disabilities or impairments.
- Differentiated curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress.
- Where areas of the curriculum present challenges for a pupil, these are dealt with on an individual basis.
- Detailed pupil information on pupils with SEND is available to all relevant staff via Provision Map.
- Specialist resources are available for pupils with visual impairments such as large print reading books, coloured paper and coloured overlays.
- There are established procedures in place for the identification and support of pupils with SEND.

The physical environment

At Dorchester Learning Centre, we have improved the physical environment of the school to increase access for pupils with a disability by:

- The school has toilet facilities (within a designated area of school) available for wheelchair users.
- The school has introduced unisex toilets.
- Access to a small designated area of the school for wheelchair users.
- Access to quiet, calm spaces for pupils that need them.
- Designated disabled parking spaces close to the school building.

Access to information

At Dorchester Learning Centre, we make written information more accessible to pupils with a disability by:

- Large print resources.
- TA support is available to read and scribe where appropriate.
- Coloured paper and overlays.
- Providing laptops for use in lessons.
- By using pictures, photos, symbols, diagrams, visual prompts and social stories.

10. Sources of advice and information

Our Accessibility Plan has been written following guidance from the Local Authority and taking into account the Dorset Local Authority Accessibility Strategy. Additionally, the following sources of advice and information have been used:

11. Implementation and monitoring

Our Accessibility Plan shows how we will continue to improve accessibility at Dorchester Learning Centre for pupils with a disability (and for staff and visitors to the school) over the next 3 years. It may be used to inform other school planning documents.

We will work in partnership with the Local Authority in implementing the Accessibility Plan. Where necessary, environmental works will be guided by relevant buildings regulations.

Sufficient resources will be allocated to implement this Accessibility Plan.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed regularly and updated if needed.

The complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

12. Accessibility Action Plan

Increasing access to the curriculum						
What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	Cost (estimate)	How can we tell if this is successful?	Date complete
Continue to develop CPD to all teaching and support staff focussed on supporting pupils with SEND to access the curriculum.	Whole school CPD from SENDCo and Dorset Council training and specialist services.	Emma Gould – Acting SENDCo.	Ongoing	N/A	All students with SEND successfully secure a post 16 destination that is sustained at a course level that is right for them.	
Trauma Informed Schools status.	Completion of the Trauma Informed Schools Diploma – Jayne Lewis. Relayed to whole school staff through regular CPD.	Jayne Lewis – Mental Health & Safeguarding Lead	2021-2022 academic year	£1500	TIS Accreditation	
ICT infrastructure improvements.	The purchase of additional school laptops.	David Dinsmore – Acting Headteacher.	2021-2022	DfE grants.	Each class to have designated laptops for use within lessons.	

Improving the physical environment						
What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	Cost (estimate)	How can we tell if this is successful?	Date complete
Soft close doors	A bid will be submitted to Dorset Council during Spring term 2022 with a request for door upgrades	Debbie Guyler – School Business Manager	Spring Term 2022	Dorset Council to fund	Door upgrade completed.	
Classroom upgrades	A bid will be submitted to Dorset Council during Spring term 2022 with a request for new desks and chairs	Debbie Guyler – School Business Manager	Spring Term 2022	Dorset Council to fund	New desks and chairs.	
Creation of additional 1:1 private space for Mental Health First Aider	Relocation of the Mental Health & Safeguarding Lead into a private office	Jayne Lewis – Mental Health & Safeguarding Lead	End of Autumn term 2021	£250	New office.	January 2022

Making written information more accessible						
What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	Cost (estimate)	How can we tell if this is successful?	Date complete
Improve accessibility of school website to pupils and parents with SEND	Audit website	David Dinsmore – Acting Headteacher	January 2022	£0	Positive feedback from pupils/parents	
Review the accessibility of school communication to pupils/parents.	To implement an email system to relay information to parents using Teachers2Parents.	Debbie Guyler – School Business Manager	October 2021	Nominated cost per email.	Positive feedback from parents. To be obtained during parent consultations. Increase in response to school letters and requests.	September 2021

