



Thomas Hardy School

Accessibility Plan

Jan 2022 to Jan 2024

Date agreed:

Review date: January 2024

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Approved by: Nick Rutherford (Headteacher)

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

We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment, which values and includes all young people, staff, parents, carers and visitors. This is regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

We are intent on ensuring that the physical environment and the curriculum is accessible to all students who attend the school.

The Thomas Hardy School is a school with 2138 students on roll from year 9 to year 13.

The school is on a large site with 4 main blocks linked to areas of the curriculum. The school dates from the 1940s and whilst is in good condition, the older parts of the school noticeably consist of narrower corridors, for example. The school has 2 large sports halls and access to the public 1610 sports centre. There is a large field on two tiers and a large AstroTurf.

The school has 2 resourced provisions (complex communication needs and physical disability).

3. Vision and aims

Our aim is for everyone at Thomas Hardy 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.

We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010, by removing disadvantage faced by pupils with a disability and eliminating discrimination.

4. Objectives

At Thomas Hardy 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, Communication Passports 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.

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 Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Health & Safety Policy (including off-site safety)
- Behaviour Policy
- School Development Plan

6. 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.

7. Current good practice

Identification

The Thomas Hardye School asks for information on any disabilities or health conditions in early communications with new parents and carers. We also carefully observe our students' progress and behaviour and will discuss any concerns with parents and carers, as necessary.

We discuss students' needs with our feeder schools to aid a smooth transition and take advice from external professionals when considering any reasonable adjustment to our environment.

Access to the curriculum

At Thomas Hardy School, we have improved access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability through the following means:

- Using multimedia activities and interactive ICT equipment to support specific curriculum areas.
- High quality teaching which includes differentiation, designed according to need and where necessary with specialist input.
- Skills for life One alternative GCSE is offered to 18 students in Yr 10 and in Yr 11.
- Skills for life complete the COPE award and have some learning outside of the classroom including visits Weymouth Outdoor.
- As an alternative to T&E, students are taught the skills of how to revise and answer examination questions. Students are also given the opportunity to use assistive technology which may help them access their exams.
- One-page profiles on SIMs.
- Hearing and vision support team of TA's (who receive regular specialist input), including modifying resources and worksheets for students where necessary.

The physical environment

At the Thomas Hardy School, we have improved the physical environment of the school to increase access for pupils with a disability by:

- Installing automatic doors around site.
- Ramped accesses to school entrances
- Dedicated parking bays at the main entrance for pupils, families and visitors with a disability.
- Ensuring that there is good lighting within the school, making use of natural light where possible and reducing glare.
- Ensuring that lessons for wheelchair users take place where possible (and in most cases) in downstairs classrooms.
- Removing and fixing potential trip hazards and keeping all floor spaces uncluttered.

Access to information

At the Thomas Hardy School, we make written information more accessible to pupils with a disability by:

- Having a specific team of HVSS (Hearing and Vision Support) consisting of two teaching assistants who work to ensure written information is accessible to students with hearing/vision needs.
- Adhering to the guidelines from specialists
- Using social stories and picture symbols to explain protocols and changes to programmes for pupils who benefit from this.

8. 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.

9. Implementation and monitoring

Our Accessibility Plan shows how we will continue to improve accessibility at the Thomas Hardy School 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 Thomas Hardy School complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

10. Accessibility Action Plan

Improving Curriculum Access

What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	How can we tell if this is successful?
1. SEND information- Review how the SEND information is shared with teachers.	<p>Make better use of SIMS.</p> <p>Create consistency of codes to ensure transition from middle schools.</p> <p>Provision Mapping software- purchased and ongoing in terms of uploading data</p>	EforE	Ongoing	Staff feedback.
2. Improve the use of the ASDAN for students studying skills for life or not studying full curriculum.	<p>Continuing to work with ASDAN on changes to the award.</p> <p>Skills for Life Leader</p> <p>Communication with all staff. Involvement of teaching assistants.</p>	EforE	Ongoing	Student outcomes in completion of the ASDAN award.
3. Homework needs to be accessible	Support through HVSS team and co-ordination with teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants also	Teaching assistants (overseen by EforE)	Ongoing	Student completion of homework, behaviour points feedback from parents.

What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	How can we tell if this is successful?
for all young people.	running homework clubs and supporting students in after school settings where necessary.			

Improving Physical Access

What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	How can we tell if this is successful?
1. Lifts- all buildings have lift access to upper floors operated.	Lifts regularly serviced.	County	At regular intervals (at least twice a year)	Access to all rooms for all students and staff

What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	How can we tell if this is successful?
2. Access highlight the edges of all kerbs with yellow paint.	Site team	Site team	Summer term 2022	Kerbs will be highlighted
3. Improving Accessibility of the Field	Communication/feasibility study undertaken with regards to altering the ramp to the field.	Site team/EforE	Ongoing	Improved access to the field for wheelchair users.

Improving access to written material

What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	How can we tell if this is successful?
1. HVSS team training based around use of braille to support students upcoming from year 8.	Training from Ben Winstanley and collaboration between county and the HVSS team here.	EforE	Ongoing	Effective support for our hearing and visually impaired students (both current and future).

What needs to be done?	How will this be achieved?	Who is responsible?	When will this be done?	How can we tell if this is successful?
2. Improve the use of assistive technology from those that could benefit.	Staff training based on assistive technology (including Dragon and Read, Write Gold, AV1 Robots	EforE	September 2023	Students confidence with the use of appropriate technology improves. Increased provision of resources such as Dragon on school computers.

