



Lanterns Nursery School and Extended Services Accessibility Statement (In conjunction with the Disability Equality Scheme) Reviewed – May 2024

Values

Lanterns Nursery School and Extended Services aims to provide a welcoming community in which each individual child, parent/carers, member of staff or the governing body and any other school user is valued and respected:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have just given birth
- Whatever their age

Lanterns Nursery School has a specific role in the inclusion of young children with additional needs and their families within the Winchester district, providing inclusive nursery education with involvement from therapy services and supporting families of children with special needs.

Accessibility for all is therefore central to the work of Lanterns Nursery School. This Accessibility Statement sets out what we currently have in place to ensure that our environment and services are accessible to the diverse community we serve. We have a proactive approach to monitoring accessibility and participation within the nursery school.

A Warm Welcome

The staff at Lanterns Nursery School provide a warm welcome to all visitors to our school. We think carefully about the resources we use and the environment we create. Pictures, posters and books used around the school contain images and illustrations that reflect our diverse community.

Access to the Physical Environment to ensure that disabled children and adults can take advantage of the opportunities, facilities and services we provide

The Nursery School was built in 2005 specifically to accommodate young children with a range of special educational needs and disabilities alongside their peers. It has been designed to provide level access throughout the school. Some doors are secure to ensure the safety and safeguarding of our young children but there are clear procedures to support adult visitors to the nursery school who are wheelchair users where appropriate. There are three dedicated parking bays.

The accommodation provides spacious toilet facilities for the children within the nursery including an area for children who require nappy changing. There is an adjustable height changing bed and shower and accessible toilet.

There is an accessible toilet for adult users and nappy changing facilities are available for visitors.

The nursery school is laid out to ensure that all areas are accessible to children who are using specialist equipment such as wheelchairs or mobility aids. Specialist equipment such as chairs, standing frames, mobility aids are accessed via therapy services in liaison with children's parents.

Children who use the nursery school can access a soft play-room which has level access and a sound and light room.

There is level access to the nursery school garden area which has a sandpit and slide with a wide ramp, both of which are accessible to all children. There are two swings that children can access, these have harnesses and are contained within a fenced area. The area is large and spacious and can accommodate a variety of bikes, buggies and larger mobility aids. Children who may be vulnerable in the garden due to their developing physical skills or developing social understanding are supported by enhanced adult ratios to ensure safety and access to the outside curriculum.

We work closely with the Specialist Advisory Teaching team for Physical Disability, Visual Impairment and Hearing Impairment to ensure that specific adjustments to the environment recommended for an individual child are implemented where possible.

Some of the children who attend our nursery school have medical needs and require specific care from adults working with them. These children have an Individual Health Care Plan which ensures that staff members have received appropriate training to support their medical needs, thus ensuring that the child can participate in nursery life alongside their peers.

Communication for All

Lanterns Nursery School prides itself on the support we provide for diverse ways of communication. We will make adjustments on an individual basis to ensure that we maximise the understanding and effective communication skills of everyone who uses our school.

Makaton sign language is used with all children within the nursery. All staff members working within the school are able to use a basic vocabulary of signs to support simple communication with children but also with adult visitors who may use sign language to communicate.

Visual support is used throughout the school to support children's understanding but also to provide children who are not yet ready to use speech to communicate effectively:

- Visual timetables (Makaton symbols/ photos to support understanding of the routine)
- Objects of reference (objects used to support understanding of what is going to happen next)
- Adults have a keyring of clear photos/ symbols to support understanding of simple instructions
- Choosing board (symbols/ photos to help children communicate a choice)
- Makaton signing throughout the session and particularly to support songs, rhymes and story sessions and Language groups
- Picture Exchange Communication System

The Nursery School has a link Speech and Language Therapist who visits and supports staff in assessing and planning to develop individual children's communication skills. Some children may require more specific augmentative communication systems. We work closely with the Specialist Teacher Advisors for Physical Disability, Visual Impairment and Hearing Impairment to ensure that the communication needs of these children are met.

The Nursery School has a SENDCo and SENDCo Assistant who work directly with children and supports the staff team in meeting children's language and communication needs. New members of staff receive guidance on implementing the strategies described above as part of their induction and access Makaton training as part of a rolling programme of staff development.

We have access to the EMTAS service for resources, translation of written materials and interpreter support for families where parents/carers are not fluent English speakers. Practitioners get to know all their families so that our environment and curriculum can reflect lived experiences. Children can access books in their home languages and resources that mirror their previous experiences.

Access to the Curriculum within the nursery school

Lanterns Nursery School provides inclusive early years education. Children are supported by an experienced team of Early Years Practitioners. There is a generous staffing ratio which reflects the level of provision for children with additional needs. This allows for higher levels of adult support throughout the session to differentiate activities, facilitate communication and enable play with peers.

The activities and resources provided within the nursery are carefully planned to meet the needs of a diverse range of learners and to ensure that they are accessible to all children. Practitioners work closely with parents to identify each child's strengths and any barriers they may experience to participation and learning. When it is identified that we may need to organise an activity or element of the environment or routine differently to accommodate an individual child, we have a 'can do' approach and adjustments are made wherever possible.

Children who need extra support with their learning have their needs assessed carefully by the SENDCo or SENDCo Assistant and keyperson. For some children we draw on advice from Health professionals such as Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy. Where necessary we can also access support from the Specialist Teacher Advisory service (Physical disability, Visual Impairment and Hearing Impairment) or the Educational Psychology Service. These children have an Individual Education Plan which details the short term targets that we would like the child to achieve and the strategies that staff will use to support them. It is the responsibility of the Senior Early Years Practitioner (SEYP) and key person to ensure that these strategies are incorporated into the setting. Staff work in partnership with parents to understand the child's needs and to plan strategies to support their child.

All children access a story group on a daily basis and are grouped so that the story is matched to their language and communication skills. As part of this, children who need more support to develop their listening and attention and/or language and communication are supported using a variety of specific teaching and learning approaches. In addition, some children receive individual or small group interventions. All learning activities are supported by clear visual cues and Makaton signing.

The number of children with social communication and Autism has increased over recent years and we now offer some of these children a specialist class. This is a small group of 6 children supported by 3 adults. The classroom environment is low distraction and the session follows a very structured routine focusing on the development of play, communication and social skills. The session draws on Attention Autism, a very structured approach to developing Listening and Attention skills. We also use TEACCH strategies to develop independent learning skills using the workstation approach.

Improving the accessibility of our nursery school

To ensure that we can identify barriers and monitor the impact of our policies and practices, we must gather information from people who use our nursery school and their experiences. We include questions about disability and access in our admission forms, staff recruitment information, and leaflets etc. asking users to inform us of their needs. We also regularly audit the type of disability experienced by children accessing the nursery school. Every year we carry out a survey to get feedback from the people who are using the nursery school so we can understand where we can improve what we provide.

It is the responsibility of the members of the Senior Leadership Team of the nursery school and the Governing Body to monitor the impact of all policies that are new or under review to consider the impact of that policy on the groups described in the introduction to this statement.