

Disability Policy

Effective from: September 2025

Authorised by: Mary Fysh; Principal, Sarah Tapp; Head and Martin Ayres; Chair of Advisory Body

CONTENTS

- Rationale
- Admissions and Disabled Pupils
- Physical Accessibility
- The Cantabile Care® Programme
- Additional Support for Behavioural or Speech and Language difficulties
- Occupational Therapy
- Other Adjustments
- Staff Training
- Other Relevant Documentation

RATIONALE

We welcome all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in the caring environment of The Avenue Nursery and Pre-Preparatory School ('the School'). Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with physical disabilities providing they can cope with our School site. This Policy applies to both the EYFS and Key Stage 1. The school also seeks to be fully compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, government guidance on working with children with disabilities and general guidance on best practice. Reference is made to other school policies, which are pertinent to the care, education and safety of children with disabilities and/or special needs.

ADMISSIONS AND DISABLED PUPILS

Each pupil with a disability requires special consideration and treatment and we will strive to make appropriate adjustments in full discussion with parents. We will also discuss with other key stakeholders, including medical advisers, the best way to enable us to develop suitable arrangements for the child concerned. When it is agreed that the child is able to join the school, the parents and child will be invited to visit the school to meet with the Principal and other staff. We recognise that some disabled pupils may also require specialist support from our Learning Support Department, and we would normally discuss any additional needs with parents before their child enters the school. The School's Special Educational Needs Policy is available on our website.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Parents and prospective parents of disabled children may wish to obtain copies of the School's Access Plan from the web site. This shows the ways in which we plan to make our buildings progressively more accessible to disabled pupils, parents and visitors as well as how we continually update our resources to ensure that children's disabilities can be catered for in the classroom setting.

The School has an active monitoring policy and will do its very best to make adjustments to take account of an individual pupil's needs, within the constraints imposed by its buildings.

THE CANTABILE CARE® PROGRAMME [1]

The school operates the *Cantabile Care®* Programme as a response by staff and parents to the perceived need of some children in the School requiring support in the areas of speech and language development, behavioural support, physical coordination and resulting attention problems. Children who are identified as having particular needs in these areas, are discussed with their parents and with staff as to the best method of accessing the most effective support early on. For information, since the inauguration of the *Cantabile Care®* Programme in September 2005, many children have progressed significantly - some to the extent that they no longer need to follow the programme. It has made a great difference to many children who would otherwise have struggled. It has also supported and helped parents in understanding their child's particular needs.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR BEHAVIOURAL, SPEECH & LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

For those children requiring behavioural support, the *Cantabile Care Programme* provides for small group sessions one morning a week for children whose needs are moderate and who would benefit from opportunities for group interaction, discussion etc.

For those children who have specific difficulties with regard to Speech and Language development, an appointment for an assessment can be made and support given on an individual basis at the School. Parents are responsible for financing this provision. Ongoing support and guidance would be provided by the therapist for the staff working with the child at school.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

An Occupational Therapist visits the School every Monday Friday during term time. Those children who are identified by staff as possibly needing support with fine/gross motor skills and/or coordination difficulties can be referred, with the parent's consent, for an initial assessment. If necessary, ongoing group therapy sessions can be arranged on Monday or Friday. Any individual sessions would be financed by the parents.

Parents of the children on the *Cantabile Care® Programme* are invited to watch sessions and are given regular updates on their child's progress and about various strategies to use at home to support the work done at School. The staff at the School are also given guidance to support the children on the programme plus items for classroom use such as chair seat supports, noise cancelling earphones, weighted blankets, pencil grips etc.

OTHER ADJUSTMENTS

We are able, depending on need, to arrange for children to use laptop computers in classes, and, for example, for large print documents to be given to those with impaired vision. Other teaching aids are available, as and when required. We take advice from both our in-house Speech and Language and Occupational Therapists regarding additional support required by a child with particular needs.

STAFF TRAINING

Our teaching staff all receive training on the learning needs of pupils with special education needs and disabilities. The School SENCO receives regular training on working with children with disabilities and also works closely with professionals from outside the School.

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following Policy documents:

Access Plan

Equal Opportunities

SEND

Child protection/safeguarding

[1] '*Cantabile*' is a registered trademark