

Accessibility Plan (HG13, P3 ISI 17b WS)
Schedule 10 of the Equality Act January 2020 - January 2023 Plan
This policy should be read in conjunction with BG18b

Introduction

1. The Equality Act (2010) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) (SENDA) place a legal requirement on all schools to increase accessibility for disabled pupils. All schools are required to produce a 3 year written Accessibility Plan.

Definition of Disability

2. The Acts referred to above state that:

Under the Equality Act 2010 you are considered disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

“Reference to ‘disabled people’ includes disabled children, young people and adults, as pupils, employees, governors, parents and carers and other members of the wider community that might use School premises for leisure or other activities.

A disability can arise from a wide range of impairments which can be:

- sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing;
- impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, myalgic encephalitis (ME), chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia, depression and epilepsy;
- progressive, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, and forms of dementia;
- auto-immune conditions such as systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE);
- organ specific, including respiratory conditions, such as asthma, and cardiovascular diseases, including thrombosis, stroke and heart disease;
- developmental, such as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia and dyspraxia;
- learning disabilities;
- mental health conditions with symptoms such as anxiety, low mood, panic attacks, phobias, or unshared perceptions; eating disorders; bipolar affective disorders; obsessive compulsive disorders; personality disorders; post-traumatic stress disorder, and some self-harming behaviour;
- mental illnesses, such as depression and schizophrenia;
- produced by injury to the body, including to the brain

3. More information on the definition of disability is available at the Disability Rights Commission's (DRC) website. In particular, it should be noted that dyslexia is also included within the broader definition of disability covered by the Equality Act 2010 and SENDA 2001.

What Is an Accessibility Plan?

4. An Accessibility Plan is a plan for
 - Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum
 - 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 and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school
 - Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled

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- Enabling staff to have appropriate strategies to deal with the needs of all pupils

It is therefore an important adjunct to the School's Disability and Special Educational Needs Policies. The School will make the Accessibility Plan available to interested parties at reasonable times. Not only does the plan cover day to day activities but it will also influence the future development of the School and its buildings and facilities.

The Plan also serves as a guide to prospective parents to help in assessing whether the School is suitable for individual pupils. Although aimed primarily at the needs of disabled and SEND pupils, the Accessibility Plan also takes into account the needs of disabled parents, staff and visitors.

This policy is constantly under review during the period to which it relates and will be revised as necessary.

The School Environment

5. West Hill Park School comprises a group of buildings that vary in age and size, situated on a reasonably level site of approximately 31 acres. All teaching resources, classrooms etc are located on the ground floor. The only area on higher floors accessed regularly by pupils, staff and visitors is the Boarding House, located in the main School Building which would have limitations of accessibility for disabled pupils.

Reasonable Adjustments

6. The school is committed to enabling and improving access wherever reasonably practical. Many of the current buildings are extremely difficult to adapt but all future buildings will be planned in such a way as to allow both access and reasonable use by all.

7. The existing pathways and entries to buildings will, where reasonably practical, be repaired and renewed (including the building of ramps) in such a way as to allow access and use by all as a part of the repairs and renewals programme within the School.

8. Provision to allow a child to arrive early or late to a class and to have a specially tailored timetable will be considered positively, as will any special disability related dietary needs. Parents are to raise any such concerns with the Headmaster when first registering their child(ren) at the School and any changes should be communicated without delay.

9. Educational activities off-site will be planned in such a way as to allow maximum participation by all.

10. When purchasing new equipment, its suitability for use by all will be considered.

11. Any new member of staff, visitor or contractor with an accessibility issue should raise the matter with the Headmaster or Estates Manager as soon as possible, and before starting work in the School.

12. Mobility is not the only issue and the School recognises the need to take into account other significant matters such as lighting and its accessibility and acoustics.

Disclosure

13. Appropriate and reasonable adjustments can only be made if School staff are made aware that individuals have specific needs; this is particularly important as many are not obvious. Hence all disabled/SEND pupils, parents, staff or visitors are encouraged to notify the School that they have a disability.

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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN – January 2020 - January 2023

Already in Place

14. The following alterations have already been made to School grounds, buildings, facilities and processes to facilitate access:

- a. Contrasting paint schemes to highlight doors and door frames on all primary internal routes through the School. This policy will remain in all future decorating schemes.
- b. Primary entry/egress routes for all main buildings have ramps fitted. Many of these are portable, and other portable ramps are available for other doorways not permanently fitted with ramps.
- c. Appropriate areas inside main buildings have ramps fitted to enable access to all main rooms (e.g. Old Library, Jubilee hall, Dining Hall etc.).
- d. One bench in the DT block has been specially constructed to permit access by a wheelchair user.
- e. Accessible toilets are available in the Jubilee Hall, Swimming Pool and Senior Girls' Changing Rooms.
- f. Vanilla printing/writing paper is available for use by those with dyslexia.
- g. Training is available from the IT Department in the use of the Accessibility Functions in Windows and other software packages.
- h. Disability/SEND and access issues are covered regularly in staff INSET sessions.
- i. All proposed new buildings or major building refurbishments will take account of accessibility issues from the design stage.
- j. Installation and commissioning of a hearing loop system in the Jubilee Hall.
- k. Repainting of significant area of the Boarding House with special emphasis on contrasting colours to highlight doors and door frames.
- l. Provide Visitors toilets on the ground floor of the Main Building.
- m. Read and Write Software installed on school computers.
- n. Appointment of a new Head of SEND 2019 with a specific brief to improve, both support and resources to all pupils.
- o. To train staff appropriately so that they have the skills and strategies to deal with pupils of all abilities.
- p. Handrails added to outside girls' toilet areas.
- q. Removed thresholds in the Music area
- r. Following the success of this action, acoustic ceilings are being investigated for other areas of the school. Eg changing areas

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- s. High visibility tape added to steps and trip hazards in EYFS. Complete (03/15) Other areas are ongoing.
- t. Added ramps to both New Block classrooms
- u. Investigate an improvement to the acoustic qualities in the dining room.
(Curtains fitted 02/14)
(Suspended ceiling fitted 08/15)
- v. Trial painting of a number of prominent doorsteps in the Shells/Lowers courtyard in a bright colour
- w. Jubilee Hall ceiling replaced with improved acoustic tiling and an update with LED lighting.
- x. Swimming pool lighting updated with LED lighting.
- y. Riding Stables lighting updated with LED lighting.
- z. Tractor Shed lighting updated with LED lighting.

Short Term Measures

15. The following specific accessibility improvement measures are planned for the period January 2020 to January 2021:
- a. All routine replacement or repair of lighting units to be carried out with increased accessibility in mind. (10 So Far 01/20)
 - b. Sports Hall lighting being changed from amber to white as replacements are necessary. This process will be moved forward more quickly from January 2020 to cater for the needs of a pupil with deteriorating eyesight.
 - c. Following the success of this action, acoustic ceilings are being investigated for other areas of the school. Eg changing areas
 - d. Work with Head of Learning Support to better equip teachers with strategies to deal with the needs of pupils of all abilities.
 - e. Heads of department to focus on SEND as a single item on meeting agendas (Ongoing)
 - f. Progressive update of resources to enable the progress of a pupil with deteriorating eyesight as logged in the EHC plan. (Ongoing)
 - g. Installation of more wheelchair ramps around the school site. (09 2020)
 - h. Continued roll out of hi-visibility taping as necessary to assist a pupil with reducing vision. (2018 ongoing)

Medium Term Measures

16. The following specific accessibility improvement measures are planned for the period January 2020 to January 2022:

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- a. Depending upon the results of the trial at paragraph 14.v, extending the painting of doorsteps to other appropriate areas of the School. (Ongoing)
- b. All fixed and portable accessibility ramps to be surveyed and renewed replaced or repaired as appropriate. (first inspection 10/19)
- c. Ongoing redecorating programme to be given special emphasis on contrasting colours to highlight doors and door frames. (In progress)
- d. All painting colour schemes are being developed with a view to reflecting ambient light (White and Grey instead of dark blue on doors) (Ongoing)
- e. All routine replacement or repair of lighting units to be carried out with increased accessibility in mind (in progress).
- f. All new lighting units to be daylight quality bulbs. (in progress)
- g. Top and bottom steps on staircases and steps to have contrasting visibility strips improved (in progress). Laundry Steps, Back Staircase
- h. Further review and update of policies and practice in the teaching and learning provision within the school for those requiring extra help. Review of possible funding for pupils with SEND.
- i. Sound reduction measures to be added to practice rooms in the Music School. (Completion aimed at 09/20)
- j. Encourage wider use of tablet devices within curriculum time. First fifty tablets purchased and in use (09/15) Second batch purchased (09/16). 20 Chromebooks purchased (01/21)

Long Term Measures

17. The following specific accessibility improvement measures are planned for the period January 2022 to January 2023
- a. Ongoing redecorating programme to be given special emphasis on contrasting colours to highlight doors and door frames.
 - b. All routine replacement or repair of lighting units to be carried out with increased accessibility in mind. (Ongoing)
 - c. Boarding House area to be surveyed with a view to increasing and improving access
 - d. Follow up on points outlined in para 16f (Ongoing)
 - e. Acoustic ceilings and carpets to be considered for more areas of the school.

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