



HEATHSIDE SCHOOL

HAMPSTEAD

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Introduction

At Heathside we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school. It is our continual duty to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum and to improve both the physical environment of the school and the delivery of information to disabled pupils to achieve this.

This is a three-year accessibility plan that sets out the proposals of senior management to increase access to education for disabled pupils. It was last reviewed in September 2020 and covers the period to September 2023. However, if there are changes in the physical layout of the buildings this policy may be reviewed.

Background

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as 'A physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities'. This has some overlap with the definition of 'special educational needs' in the Education Act 1996 (which includes pupils with significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age, or a disability which means that a pupil cannot make full use of the general educational facilities provided for pupils of their age) but not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa.

It is the duty of the school to make 'reasonable adjustments' and to provide auxiliary aids and services: 'where a disabled person would, but for the provision of the auxiliary aid, be put at a disadvantage.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the School has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

The school's aims

- We value the individuality of all our children and are committed to giving all of them every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards.
- We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children.
- We firmly believe that every individual has a right to be part of a community where each member is valued and respected for their own worth irrespective of race, colour, creed or ability.
- We strive to provide a setting in which all children have an equal opportunity to grow in understanding, skills and values.
- We aim to help all children appreciate that they are members of a rich and diverse

wider community and to appreciate the needs and rights of others.

We are working within a national framework for educational inclusion provided by:

- Inclusive School (DfES 0774/2001)
- SEN & Disability Act 2001
- The SEN Revised Code of Practice 2014
- The Disability Discrimination Act (amended for schools 2001)
- The Equality Act 2010
- Code of Practice for Schools (Disability Rights Commission)
- Ofsted

Limitations of the Physical Environment

The School buildings comprise a mix of traditional and historic buildings located within Hampstead in North London. All of the school's current buildings are constructed with narrow corridors and require the use of stairs to access the properties. The buildings are not equipped with DDA compliant doors and it is unlikely that suitable adaptations could be made to support individuals with limited mobility onsite due to the nature of the conservation area in which the buildings are located.

Admissions Arrangements

As a part of the admissions process, in order to ensure that no individual is disadvantaged, prospective pupils and/or parents with special educational needs or disabilities will meet with a member of the inclusion team who will assess the school's suitability to meet the pupil's individual needs and report to the headteacher prior to the offer of a place.

Accessibility arrangements to assist the inclusion of pupils with SEN and disabilities

Physical:

The following measures are in place to ensure the physical accessibility to students with SEN and Disabilities:

- handrails along stairs/steps
- seating plans are organised according to the needs of individual pupils
- refuge areas to all staircase landings for emergency access and audio connection to main reception
- inter-active hearing loop installed to at the desks to receptions
- disabled toilets with emergency alarm loop to main reception to summon assistance if required medical room has additional wheelchair to assist.

The following equipment has been purchased to assist students to access the curriculum:

- individual laptops
- touch screen computers
- colour photocopier to photocopy resources for partially sighted students
- Literacy software for pupils with a low reading age upon entry

Curriculum:

The following measures are in place to improve curriculum access for students with SEN and Disabilities:

- differentiated content and range of Teaching & Learning approaches to ensure access
- special arrangements made for disabled students to participate in school trips
- facility to enlarge worksheets or change font format.
- Learning Support Department runs homework clubs before school, break, lunch-time and after school
- therapy programmes are provided for some pupils who are suffering from emotional and behavioural difficulties (These are provided by an external team of therapists, who work on site)
- TSAs are assigned to particular groups and individuals to support their learning

Training:

Staff and training arrangements to aid inclusion of students with SEN and Disabilities:

- Tailored SEN staff training and induction for Learning Support staff during August INSET
- TSA training
- Special arrangements/adjustments made to enable disabled/ SEN students to be included in school trips. E.g. additional staff.
- Liaison with outside agencies including;
 - LCP's Speech and Language Therapist
 - SEN advisory teacher
 - Dukes Education SEND working group
 - Educational Psychologist
 - School Nurse
 - CAMHS