

Walderslade Girls' School

Accessibility Policy



Introduction

This policy has been drawn up to implement the Walderslade Girls' School Planning Duty for Disabled Access. This planning duty arises from changes made to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) which extended the DDA to cover education.

Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

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

This policy has been developed in accordance with the definition of disability and terms set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines disability as the following:

'A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on a student's everyday life. This includes students with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorders), ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and any linked with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this plan is to set out how Walderslade Girls School is committed to providing a rich and inclusive environment to enable all students to participate fully in the school community by identifying and eliminating barriers that could prevent this. We aim to:

1. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
2. Improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.
3. Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Key Principles

- The school recognises the inherent quality of all, irrespective of emotional needs or physical needs or mental disabilities.
- The school seeks to promote equality of opportunity so that all children irrespective of ethnic origin, gender disability or special educational needs have equal access to opportunities that develop their skills and abilities.
- The school believes that every child has unique characteristics, abilities and learning needs and a fundamental right to an education, which takes into a wide diversity of need and culture.
- The school believes that the involvement of parents and children should be as active partners of equal value.
- The school believes that high expectations should be set for all pupils including those with SEND with particular emphasis on independence.
- The school should respond to diverse needs through an atmosphere of collaboration and partnership.
- The school will not discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
- The school will aim to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- We aim to ensure governors and staff have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002) when performing their duties.
- The school values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his / her ability to carry out normal activities.
- The school respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.
- We aim to provide all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individuals and their preferred learning styles and to endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum.

This policy sets out the proposals of our school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties of the DDA:

1. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
2. Improving the environment of the school so disabled pupils can take greater advantage of education and associated services.

3. Improving the delivery of the curriculum to disabled pupils.

In determining what is reasonable the school will have regard to:

- The financial resources available to the school
- The costs of any particular alteration to the premises, staffing arrangements, or special equipment required
- The practicality of making reasonable adjustments
- The extent to which aids and services will be provided via a Statement of Educational Needs statement, or by provision paid for outside the school's resources
- Health and Safety requirements
- The interests of other pupils

Walderslade Girls' School is committed to resourcing, implementing, reviewing and revising the Disability Access Policy annually. A Disability Access Audit is undertaken as part of this process. Any future building developments or renovation projects will be compliant with the regulations and guidance for Disability Access.

School Development Planning Priorities relevant to the DDA

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils participate in the school curriculum:

- short, medium and long term planning to meet the needs of every child
- continued collaboration with external agencies
- raised whole school awareness
- support and commitment of all staff
- peer support
- high expectations
- shared good practice
- full access to curriculum and extra curricular activities
- progressive use of ICT
- intelligent timetabling

Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.

- installing ramps, lifts and improvements to doorways insuring suitable and sufficient access and egress
- improving lighting, signage, colour contrast, acoustics and floor coverings
- improving toilet, washing and changing facilities
- adapting playground environment
- providing a wheelchair accessible minibus
- exploring sources of funding to enhance the general provision for disabled pupils through Statementing and charity funding
- consulting with experts on the best use of resources and funding

Improving the delivery of the curriculum to disabled pupils.

A wide variety of strategies and support material will be used, as identified in individual plans and profiles. These will include, as appropriate: Timetables, key word lists, support materials, visual timetables, writing frames, lesson notes, differentiated tasks or outcomes, enlarged print, laptops, audio books/dvds, mentoring, special exam arrangements for instrumental, internal and external exams, LSAs, specialist support tuition.

At all times, Walderslade Girls' School will take full account of:

- specific impairments
- pupil and parental views
- advice from teachers
- advice from other designated professionals

The school will maintain an Accessibility Plan to ensure that current and future planning requirements are addressed.

Information from student data and school audit

The following data summarises current school population as described by the school's Special Needs Register, needs analysis and medical information held in SIMS.

The school currently makes provision for students as follows:

- Specific learning difficulties.
- Global learning difficulties and occasionally pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- Subject specific difficulties.
- Behavioural/emotional or social issues affecting educational progress including students with poor school attendance.
- Attention, Deficit, Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Physical disability
- Development Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)
- Medical conditions which affect learning including Diabetes.
- Aspergers Syndrome and students on the Autistic Spectrum (ASD)
- Dyscalcula
- Speech and language difficulties

Key Responsibilities for all Staff and Governors

Responsibility of the Governors

- To ensure that the school fulfils its legal obligations with respect to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the changes to that act relating to education by the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001.
- To ensure the publication of an annual accessibility plan.
- To ensure that policies and procedures undertaken in school are monitored and are effective.
- To ensure that staff receive appropriate training to enable the policies to be effectively implemented.
- To support the Headteacher in implementing the policy.

Responsibility of the Headteacher

- To ensure that the school fulfils its legal obligations with respect to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and the changes to that act relating to education by the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001.
- To ensure that compliance with requirements of the DDA is key to all school policies.
- To ensure that there is no discrimination against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions and in the provision of education and associated services.
- To treat disabled students equally.
- To ensure that staff receive appropriate training to enable the policies to be effectively implemented.
- To ensure that the school provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, tailored to meet individual needs.
- To ensure that Access to Education means making a full school life accessible to the disabled student including extra curricular activities and events.
- To ensure that in working with parents the school recognises and values parents knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out normal activities.
- To publish an Accessibility Plan based on self-audit and review the Disability Action Plan annually.
- To report to governors regularly on the implementation of the policy and practice in school.
- To ensure that the ethos within school is supportive of the policy and procedures.

Responsibility of the Staff

The role of teachers and support staff is crucial in implementing the policy and practice with reference to disabled students. The ethos they establish within, and beyond, the classroom will ensure that equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination works in practice.

Responsibilities

- To ensure that they are familiar with and implement the policy and procedures.
- To ensure that training opportunities are taken up.
- To ensure that the beliefs and values underpinning equal opportunities and anti-discrimination are reflected in the classroom environment and the curriculum.
- To take all reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a disadvantage.
- To ensure that pupils are treated as individuals entitled to the best education they can receive regardless of any disability they may have.
- To manage behaviour in a way that is seen by the pupils as fair and which models respect for the individual.

The school will undertake to meet its key objectives by developing three key areas:

1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- The school undertakes to assess its provision of curriculum to students on a regular basis, and to use this information to better tailor the curriculum to student requirements.
- The identification of barriers to participation in all areas of school life is a priority and where necessary, adjustments will be made to the curriculum and teaching methods.
- Suitable learning challenges are set and progress of individual's achievements are assessed.
- Departments will identify staff development needs to improve their ability to meet the needs of students and include these within the performance management systems.
- See Appendix I.

2 Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.

- The school will audit existing facilities and develop ways of making the physical environment more accessible to people with disabilities.
- Within the context of our school buildings, which contains many steps and levels, all refurbishment and new buildings will be undertaken with the intention of improving access for disabled students, staff and visitors.
- The school will consider ways of providing the most suitable aids and resources, outside of the child's SEND, or health, provision.

3 Improving the delivery to pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

- Audit existing methods of providing information and media utilised, develop these to improve accessibility.
- Students who have difficulty accessing standard size print will have this fact identified on, or prior to admission, and this information will be transmitted to the AEN Department, who will become responsible for distribution to the school staff. All relevant information will be collated of student needs and kept available for staff.

- The AEN Department will communicate individual requirements for enhanced scripts with relevant staff to enable them to produce material for a specific student.
- Staff will ensure that the specific needs of identified students have been met by forward planning of every lesson, and the production of differentiated material to meet identified needs.
- Consideration will be given to the text presented to students, considering the need for simplified versions where this is appropriate
- The use of OHPs, projectors, TVs and other IT equipment will be considered in the context of student's disabilities. Recognition will be given that some formats, whilst beneficial to many students, will not be appropriate for all. An assessment will be made of the impact of using a technology with a class where a disabled student is working.
- Parents and students will be included in the choice of the most suitable media for the disabled child

Appendix I

Accessibility Plan

Improving the Curriculum Access at Walderslade Girls' School

Area for Development	Action points	Outcomes	Timeframe	Staff Involved	Success Criteria
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum	After an audit of staff skills, CPD to take place on differentiation	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled children's needs with regards to accessing the curriculum	Training event Ongoing development in 2015-2017	All staff	Increase in access to the National Curriculum; pupils able to access work more independently
All out-of-school activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Review all out-of-school provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All out-of-school activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements	By July 2016	REL (trips coordinator) All teaching staff organising trips	Increase in access to all school activities for all disabled pupils
Classrooms are organised to allow the participation and independence of all pupils	Conduct learning walks; identify environments that require improvement; action needs	The needs of individual pupils can be accommodated with minimal disruption or reorganisation	By July 2016	DDU/ERA All teaching staff	Increase in access to the National Curriculum; improved confidence and safety of pupils
School begins work towards achieving dyslexia friendly status	CPD to introduce criteria for dyslexia friendly status, review and development of key areas	Written and visual resources match dyslexia friendly criteria and are accessible to a wide range of users	Entry level status by April 2017	DDU	Increase in access to the National Curriculum; pupils able to access work more independently
Chairs with arm rests should be available for use by all permanent wheelchair users	Check if we have any in school already; order one or two for Learning Support	Chairs will be available for use by wheelchair users	July 2016	ERA	Wheelchair users will feel safer and secure when not in their own wheelchairs

<p>More students are attending mainstream school with medical needs i.e. catheter bags and they will need to be supported.</p>	<p>If employing new support staff, include 'supporting personal care needs of individual students' in job description</p>	<p>Students with a range medical and physical needs will be fully supported</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>LMC</p>	<p>Inclusion of students with medical and physical needs in the mainstream school environment</p>
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Improving the Delivery of Written Information at Walderslade Girls' School

Area for Development	Action points	Outcomes	Timeframe	Staff Involved	Success Criteria
Availability of written material in alternative formats, to include school brochures, school newsletters and other information for pupils and parents in alternative formats	Explore options, including LA support for converting written information into alternative formats; development of website	The school can provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes	By July 2017	ERA/DDU	Delivery of information to disabled pupils, parents and the local community improved
Develop a dyslexia friendly, visual identity for all written and presented documents e.g. worksheets and power point presentations	Audit of current written formats; audit of changes in line with dyslexia friendly guidance, develop consistent whole school approach	Written information follows a clear, dyslexia friendly house style and is accessible to readers of all abilities	By April 2017	All staff	Pupils can access written and presented material more independently; improved access to the National Curriculum
Use of coloured paper in exams in classrooms for those with visual perception difficulties	Order overlay screener; screen current list of students with overlays; ensure all students receive an overlay if they need one; disseminate information to all staff	Students with visual stress will use an overlay and have they exams copied on to appropriate paper	By July 2016	All staff	Only those who need it, will have an overlay. All students with visual perception difficulties will have their exam papers printed on the appropriate coloured paper

Improving Physical Access and the Physical Environment at Walderslade Girls' School

Area for Development	Action points	Outcomes	Timeframe	Staff Involved	Success Criteria
Students in wheelchairs should have a 'personalised emergency evacuation plan' for fires	One member of staff (FT?) takes responsibility for having the individual students' timetable to hand, finding student and supporting them in making a safe exit from school.	Students in wheelchairs will be safe when exiting the building in case of a fire.	By July 2017	PWI Form tutors	Students will be escorted by key workers out of the building within a reasonable time and in a safe way
All fire exits should have ramps for wheelchair users to safely escape from	Fire exit near Learning Support and Drama room needs to have a ramp where the car spaces are or the ramp going to the GA cooking room should be accessible to use	Students in wheelchairs will be safe when exiting the building in case of a fire.	By April 2017	Site Team PWI	All fire exits will have a ramp for wheelchair use
Handrails on stairs	Audit/walk around of all stairs. Hand rails on stairs should extend all the way down so if a student needs to hold on to them coming down the stairs, they do not get to a point where they have nothing to hold on to but are not at the bottom of the stairs yet.	Students will physical difficulties will be safe walking down all stairs	By July 2017	Site Team PWI	All hand rails will extend all the way down every stair case
Trip Hazards for those who may be visually impaired	Audit of all staircases. Closing the gaps on the bottom of all staircases. (Again, the Art stairs have a gap between the first step and the floor)	No student or staff member will trip on the bottom step of stairs	July 2016	Site Team PWI	No staircase will have a gap at the bottom step
Disabled toilet	The lock on the disabled toilet should be unlockable from the outside using a coin or something similar	Students and staff will be safe and be able to be let out in case of emergency in toiler	April 2016	Site Team PWI	New lock on disabled toilet door