



KING EDWARD VI HANDSWORTH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Accessibility Plan 2023-2024

Document Control

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Deputy Head – Director of Curriculum and Operations is responsible for reviewing and revising the policy.

Change History

Version	Date	Description
2	01/11/21	Updates
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Linked Documents

Reference	Title
	AT Special Education Needs and Disability Policy
	School SEN Policy
	School medical needs Policy
	School SEN Information report

King Edward VI Handsworth Mission Statement

We celebrate diversity and value fairness and equal treatment for everyone at the school regardless of their race, age, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability. We promote equality through our rich and diverse curriculum, equipping students with the skills, knowledge and understanding to succeed in a diverse world outside and beyond school. We challenge discrimination in all its forms so that all members of the school community feel safe and valued.

Unconscious Bias Key definitions:

There are two types of biases

1. **Conscious bias** (also known as **explicit** bias) and
2. **Unconscious bias** (also known as **implicit** bias)

Conscious bias is an inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair.

Unconscious bias is implicit bias. It is unintended and subtle, based on unconscious thought. People may have unfair beliefs about others but not be aware of them. Typically unconscious bias happens involuntarily without any awareness or intentional control. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups.

Under the 2010 Equality Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of nine areas termed in the legislation as protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

How to overcome unconscious bias

- Be aware of unconscious bias.
- Don't rush decisions rather take your time and consider issues properly.
- Justify decisions by evidence and record the reasons for your decisions
- Ensure that everyone knows what kind of behaviour is expected of them.
- Ensure that everyone knows how to report prejudice related incidents.
- Encourage people to work with a wider range of people and get to know them as individuals.
- Focus on the positive behaviour of people and not negative stereotypes.
- Employers should implement policies and procedures which limit the influence of individual characteristics and preferences.

Policy

King Edward VI Handsworth School for Girls has adopted this accessibility plan in line with the Academy Trusts Special Education Needs and Disability Policy and the School's Special Educational Needs Policy, with the aim of ensuring that our school is socially and academically inclusive, that all pupils have access to a full curriculum, and that all pupils are appropriately challenged.

This accessibility plan forms part of the school's SEN Information Report and shall be published on the school's website.

The school SEN Policy, Medical Needs Policy and SEN Information report explains how we ensure equal opportunities for all our students, increased access to the curriculum, physical access to the school and access to information particular to students with SEND. This accessibility plan provides an outline of how the school will manage this part of the SEND provision. Please refer to our SEN policy for an outline of our full provision to support pupils with SEND.

Context

As at October 2023 the school has 1288 pupils including:

EHCP students	2
Pupils with additional needs seen by the SENCO	68
Looked After Children	0
English as an Additional Language	532
EAL receiving additional support	0
Medical conditions	287
Vulnerability support	168

We aim to support all children who have additional needs by discussion with parents, providers of specialist services and the pupils themselves before and after admission. No pupil has been denied full access to the curriculum because of disability.

Employees with known serious long-term medical conditions are given support in their roles with regard to medical appointments and the need, at times, for periods of absence.

Legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995), the Disability Discrimination Regulations (2005) and Equality Act (2012) which replaced them are useful guidance as well as legislation.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) places duties on the governing body which still have relevance today:

Part 4 deals with admissions, exclusions and school life. It requires the governing body to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in three ways:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of the education offered; and
- improving written information available to disabled pupils.

Part 5A requires the governing body to:

- promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people who use the school site or who may wish to e.g. pupils, parents/carers and staff; and

- prepare and publish a disability scheme. This document, the accompanying action plan and the Accessibility Plan set out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

Generally, impairments have to meet the statutory requirements set out in section 6 and Schedule 1 to the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- judging the impact of long term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

Statutory guidance on the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability has been produced by the Office for Disability Issues (within the Department for Work and Pensions) to help better understand and apply this definition - <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wor/new/ea-guide.pdf>

The clear starting point in the statutory guidance is that disability means ‘limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people’. ‘Substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial. ‘Long term’ means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so. ‘Normal day to day activities’ could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of factors in pages 47 to 51 of the statutory guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010. (Study and education related activities are included in the meaning of ‘day to day’ activities.) The guidance from the Office for Disability Issues referred to above illustrates the factors which might reasonably be regarded as having a substantial adverse effect on normal day to day activities. Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect are also provided.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person’s native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating;
- difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions;
- physical impairment – for example, difficulty operating a computer because of physical restrictions in using a keyboard.

Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- minor problems with writing or spelling;
- inability to read very small or indistinct print without the aid of a magnifying glass;
- inability to converse orally in a language which is not the speaker’s native spoken language.

Non-discrimination duties

It is unlawful to:

- treat a disabled pupil or prospective pupil any less favourably for a reason related to that disability than someone for whom that reason does not apply;

- apply a criterion or rule that would affect a disabled pupil adversely unless this is for a legitimate reason;
- discriminate against a disabled pupil for something that is a consequence of their disability unless this is for a legitimate reason;
- harass a pupil on grounds of his/her disability;
- fail to attempt to take reasonable steps to avoid placing disabled students at a disadvantage compared to other pupils; and
- fail to provide an auxiliary aid or service where to do so would alleviate any substantial disadvantage.
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Less favourable treatment must meet these tests:

1. It must be for a reason related to the child's disability.
2. It must be less favourable than that given to a child without that disability.

Reasonable adjustments

Schools must ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage and take reasonable actions. The following factors can be taken into account when considering this:

- the need to maintain academic, musical and sporting standards
- the financial resources available
- the cost of taking a particular step
- the extent to which it is practical to do so
- the extent to which aids and services are provided as a result of the EHCP
- health and safety requirements
- the interests of other pupils.

Disability Action Plan

The governing body will continue to:

- promote equality between disabled and other people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this involves more favourable treatment.

In addition, as far as is reasonably and financially practicable, the school will continue to:

- consult with individual pupils, staff and parents/carers about how it can improve its assistance;
- seek information on disability from appropriate pupils, parents/carers and staff;
- ensure that disability is considered during the admissions and leaving processes;
- ensure that disability is considered when making staff appointments;
- ensure that physical aids, e.g. large print format documents and practical help e.g. the assistance of support staff, are available;
- ensure that all school provision, whether curricular or extra-curricular, is available to all and take account of learning styles and aptitudes;

- ensure that all children and adults with disability have access to the site¹ and that disabilities are taken into account in the planning of new buildings or facilities;
- ensure that the social (in particular, exclusions and bullying) and academic progress of pupils with disabilities is adequately supported;
- ensure that there is no discrimination with regard to the professional opportunities offered to staff with disabilities and their advancement within the school;
- provide appropriate training for staff;
- maintain records;
- monitor its actions regularly and report on progress to the governing body;
- review its policy regularly and update it as necessary; and
- publish this document on the Internet.

Actions

The Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions to:

- Improve access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, modifying the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in extra-curricular activities including school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist **aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
- Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

Accessibility Audit

Section1: Delivery of the curriculum

Question	Yes	No	Comment
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?	√		Appropriate guidance and training tailored to individual needs Access to national College additional virtual training
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?		√	Large class sizes make movement difficult, however, small number of ground floor rooms are available for majority of lessons and new builds have allowed lift access to science, music and sports facilities.
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?	√		Adaptive teaching is part of lesson planning. Individual needs are taken into consideration and adaptations made as necessary

¹ Alterations to buildings and the provision of auxiliary aids and services are not required under this law

Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	√		Schemes of work deal appropriately with cultural, social and ethnic diversity and are sensitive to disability
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	√		
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	√		
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	√		Additional support is provided by teachers in class and extra time allowed in assessments and examinations where required, supported by the Learning Support Team.
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some form of exercise in physical education?	√		Yes where there is need
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	√		Laptops and other technical aids as appropriate are available.
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	√		As much as possible, working in partnership with parents/carers and providers.
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	√		
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	√		

Section 2: The school site

Question	Yes	No	
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?		√	There is no access for a non ambulant pupil above the ground floor in the main school, the design block upper floor and the Sixth Form Centre. A recent purchase of a wheelchair stair climbing aid can make occasional access possible. The canteen and social spaces are accessible as are sporting facilities.
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?	√		To a large extent on the ground floor areas. New buildings have been designed with access in mind and there have been wheelchair users on site. Toilet facilities are available in the Sports Hall, Fitness block, Science Block, Design block and Music Centre alongside a dedicated toilet

			in the new locker block. Some facilities include a shower as well.
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	√		New markings make disabled access clear.
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?		√	Not visual alarm systems except for Lockdown when screen interruptions occur on projector displays and PC monitors. Students discuss and set up PEEPs which are updated routinely.
Are non-visual guides used to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?		√	All visually impaired persons are accompanied
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?		√	
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?	√		Recent LED lighting project has improved lux levels and outside lighting.
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment?	√		Pupils sitting examinations have been offered separate rooms Students are able to use ear defenders either individually or as groups in DT lessons.
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	√		As an individuals' needs are known.

Section 3: Delivery of materials in other formats

Question	Yes	No	Comment
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	√		We have made adjustments for pupils in the school and would for prospective ones if necessary. Coloured paper is routinely used. The school has provided a used a read write device.
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	√		
Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	√		
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	√		We look at individual needs and adapt appropriately, such as the use of hearing aids.

SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Improving Physical Access

Item	Comment
Accessible car parking	Parking is available close to most buildings and includes an electric charging bay.
Dropped kerbs	Provided on all paths
Doors	Anti-glare film; this would be a major and unnecessary expenditure
Staircases - colour-contrasted handrails to both sides of staircases recommended	These are installed in new buildings
Doors at top of stairs to prevent wheelchair users accessing stair case.	The only upstairs access for wheelchairs is in the Music Centre and Science Block and there is a door into the stair well in both buildings.
Accessible toilet	Available in the Music Centre, Sixth Form Centre and Sports Hall, Fitness block, Design Block and Science Block
Provision of a lift to access the upper floors	Music Centre and Science Block
Provision of induction loops	None available
Improve Reception facilities	Remodelled to allow for free flowing access.
Light switches, power outlets and emergency alarm buttons at wheelchair height	Wheelchair users are always accompanied
Adapted wash basins to be at wheelchair height with space under for wheelchair to allow user to get close to wash basin.	Available in the Music Centre, Sixth Form Centre, Science Block, Design Block, Fitness Block and Sports Hall
Examinations	All external examinations are housed in the Sports Centre which has ground floor access and disabled facilities with adjacent disabled parking.

Improving Curriculum Access

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe
Training for teachers on adapting the curriculum	Undertake an audit of staff training requirements	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled children's needs with regards to accessing the curriculum	In place
	Review the specific needs for pupils living with a disability, in terms of basic daily living skills, relationships and future aspirations.	Teachers are aware of the relevant issues and can ensure that individuals have equality of access to life- preparation learning. The use of other professional partners has been made available.	In place
All out-of-school activities are planned to ensure the	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	In place

participation of the whole range of pupils		comply with all current and future legislative requirements	
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils	In place
Training for Awareness Raising of Disability Issues	Provide training for governors, staff, pupils and parents Discuss perception of issues with staff	Whole school community aware of issues relating to Access	Governor training in the future

Improving the Delivery of Written Information

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
Availability of written material in alternative formats	The school will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats.	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes. Delivery of information to disabled pupils improved
Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats.	Review all current school publications and investigate the availability in different formats for those that require it.	All school information available for all. Delivery of school information to parents and the local community improved
Review documentation with a view of ensuring accessibility for pupils with visual impairment.	Get advice from HVSS on alternative formats and use of IT software to produce customized materials.	All school information available for all. Delivery of school information to pupils & parents with visual difficulties improved.

Priority Actions for 2023-2024

Area	Action	When	I/C
Curriculum Access	Reinforce need for adaptive teaching in schemes of work Ensure staff are thoroughly aware of the special needs of some of our pupils	Ongoing	SenCo
Written information	Investigate need for information in alternative formats	Autumn term 2023	MV working with CCO

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Monitoring and review

This policy and action plan will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Welfare Committee

J Kendall
Deputy Head – Director of Curriculum and Operations
October 2023