Sydenham & Dulwich Girls

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Accessibility Policy & Plan
Whole School: Senior School/Junior School: EYFS, KS1 and KS2

Introduction

The GDST aims to treat all pupils, staff, prospective parents and other members of the school community favourably, and wherever possible, take reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage. The Equality Act 2010 imposes duties on schools not to discriminate against, or treat less favourably, disabled pupils or prospective pupils in the provision of educational services. This policy sets out the GDST's commitment to ensuring accessibility to education for disabled pupils, both in terms of education itself but also the physical access of our schools.

What will the Accessibility Policy do?

The GDST recognises its duties under the Equality Act and takes a positive approach in making its Schools more accessible in terms of improving access to the curriculum, physical access to education and associated services; and delivery of information to disabled pupils.

Whilst respecting the individuality of each school, the GDST will seek to provide consistent, ongoing guidance and support to all schools to ensure that a coherent approach is adopted by each school.

1. Improving access to the curriculum

The Trust will issue regular guidance, and provide focussed training, support and advice to assist each of its schools in taking all reasonable steps to ensure that its curriculum is as accessible as possible to its disabled pupils. This may include teaching and learning, and the wider curriculum, such as participation in after-school clubs and visits. The Trust will regularly review its policy towards Inclusion and will update its schools, where appropriate, on any changes to this policy or related guidance.

In order to improve access to the curriculum for those students with mental health issues, we provide counselling support as part of the broader pastoral support network in place.

2. Physical access to our schools

Whilst the GDST firmly believes that the main emphasis of its accessibility planning should be on access to the curriculum and education, it recognises that alterations to its premises are likely in order to enable disabled pupils to take advantage of education, facilities and the

services the school covers. Any alterations will be judged against the test of reasonableness, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The GDST will review its schools' accessibility plans on a regular basis in order to prioritise any adjustive capital works to achieve the best possible results across all its schools in terms of value for money and available time and resources. The requirements for Accessibility Plans are detailed below.

Wherever possible, the GDST will endeavour to integrate any adjustive works into the existing maintenance and capital works programmes so as to make best use of the Trust's resources.

The GDST will also review the impact of any adjustive works against its Asset Management Plans for each site to ensure that resources are targeted to guarantee the sustainability and cost effectiveness of any development. All of these factors will be combined to ensure that the GDST adopts a reasonable approach to its adjustive work programme.

3. Provision of information to pupils with a disability

It is our aim to ensure that the transition of pupils with a disability to Sydenham High School, is carefully considered and planned. Review meetings, parents' evenings and meetings with external agencies (as required) will be held to improve the flow and delivery of information to pupils with a disability to them, their parents and the wider community. This may involve planning on how to make written information accessible to disabled pupils within a reasonable timeframe, including handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admissions Policy;
- Equal Opportunity Policies;
- Inclusion Policy; and
- Exclusions Policy.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 imposes duties on schools not to discriminate against, or treat less favourably, disabled pupils or prospective pupils in the provision of educational services. Sydenham High School recognises its duties under the Act and intends to adopt a positive approach to making the school more accessible in terms of admissions, the curriculum, both the taught and the wider curriculum, associated service, including after-school care and extra-curricular activities, behaviour and discipline policies and the estate and premises. Sydenham High School's commitment is to offer a distinctive educational experience to girls in our care, within a broad, inclusive curriculum and a culture of high expectation. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled 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 undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Sydenham & Dulwich Girls School will make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

This Accessibility Plan is subject to a three yearly schedule of review and revision, with annual monitoring and review to assess provision for disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) and progress in implementing the Plan. The Director of Finance and Operations through the Health and Safety Committee is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the Plan with specific responsibility for physical requirements.

We strive, wherever possible, to ensure that each and every girl can take part in the whole school curriculum. We value the diversity of our school community and appreciate the contribution that girls with special educational needs and/or disabilities can bring to the School.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

Sydenham & Dulwich Girls supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan and is supported and guided by the GDST to achieve this.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school both current and prospective.

Risk Assessments and procedures are in place to include the assessment of the individual needs of disabled pupils, and a personal emergency evacuation plan and personal safety plan is agreed with pupils and parents when deemed necessary/appropriate . Should a pupil with physical disabilities join the school; discussion with parents, therapists and medical professionals would be conducted to devise an appropriate risk assessment that would be implemented.

The school has adopted this strategy as a constructive approach to ensure that it does all that is reasonably practical to enable disabled pupils and prospective pupils full access to the educational service it provides.

The strategy covers the following areas:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

1. **Curriculum Access**

Teachers will take specific action to enable the effective participation of pupils with disabilities by:

- Planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for satisfactory completion of tasks
- Planning opportunities, when necessary, for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum
- Identifying aspects of their programmes of study and attainment targets that may present specific difficulties for individuals.
- Curriculum access is addressed on a case by case basis. The school encourages the parents of those for whom special curricular access arrangements may be necessary to visit the school at the earliest opportunity to discuss how the prospective pupil's needs may best be met, both during the application process and also after admission.

Aim	Current good practice *Include established practice and practice under development*	Objectives *State short, medium and long-term objectives*	Actions to be taken ***2026 - 2029 Additional Actions***	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by ***Progress***	Cost *Low, medium, high*	Success criteria
Ensure pupils with additional learning needs, be it visible, invisible, physical or mental, can participate in the curriculum	Our school offers a differentiated curriculum for all pupils with learning adapted for individuals Academic progress is tracked for all pupils, including those with a disability	Curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils Specific tracking of ALN pupils and other defined groups	Standing item on SLT/department link management meetings to review and monitor SoW for accessibility of all learning groups Analysis of reporting data for specific groups (ALN/MAT/EAL/LA) after each reporting session within subject departments and by HoY and Heads of Key Stage.	Deputy Head Academic	Further action: when schemes of work are modified in all subjects, ensure diversity and inclusion for all pupil additional learning needs are considered Ongoing Analysis for specified defined groups for Y10/Y12/Y13 October 2023 Analysis for Y11 November 2023 Analysis KS3 December 2023	Low cost	Curriculum continues to meet the needs of all pupils

	Teacher knowledge and understanding about learning disabilities is good All pupils with ALN/SEND have needs background information and pupil learning profiles which can be found via Sydenham High Handy Links: Learning Support Register and Pastoral Register Learning profiles are considered by teaching staff when designing schemes of work and planning lessons Learning targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with ALN/SEND Resources are tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to	Rolling programme of INSET on increasing access to the curriculum.	Each area covered at least every 3 years INSET for staff in specific disabilities	ALN/SEND coordinator	Learning Streams have focused on different areas of ALN Regular staff briefings for individual pupils take place as part of staff meetings and briefings Ongoing Part of the Induction process for all new members of staff Ongoing Recognition of ALNs, disabilities and neurodiversity in whole school assemblies. particularly during awareness weeks / months Whole school INSET on SEND September 2023 Dyslexia Training with GDST Consultant Teacher for SEND November 2023	Low cost	Staff are more aware of how to make accommodations for pupils with ALN/SEND/disabilities and these pupils show at least as good average progress as other students

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	access the curriculum Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities						

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	Excellent pastoral care ensures pupils make progress	SEND pupils fully integrated into the School and make progress that is in line with others	Pastoral team track pupils throughout academic year and support is put in place as a result of discussions and analysis of tracking.	Deputy Head Pastoral	Positive project training for key members of the pastoral team Completed Mental HealthFirst Aid training for key pastoral staff. Completed June 2021 Counselling provision: 7 days between 2 counsellors. Completed June 2022 Trauma Informed Schools UK training completed Jan/Feb 2022 Access arrangements Courses completed by CPA SENCO September 2022	Low cost (time)	Staff are aware of importance of mental health in supporting pupil progress

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	All pupils with ALN/SEND have Pupil Learning Plans.	Pupil pursuits completed for ALN/SEND pupils to ensure needs are being met in the classroom.	SEND and ALN coordinates		PRoduction of learning plans for individual ALN/SEND pupils Ongoing	Low cost (time)	

2. Provision of information

Aim	Current good practice	Short, medium and long term objectives	Actions to be taken 2025-28	Person responsible	Date of completion	Cost	Success criteria
To improve the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in writing for pupils who are not disabled							
To ensure all pupil's needs are collated in a way that is accessible to them, their parents and their teachers	All pupils with disabilities that result in them being on the SEN register have Pupil passports or Individual Education Plans (IEPs)	Pupil voice is a large part of the plan and this ensures that pupils are able to express when they feel they need more or different information	Complete the rollover to Provision Map and ensure that all pupils on SEN register have PPs	SEN team, Pastoral team	Ongoing	low - time	All pupils on SEN register to have a document that allows them to communicate their needs to staff
To ensure that disabled pupils are able to access the curriculum during lessons	Adapted resources for pupils with SEN SRBs in assessments for pupils with disabilities such as ADHD The use of Google classroom for resources for	Short - to ensure that pupils can access the relevant materials for each lesson. Medium - to allow pupils to make progress lessons and sit assessments without disrupting others or being	Regular learning walks and QA within departments to ensure parity of materials and adaptive teaching. SEN focused learning walks from SEN and pastoral team	SENCO/EWA/JSP	Ongoing	low - time	Pupils to feel supported in lessons, able to fully take part, complete work and see progress in their learning

	pupils with SEN and SEMH Teachers to have a good understanding of the challenges specific to disabilities and SEMH e.g. organisation, triggering content	unduly anxious Long - Disabled pupils' achievements are in line with the rest of the cohort					
To ensure that disabled pupils are able to access lesson resources and homework tasks at home	Google classroom acts as a repository of resources, pupils manage their work via the 'to do' list	Short - pupils can keep up with lesson content Medium - teachers can share info and communicate with pupils directly about work they need to do Long - pupils can successfully manage their to do lists, including removing tasks when they are complete.	Maintain training and updates with staff to ensure a parity of approach to GC content	JSP/CBU?Dep Head Ac	Ongoing	Low - time	Improved levels of anxiety for pupils who miss school due to their disability
To ensure that pupils experiencing EBSA are able to continue to access school	All lessons published on google classroom in a timely manner so pupils can	Short - pupils can keep up with lesson content Medium - teachers can share info and	Improved tracking and analysis of EBSA pupils with EBSA grid	EWA/HoS	Ongoing	low - time	Reduction in numbers of pupils experiencing EBSA

resources	access up to date tasks	communicate with pupils directly about work they need to do Long - easier reintegration of pupils into school due to less anxiety around missing work					
To ensure that disabled pupils are able to regularly share their experiences and challenges	IEPs Learning support register Parent review meetings SEN 1:1 sessions	Short - give pupils a space to share their concerns Medium - to be able to document record and monitor successes and challenges and communicate this to parents. Pupils to be involved in the creation and monitoring of the document Long - Pupils with disabilities to perform in line with their peers	Roll out of provision map to produce Pupil Passports for pupils on the learning support register which are more user friendly for pupils to access and amend	SEN team / pastoral team	Ongoing	low - time	Pupils to be able to access the information in their pupil passport and to play a key role in developing the content of it.

3. Premises – The Physical Environment

Sydenham & Dulwich Girls will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to working conditions for disabled pupils and staff and to the curriculum for disabled pupils. The list below seeks to plan ahead for any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made in the future. It seeks to address the reasonable and proportionate barriers that may impede pupils with different kinds of disabilities.

In addition, the school will ensure that discrimination does not occur and that disabled people will not be placed at substantial disadvantage compared to others who are not disabled. The school will work with the Trust Office to audit the school for facilities and access for disabled staff and pupils. Access to the premises is assessed on an individual basis.

The Accessibility Plan for Sydenham & Dulwich Girls has been carefully considered as part of the school's on-going Masterplan, the first stage of which commenced in Summer 2023. Cost plans for a new entrance, 6th Form, additional classrooms, and DT provision are included in the second phase and accessibility has been built into all designs to ensure that these buildings can be used by as many stakeholders as possible.

Future phases will also be costed to ensure that the site is fully accessible.

Timeframe	Action	Progress/Outcome	Budgetary Considerations (approximate costs) Update December 2024
Short-term 2026-27	Replacement of emergency lighting - **completed**	Frequently used areas have been completed and minimum standards are now met. Further replacements and upgrades will be completed in conjunction with the fire risk assessment program.	Trust capital project for fire risk assessment works £900k. **on-going** Emergency areas will be covered by school budget - **completed**
	When replacing double doors, fit door and a half sets to achieve a minimum 800mm clear width - **ongoing**	Fire doors will be addressed as part of the Fire Risk program works. Fire doors was excluded from Summer 24 works but will be picked up during 2024-25	Fire Assessment work capex by Trust. Future areas from school budget wherever possible.
	Purchase library magnifier	To be ordered and available from September 2026 at the latest - to be reviewed	Minor costs
	Create new access points in relation to major building project - **completed**	Compliant Vehicular and pedestrian access points installed.	Included in project costs
	Produce maps in Seniors and Prep showing accessible routes	Reprographics Office to work with Premises to produce laminated copies of plans for both schools	**Complete and available from reception - reviewed periodically.**

	Purchase portable hearing loop for use anywhere within the main seniors and junior blocks.	DFO to obtain quotes and install with suitable training in use. Company who provide Senior school permanent loop system have been contacted to produce suitable specification for whole school- to be reviewed.	Costs expected to be in the region £1000
Medium term 2026-28	Replace knob taps with lever taps as part of ongoing maintenance - ongoing	Vast majority of taps completed. Remaining taps in low use areas or new areas and will be completed as part of the redecoration/upgrade in each area	These works will be completed as areas are refurbished
	Install tactile "corduroy" landings at the head and base of external steps on the main circulation routes. - ongoing	Some areas completed with remaining areas to be completed as carpeting replaced	Covered within annual carpet replacement allowance
	Replace broken and uneven paving slabs with tarmac surfaces to remove trip hazards - ongoing	Various replacement paving slabs and uneven areas have been tarmac. e.g. Longton Hall and sixth form.	Other areas will be covered as maintenance works are completed.
	Provide wheelchair handling training to Teachers and Caretakers.	To be considered as part of the school inset process. Trust to provide details of suitable training by January 2027	Likely to be limited cost, awaiting Trust feedback
	Install hearing loop to Westwood Theatre, Longton Hall, Recital Hall and Prep.	Quotes to be obtained and consideration to be implemented. Portable loop to be acquired in the meantime. Company who provide Senior school permanent loop system have been contacted to produce suitable specification for whole school	No current demand therefore personal/portable devices to made available in short term
	Investigate means of using IT to enable books to be drawn from the library remotely.	Costs to be obtained for the system, but short term solution is pupils' can email librarian who will source books and deliver them to the classroom. This process developed during Covid and worked well for all pupils.	Consider for 2027-28 academic year

Long term 2028-29 and onwards	Construct an accessible ramp adjacent to the steps leading down to your all weather sports pitch	Likely to require CAPEX due to significant fall in land height towards Astro. In the meantime an accessible route is available via path at side of Orangery	Will need Capital requirement and be part of Masterplan
	Form path linking 6th Form deck to Astro-Turf.	Likely to be along with Sixth form refurb but feasibility will be carried out in Summer 2026 to consider gate installation directly from decking which would also alleviate main access.	Onhold pending school masterplan completion
	Relocate/re-purpose Senior School Nurse area	Move to new building or re-locate offices so that nurse can move to vacant re-purposed areas.	To be considered as part of school estate masterplan
	Relocate SEN support rooms to accessible locations.	Due to space and capacity this is likely to take some time to achieve.	To be considered as part of school estate masterplan
	Consider wheelchair accessible workstations for labs	No immediate need therefore to be considered as part future spend or Trust masterplan project	To be considered as part of school estate masterplan
	Ensure accessibility requirements are considered during new build or extension	New build approved adjacent to Centenary which will include all accessibility requirements including a possible link to the upper floors of the Centenary building.	Cost are included in Capex proposal financed by Trust
General	Review of requirements during admissions process	It has been recognised that there are still parts of the school that require additional infrastructure changes to provide ease of access. Trust Estates Director has indicated any fees from a student requiring accessibility improvements should be used to fund any specific changes required.	Funding will come from school budget to a maximum of the school fees in that year.

Admissions and Curriculum

The school will ensure that our policies, in particular in relation to admissions procedures, do not place disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the reasonable adjustment duty) in matters of admission and education. The school will ensure that families, for whom English is an additional language, have access to materials about Sydenham High School and the curriculum translated into their languages, where appropriate and where feasible within practical and budgetary constraints. We will ensure that the admissions policy is objective, clearly set out and does not disadvantage certain groups. Students have equal access to all programmes of study and co-curricular activities. Constraints of time and space may make some restriction in choice of optional activities inevitable but efforts will be made to prevent this.

Behaviour and Discipline

The school sets out in its Behaviour Policy the expectations that students respect differences between people. Sensitivity and respect is fostered and reinforced between staff and students and amongst students, through our general ethos. The school acts promptly to investigate and if necessary act on any claims of discrimination.

Roles and Responsibilities

The general duties of the school in relation to equal opportunities are the responsibility of all members of staff and people involved in working at the school. Specific responsibilities include:

Head

- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy with regard to employment and admissions
- Should the need arise, developing and monitoring of Action plans arising out of the policy
- In preparing an accessibility plan, work in conjunction with the GDST to allocate adequate resources for implementing the plan.

Deputy Heads

- Ensuring the training in equal opportunities work is available to all members of staff

Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed at least annually as part of the school strategic planning process and actions incorporated into the school annual development plan with a whole-scale review every **4** years.

It will be approved by the Head, along with an audit by the GDST

Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Risk Assessment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report
- Managing Medicines Policy
- Curriculum Policy