



# Sydenham High School

GDST  
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

## Accessibility Policy & Plan Whole School: Senior School/Prep 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.

#### **Accessibility Plan**

Each School will be responsible for preparing its own Accessibility Plan, as required by the Equality Act, which will set out how it intends to achieve these goals. Schools should regularly monitor, review and update their Accessibility Plan. Although not required to be a lengthy document, the Accessibility Plan must be sufficiently detailed to allow clear information about actions taken and planned to be easily identified. The Accessibility Plans must be reviewed and updated regularly, at least every three years.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the Trust's Equal Opportunity Policy and Inclusion Policy.

#### **Accessibility Co-ordinator**

Each school will appoint a sufficiently senior person to be responsible for all accessibility issues, referred to as the Accessibility Coordinator. At Sydenham High School this is the Deputy Head Pastoral who is supported by the Director of Finance and Operations where physical adjustments to the school may be required. The Accessibility Coordinator should be fully aware of the responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including the Accessibility Plan.

#### **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 High 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 High School 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

## **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 <i>Include established practice and practice under development</i>	Objectives <i>State short, medium and long-term objectives</i>	Actions to be taken <i>2022 - 2025 Additional Actions</i>	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by <i>Progress</i>	Cost <i>Low, medium, high</i>	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 <a href="#">Ongoing</a>  Analysis for specified defined groups for Y10/Y12/Y13 <a href="#">October 2023</a>  Analysis for Y11 <a href="#">November 2023</a>  Analysis KS3 <a href="#">December 2023</a>	Low cost	Curriculum continues to meet the needs of all pupils

	<p>Teacher knowledge and understanding about learning disabilities is good</p> <p>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</p> <p>Learning profiles are considered by teaching staff when designing schemes of work and planning lessons</p> <p>Learning targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with ALN/SEND</p> <p>Resources are tailored to the needs of pupils who require</p>	<p>Rolling programme of INSET on increasing access to the curriculum.</p>	<p>Each area covered at least every 3 years INSET for staff in specific disabilities</p>	<p>ALN/SEND coordinator</p>	<p>Learning Streams have focused on different areas of ALN</p> <p>Regular staff briefings for individual pupils take place as part of staff meetings and briefings <a href="#">Ongoing</a></p> <p>Part of the Induction process for all new members of staff <a href="#">Ongoing</a></p> <p>Recognition of ALNs, disabilities and neurodiversity in whole school assemblies. particularly during awareness weeks / months</p> <p>Whole school INSET on SEND <a href="#">September 2023</a></p> <p>Dyslexia Training with GDST Consultant Teacher for SEND <a href="#">November 2023</a></p>	<p>Low cost</p>	<p>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</p>
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	support to 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	<p>Positive project training for key members of the pastoral team <a href="#">Completed</a></p> <p>Mental HealthFirst Aid training for key pastoral staff. <a href="#">Completed June 2021</a></p> <p>Counselling provision: 7 days between 2 counsellors.</p> <p>Trauma Informed Schools UK training completed <a href="#">Jan/Feb 2022</a></p> <p>Access arrangements Courses completed by CPA SENCO <a href="#">September 2022</a></p>	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 <i>Ongoing</i>	Low cost (time)	

## **Premises – The Physical Environment**

Sydenham High School 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 High School has been carefully considered as part of the school's on-going Masterplan, the first stage of which will commence in Summer 2023. Costs plans for a new entrance, 6th Form, additional classrooms, and DT provision are included in the first 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.

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>	<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>  <b>(approximate costs)</b>  <b>Update June 2023</b>
Short-term 2022-23	Replacement of emergency lighting	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.  Emergency areas will be covered by school budget
	Consider ways to improve support offered to pupils suffering from mental health problems	Additional counselling provision recruited	Ongoing review to flex working days up from current part time arrangement if required
	When replacing double doors fit door and a half set to achieve minimum 800mm clear width.	Fire doors will be addressed as part of the Fire Risk program works. Fire doors was excluded from Summer 22 works but will be picked up during 2023-24	Fire Assessment work capex by Trust. Future areas from school budget wherever possible
	Insert disability awareness and etiquette training info induction process.	HR Induction procedures will be amended to include a statement on disability awareness. Trust will also be asked whether there is suitable online resource	Limited costs as in-house produced. Will be available from January 2023
	Purchase library magnifier	To be ordered and available from January 2023 at the latest	Minor 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
	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	Costs expected to be in the region £600
Medium term 2023-24	Replace knob taps with lever taps as part of ongoing maintenance	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.	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	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 2024	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 portable loop to made available in short term
	Install handrails to set of library steps at Prep	Planned for Spring 2023 once fire door works completed	Summer 2022 - completed early following failure of lift

	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 pupil's can email librarian who will source books and deliver them to classroom. This process developed during Covid and worked well for all pupils.	Considered for 2022-23 academic year
Long term 2024-25 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 2022 to consider gate installation directly from decking which would also alleviate main access.	Onhold pending school masterplan completion
	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 in Summer 2023 for science block rooms
	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 for 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 3 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