Accessibility Policy

Policy Number:	EDE/POL/010	Policy Owner Job Role	Quality Manager
Issue Number:	008	Ratified By	Quality Director
Issue Date:	01.07.26	Service Type:	Schools
		Applicable Services:	Education
Contributors	Rob Arrowsmith		
Mandatory Policy	Yes		
Relevant Regulations	- Equality Act 2010 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 - Part 3 (Welfare, Health and Safety), Part 5 (Premises and Accommodation), Part 6 (Provision of Information) - SEND Code of Practice (0–25) - Education (School Premises) Regulations 2012		
Note	This policy should not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

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1. Supporting Documents

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This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

2. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 mandates that all schools and local authorities develop and implement plans to improve accessibility for disabled pupils.

Since September 2002, schools, including independent schools, and local authorities have been required to develop accessibility strategies and plans.

Begdale House School is committed to providing a fully accessible environment that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents/carers, and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional, or cultural needs.
We are dedicated to challenging attitudes towards disability and accessibility and fostering a culture of awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

Begdale House School maintains individual accessibility plans (appendix A), reviewed and updated every three years, tailored to the needs of our pupils.

3. Aim/Scope

This policy aims to create and maintain an inclusive educational environment for the entire school community, promoting ongoing awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

The Equality Act (2010) defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a 'substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal, day to day activities.'

This includes sensory impairments (such as sight or hearing loss) and mental illnesses that are clinically recognised; for example, diagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions, including Autism, ADHD and SEMH needs where they impact access.
Not all disabled pupils have Special Educational Needs (SEN), and not all pupils with SEN have disabilities under this legislation. Many pupils may have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

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5. Policy Content

5.1 Improving Access to the Physical Environment

We commit to enhancing the physical environment of Begdale House School, including visual, acoustic, and physical aspects, to meet the needs of disabled pupils. Reasonable adjustments may include sensory adaptations, assistive technologies, and differentiated communication methods.

All new buildings comply with Building Regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations (2012) to ensure physical accessibility.

5.2 Increasing Access to the Curriculum

Access to the curriculum encompasses teaching and learning as well as extracurricular activities such as after-school clubs, leisure, sports, cultural events, and school visits.

We tailor accessibility planning to pupils with EHCPs and complex needs to ensure full participation.

5.3. Improving Delivery of Written Information

We ensure that written materials provided to pupils are available in formats suitable to their abilities and needs, delivered within reasonable timescales.

Local authorities and schools review and revise accessibility strategies and plans regularly, prioritising resources for effective implementation.

5.4 Accessibility and Safeguarding

Due to the strong link between accessibility and safeguarding, it is recognised that barriers to access can increase vulnerability, create attendance issues, lead to disengagement and increase the risk of exclusion.

Begdale House School ensures that accessibility planning supports safeguarding by promoting engagement, inclusion and enables access to education.

6. Responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring accessibility planning is implemented effectively and reviewed regularly.

The SENCo supports the identification of barriers to access and ensures that reasonable adjustments are made.

Senior leaders monitor accessibility improvements and ensure alignment with SEND provision.

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All staff are responsible for implementing inclusive practice in their daily work.

7. Monitoring and Review

The school maintains a written Accessibility Plan in accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Progress is monitored through:

- Review of individual accessibility plans

- Feedback from pupils and parents/carers

- Analysis of attendance, engagement, and participation

Senior leaders report on accessibility to the governing body to ensure oversight and continuous improvement.

In accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the school maintains a written Accessibility Plan which sets out how access to education, the physical environment and information will be improved for disabled pupils over time. The plan is reviewed annually and updated whenever significant changes to provision, premises or pupil needs occur.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

To ensure a person-centred approach, the pupil voice and parental/carer input will support accessibility planning. If any individual or group believes they are disadvantaged by this policy, they should contact the Headteacher of the school. Begdale House School and Keys Group will respond proactively to such concerns.

9. Version Control

This document can be found in Radar. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The named owner for review at Begdale School is the headteacher.

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10. Appendices

Appendices – Procedures and Localisation of Policy

Appendix A – Accessibility Plan Template

Objective	Actions/Strategies	Responsible Person(s)	Timescale	Success Criteria
Improve physical accessibility	Conduct accessibility audit; implement adaptations (ramps, signage, lighting)	Elise Rout, Jo Murray	Annually	All areas accessible to disabled pupils
Enhance curriculum access	Provide assistive technology; adapt teaching materials; staff training on inclusive practices	Kelly Wilshire, Teaching Staff	Ongoing	Measurable improvements in engagement, attendance, behaviour incidents and progress.
Improve delivery of written information	Provide materials in accessible formats (large print, braille, digital); staff training on communication	Kelly Wilshire, Sarah Longley	Ongoing	Pupils receive information in preferred formats
Review and update accessibility strategies	Annual review of accessibility plan and progress	Jo Murray, Governors	Annually	Updated plan reflecting current needs

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Appendix B – Reasonable Adjustments Checklist

- Sensory adaptations (e.g., noise-cancelling headphones, tinted overlays)
- Assistive technology (e.g., speech-to-text software, adapted keyboards)
- Differentiated communication (e.g., simplified language, visual supports)
- Physical environment adjustments (e.g., ramps, handrails, accessible toilets)
- Flexible curriculum delivery (e.g., alternative assessments, adapted timetables)
- Staff awareness and training on individual needs
- Accessible formats for written materials (large print, braille, audio)
- Support from specialist services (e.g., occupational therapy, speech therapy)
- Emotional regulation support strategies
- Trauma informed approaches
- Access to Therapeutic Support

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Appendix C – Accessibility Audit Tool

Area Reviewed	Accessibility Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Responsible Person	Review Date
Entrances and exits					
Corridors and pathways					
Classrooms					
Toilets and changing facilities					
Signage					
Lighting and acoustics					
Emergency procedures					

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Appendix D – Communication Support Protocol

- Identify pupils' and families' preferred communication methods.
- Provide written materials in accessible formats (large print, braille, audio, digital).
- Use visual supports and symbols where appropriate.
- Ensure staff are trained in communication needs and strategies.
- Review communication support regularly with pupils and families.
- Liaise with external specialists for communication aids and advice.

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Appendix E – Equality Impact Assessment Template

Policy/Practice/Change Assessed	Date of Assessment	Assessor(s)

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions
Age		
Disability		
Gender		
Race/Ethnicity		
Religion or Belief		
Sexual Orientation		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Gender Reassignment		

Summary and Recommendations:

Assessor Signature: **Date:**

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