



HEATHSIDE SCHOOL
HAMPSTEAD

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN

Ethos

At Heathside School Hampstead, we are committed to equality of education and achieving outstanding outcomes for all pupils. We work to ensure every pupil reaches their full

potential academically and personally through providing an environment and curriculum that encourages individual growth and allows pupils to explore and express their unique potential.

It is our continual duty to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school's curriculum and to improve both the physical environment of the school and the delivery of information to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to achieve this.

Aims

- We value the individuality of all our children and are committed to giving all of them every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards.
- We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children.
- We firmly believe that every individual has a right to be part of a community where each member is valued and respected for their own worth.
- We strive to provide a setting in which all children have an equal opportunity to grow in understanding, skills and values.
- We aim to help all children appreciate that they are members of a rich and diverse wider community and to appreciate the needs and rights of others.

1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 states that schools are not expected to change their premises, however, it does outline the need for a long-term plan which clearly sets out aims for the following:

- a. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- b. Improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services we provide.
- c. Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

This is a three year accessibility plan that sets out the proposals of senior management to increase access to education for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. It was last reviewed in April 2024 and covers the period to September 2025. However, if there are changes in the physical layout of the buildings this policy may be reviewed sooner.

We are working within a national framework for educational inclusion provided by:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The SEN Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014

Limitations of the Physical Environment

The School buildings comprise a mix of traditional and historic buildings located within Hampstead in North London. All of the school's current buildings are constructed with narrow corridors and require the use of stairs to access the properties. The buildings are not equipped with DDA compliant doors and it is unlikely that suitable adaptations could be made to support individuals with limited mobility onsite due to the nature of the conservation area in which the buildings are located.

Admissions Arrangements

As a part of the admissions process, in order to ensure that no individual is disadvantaged, prospective pupils and/or parents with special educational needs or disabilities will meet with a member of the SEND & Inclusion team who will assess the school's suitability to meet the pupils' individual needs and report to the headteacher prior to the offer of a place.

Accessibility arrangements to assist the inclusion of pupils with SEN and disabilities

The school recognises that many of its pupils, visitors and staff, whether disabled or otherwise, have individual needs when using school facilities. We recognise that for all pupils, the nature of their disabilities may mean that they experience specific difficulties related to accessing education, and the physical environment. As part of the on-going commitment to the delivery of an inclusive educational service, we will continue to develop our friendly and supportive community in providing the perfect environment for pupils to learn and grow.

In order to ensure that the educational services we provide effectively meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, Heathside School Hampstead school will continue to:

- Inform all staff of this accessibility policy so that the provision of educational services ensures the inclusion of all of our pupils. Such communications will address the legal obligation of staff and the school.
- Make all prospective employees aware of the special educational needs and disabilities of the pupils in our school. Any applicant for a new position will be made aware of their responsibilities within delivering the curriculum in accessible ways through quality first teaching approaches and maintaining the health and safety of the pupils at all times. Where needed, staff will be provided with suitable training in personal care, moving and handling, therapy programmes and specific first aid with effective implementation and monitoring of processes on an ongoing basis.
- Gather the views and voice of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, staff and parents/carers to further inform and enhance our accessibility policy.
- Regularly review whether our curriculum, teaching and learning strategies and other aspects of the school day are both accessible and effective, and take appropriate action for continuous improvement.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this plan on a regular basis
- Ensure that information about the Accessibility Plan is published on the School's website.

Access to the Curriculum

Heathside School Hampstead offers a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils and provides additional specialist provision to enable all pupils with learning difficulties to access the curriculum and aid their educational development. The teaching environment and facilities include:

- Teachers and learning support staff have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils through INSET days, individual courses and weekly CPD. We will continue to liaise with outside agencies such as LCP's Speech and Language Therapist, SEN advisory teachers, Dukes Education SEND working group, Educational Psychologists and CAMHS.
- Staff work closely with colleagues from the SEND Department to ensure that pupils are enabled to access all curriculum opportunities, have appropriate means of communication and to devise and review targets for inclusion on IEPs, risk assessments and support plans.
- Individual targets are set to allow all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to make progress in their lessons.
- Pupils have access to computers and laptops
- Pupils who have a normal way of working on a laptop are provided this in class and in tests and examinations.
- School visits are accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment.
- There are high expectations of all pupils.
- Staff constantly seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation and are able to meet with the SENDCo to find solutions.

Quality First Teaching

Teachers and support staff at Heathside School Hampstead are encouraged to embrace innovation, be brave in their approaches, and continuously enhance their skills to deliver the best educational experience for our pupils. We adapt our teaching approaches to enable our pupils to learn effectively in our classrooms.

- Staff present work in many different ways using a variety of equipment. Work can be carried out individually, in small groups or as a whole class
- Staff enable the pupils to show their interest, knowledge and skills despite their difficulties e.g:
 - communication through visual or kinaesthetic means.
 - Visual timetables and social stories are given where appropriate to ensure pupils are aware of the routines and expectations of the school day.
 - Reward systems are in place to support the children with positive strategies
 - Detailed pupil information is given to all relevant staff to inform lesson planning
 - Specific resources, such as handouts, word maps, sentence starters, checklists, are used to adapt the curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress
 - Access arrangements are in place for pupils taking part in exams e.g. rest breaks, laptops, 25% extra time, human or electronic readers, oral language modifiers and scribes are provided if appropriate.

Classroom Environment

Each classroom is set out to provide the most positive environment to work in, to ensure the pupil learns effectively.

- Classrooms have sufficient space for all the children and young people
- Toilet facilities are available close to each classroom and signage is in place to clearly identify the facilities
- A variety of resources are used to ensure that the pupil learns effectively
- Classroom displays are considered carefully to support learning
- IT support is used to providing access to the curriculum and assistive technology is used where appropriate throughout school to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

Heathside School Hampstead recognises that all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities should have access to education in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and acknowledges the SEND Code of Practice 2015, both which outline accessibility strategies. At Heathside School Hampstead, we aim 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, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils are as equally prepared for life as are able-bodied pupils; this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and school trips and visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and assistive technology, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
- Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities e.g. handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

Reasonable Adjustments

Heathside School Hampstead will continue to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities, parents and carers and visitors attending the school are not discriminated against. We acknowledge that it is necessary to raise awareness of issues related to accessibility and to provide appropriate training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination.

Making reasonable adjustments will include:

- changes to practices or procedures
- changes to physical features
- changes to how learners are assessed
- providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment).

Listed below is our strategy for points 1 to 3.

1. Increasing access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum.

Target	Strategies	Time- scale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Increase confidence of all staff in differentiating the curriculum	Be aware of staff training needs on curriculum access Assign CPD for specific areas of need, adaptive teaching strategies and recording methods Online learning modules if required	On-going and as required	SENDCO	Raised staff confidence in strategies for differentiation and increased pupil participation
Ensure classroom support staff have specific training on disability issues	Be aware of staff training needs Staff access appropriate CPD Online learning modules if required	As required	SENDCO	Raised confidence of support staff
Ensure all staff are aware of disabled children's curriculum access	Set up a system of individual access plans for pupils with disabilities and/or difficulties accessing the curriculum or school activities when required Information sharing with all agencies involved with child including parents/carers, school staff and external bodies.	As required	SENDCO	All staff aware of individuals needs
Use ICT software to support learning	Make sure supportive software is installed where needed. Supporting children with their touch-typing skills to develop use of a word processor as their normal way of working.	As required	ICT	Wider use of SEN resources in classrooms

All educational visits to be accessible to all	Develop guidance for staff on making trips accessible such as through visiting venues in advance to ensure each new venue is vetted for appropriateness to develop a detailed risk assessment and consideration of routes, activities and travel.	As required	Head/SLT	All pupils in school able to access all educational visits and take part in a range of activities
Review PE curriculum to ensure PE accessible to all	Gather information on accessible PE and disability sports relevant to the childrens' individual needs and abilities. Seek sports people with disabilities to come into school for visits / discuss high-profile athletes with disabilities such as those in the paralympics to provide inspiration and challenge bias on ability.	As required	PE co- ordinator	All to have access to PE and be able to excel

SLT-Senior Leadership Team

SENDSCO- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator

2. Improving access to the physical environment of the school

Target	Strategies	Time-scale	Responsibility	Success criteria
The school is aware of the access needs of disabled pupils, staff, governors, parent/carers and visitors	<p>To create access plans for individual pupils with SEND as part of the IEP process when required.</p> <p>Be aware of the needs of our staff, governors and parents in accessing the school physically and through communication and information and meet these needs as appropriate.</p> <p>Through questions and discussions, find out the access needs of parents/carers through parent/carer surveys.</p> <p>Consider access needs during the recruitment process.</p> <p>Ensure staff are aware of Environment Access Standard 2011.</p>	<p>As required</p> <p>Induction and on-going if required</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Recruitment process</p>	<p>SENDCO</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p>	<p>IEPs in place for disabled pupils and all staff aware of pupils needs</p> <p>All staff and governors feel confident their needs are met</p> <p>Parents have full access to all school activities</p> <p>Access issues do not influence recruitment and retention issues</p>
Layout of school to allow access for all pupils to all areas	Consider the needs of pupils with disabilities, parents/carers and visitors when considering any redesign.	As required	HT/ Governors/ Architect	Re-designed buildings are usable by all
Ensure access to reception area to all	Improve access to the reception area during any redesign e.g. through a self-opening gate to develop system to allow entry for wheel-chair users.	Complete On-going	N/A	Disabled parents/carers/ visitors feel welcome Reception area was redeveloped and corridors widened to ensure better access/egress.
Improve signage and external access for visually impaired people	Yellow strip mark step edges.	On going	Site manager	Visually impaired people feel safe in school grounds

Ensure all disabled pupils can be safely evacuated	Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for all pupils with mobility difficulties.	As required	SENDCO	All disabled pupils and staff working alongside are safe in the event of a fire
	Develop a system to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities.	Each Sept	SENDCO	

Target	Strategies	Time-scale	Responsibility	Success criteria
Ensure accessibility of access to IT equipment	Alternative equipment in place to ensure access to all hardware including hall Liaise with VI/HI specialists on information with regard to the visual impaired and hearing impaired pupils	On-going and as required Software may be required	ICT	Hardware and software available to meet the needs of children as appropriate
Ensure hearing equipment in classrooms to support hearing impaired	Seek support from an independent hearing consultant or specialist teacher of the deaf on the appropriate equipment and environment.	On-going	Independent hearing consultant	All children in need of equipment have access to it.

3. Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils

Targets	Strategies	Time-scale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Review information to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible.	<p>Provide information and letters in clear print and concise English, considering the font size and visual perception of content.</p> <p>School office will support and help parents to access information and complete school forms.</p> <p>Ensure the website and all documents accessible via the school website can be accessed by the visually impaired e.g. text to speech.</p>	<p>During induction</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Current</p>	<p>KS1/office</p> <p>School Office</p> <p>Office/ Website design team</p>	<p>All parents receive information in a form that they can access</p> <p>All parents understand what are the headlines of the school information</p>
Improve the delivery of information in writing in an appropriate format	Provide suitably enlarged, clear print for pupils with a visual impairment on guidance of specialist optometrist / specialist teacher reports.	As required	Office	Excellent communication
Ensure all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats	Guidance to staff on dyslexia, reading difficulties and accessible information.	On-going	SENDCO	Staff produce their own information
Annual review information to be as accessible as possible	Develop child friendly IEP review formats.	On-going	SENDCO	Staff more aware of pupils preferred method of communications
Languages other than English to be visible in school	Some welcome signs to be multilingual where appropriate, celebrating the cultural diversity of our school community and staff.	On-going	EAL co-ordinator	Confidence of parents to access their child's education

Provide information in other languages for pupils or prospective pupils who may have difficulty with hearing or language problems	Access to translators, sign language interpreters to be considered and offered if possible	As required	SENDCO	Pupils and/or parents feel supported and included
Provide information in simple language, symbols, large print for prospective pupils or prospective parents/carers who may have difficulty with standard form of printed information	Ensure the website is fully compliant with requirements for access by a person with visual impairment. Ensure Prospectus is available via the school website.	On-going Jan 2022	Office	Redeveloped school website has options for Print, Standard and High visibility views. All can access information about the school

EAL - English as an additional language