

DISABLED ACCESS AND FACILITIES IN EDUCATION POLICY

EATON HOUSE SCHOOLS
POLICY DOCUMENT

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Policy Statement

This school is committed to providing a nurturing and welcoming environment that is inclusive, safe and easy to use for pupils, their parents and relatives, staff and other visitors and users of the school premises. The school believes that the accessibility of school buildings and services is a critical issue, especially for people with a disability. In this respect, the school understands that entrances and exits need to balance ease of access with safety and adequate levels of security. Providing good access to school buildings and classrooms and facilities is critical for all pupils to be able to access education, teaching staff to educate and support staff to be able to fulfill their job role. Providing equal opportunity to pupils, staff and visitors.

In this school, all disabled pupils should have a unique individualised plan of care which takes into account their needs and wishes and those of their parents, carers and others involved in their care. Needs identified from these care plans will inform the disability access and premises development and maintenance plans to ensure that all individualised needs are met wherever practicable.

Aims of the Policy

The school is committed to the implementation of a policy to achieve equality of opportunity for all its pupils, ensuring that they are given a chance to attain their full potential through equal access to all school facilities, resources and services. This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant three-year accessibility plan.

Procedure

This school adheres fully to the provisions of the Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order 2005, the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Act 1995, extended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, which make it unlawful to discriminate against disabled pupils, applicants or potential pupils and place a duty upon owners of premises to provide adequate access for disabled people and to make reasonable adjustments to allow them to access all services, premises and resources.

The school is especially committed to providing safe access for pupils who use wheelchairs, who are infirm or unsteady on their feet, or who suffer from sight, hearing or other sensory impairments.

The school recognises that Equality Act 2010 requires employers to make “reasonable adjustments” for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their service. The school also understands that employers have to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide reasonable means of avoiding physical features or attitudinal barriers that make it impossible or difficult for people with a disability to use a service or to be employed in a workplace. It also means providing full access to the curriculum, information resources, services and opportunities, such as trips and sports, for disabled pupils.

The Principal and Governors of the school recognise that under the general and specific provisions of the public sector equality duty, it must:

- S10 3(1)&(4)* 1) prepare a written accessibility plan,
- S10 3(5)* 2) keep the accessibility plan under review during the period to which it relates and, if necessary, revise it,
- S10 3(6)* 3) implement the accessibility plan,
- S10 4(1)* 4) have due regard to the need to allocate adequate resources for implementing the plan.

To comply with these aspects of the law, and to provide full access as stated above, this school has put measures in place that identify barriers to access. It regularly reviews its systems and processes for the way that its services are provided.

Key processes in place include:

- Full integration of disability access equality in all aspects of school life and management, including in the provision of all buildings and premises, the development and review of all policies, the planning of all curriculum activities and services, and in the provision of all information resources.
- an annual audit of the school premises to ensure that all issues relating to access to and exit from the buildings are considered, any problems are identified and reasonable improvements are planned and made
- the formulation of an accessibility plan which will be incorporated into the premises development plan
- prioritisation of disability access issues in the school maintenance system
- access to specialist advice and guidance from appropriate occupational therapy, physiotherapy and architectural design experts to ensure that the needs of disabled pupils and other disabled users of school buildings are met
- active engagement with disabled pupils and their parents, which sees their views and needs fully represented to the senior leadership team and Principal
- the formulation of an accessibility plan which will be incorporated into the premises development plan
- the purchase and provision of adequate aids and learning resources to ensure that services such as library, sporting and computing provision are fully accessible to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Monitoring of performance data and outcomes for SEND pupils, to enable the organisation to ensure that gaps in performance are addressed, services are improved and the potential of all pupils is realised
- assessing the implications for people with disabilities each time a decision is made, a service is launched or a policy set down
- proactive planning of integrated services and facilities for disabled pupils, parents, staff and visitors

In this school, all access points to the building are reviewed annually as part of the accessibility plan and suitable adaptations are made under the Equality Act 2010 and the building regulations. This includes main entrances and side entrances.

Adaptations include:

- suitable access to all parts of the building and grounds
- the provision of disabled parking bays close to the building if this is practicable
- the fitting of covered ramps and slopes to replace stairs and steps where appropriate
- the fitting of suitable grab rails and handrails
- the fitting of electrically opening doors or of door opening systems
- alterations to existing doors to make them easy for wheelchair users to open
- the provision of intercom security systems where necessary
- the widening of doorways to ensure wheelchair access
- the removal of door steps or barriers
- the removal of furniture or fittings that block wheelchair access
- a review of floor surfaces and coverings to make them slip and trip free
- a review of signage to ensure that pupils and visitors know where they are and how to get to their destination
- the provision of flat, safe paths leading from the car park.

All works or extensions should consider disabled access as a key part of building design and incorporate a “level floor” policy, avoiding the use of ramps and slopes wherever possible by ensuring that individual floors are kept to one level.

All works or access alterations must include a full fire risk assessment to consider the impact of changes on fire exits.

School Sports and Trips

All sporting events, school trips and school activities will be planned so as to provide fully integrated access to disabled pupils.

Training

All staff are offered training covering basic information about staff duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and about health and safety risk management and the reporting of hazards. All new staff receive induction training, including a comprehensive tour of the premises and guidance on improving access and procedures wherever possible.

Linked Policies

Disabled employees

Relevant three-year accessibility plan