



Hurstmere School

Accessibility Policy

Responsible:

Business Manager – Mrs L Ebers

Ratified by Governors:

Finance, Audit and General Purpose Committee

REVIEW HISTORY

REVIEWED	RATIFICATION	CYCLE	REVIEW	NOTES
Spring 2017	14 th June 2017	3	Summer 2020	Minor amendments
Autumn 2020	29 th January 2021	3	Summer 2023	Changes made to include new equipment to be provided. Responsibility of policy updated.

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Next Review – Summer 2022

Overview

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 removed the previous exemption of education from the Disability Discrimination Act (1995), ensuring that discrimination against disabled students is unlawful. Schools incurred additional responsibilities with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 superseded by the Equality Act 2010 requiring them to take measures to meet the reasonable needs of the building's potential users. Unlike the earlier legislation affecting employers who are required to meet the needs of disabled employees, as and when a need arises (a reactive duty) educational establishments and services (shops, theatres, etc) have an anticipatory duty.

Following the implementation of SENDA, Bexley Council produced the required Statutory Accessibility Strategy. The school, in turn, produces and develops its own Accessibility Plan. This embodies the spirit of the strategy and the Equalities Act 2010 and is specific to Hurstmere School, as it is now.

Aims

The aim of the Accessibility Plan is:

- (a) To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- (b) To improve the physical environment of the school, increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- (c) To improve the delivery to disabled pupils of written information which is provided to pupils who are not disabled;
- (d) To provide equality of access to the building and use of facilities to all staff, adult users and visitors in compliance with the Equalities Act 2010.

Progress

Much has been achieved in the recent years through new building projects, improvements and refurbishment. The school has been fortunate to generate input to the work of its architects and designers. Accessibility principles are central to designs currently under development. Notable recent achievements include:

Relating to Building and Facilities:

- Provision of staff, accommodation and resources to support individual needs;
- The installation of a boiler with new hot/cold water pipes to serve the main body of the school;
- Improved main foyer entrance and reception;

- Resurfacing of road approaches & walkways along with road markings and including pedestrian segregation;
- Installation of a new CCTV system to help with site security;
- Replacement fire doors throughout the school;
- Emphasise on site security with new fences and automated front gate;
- Provision of additional disabled WCs to support PE;
- Provision of additional changing and toilet facilities in the PE block;
- Review all aspects of site signage, ongoing;
- Replaced metal windows and frames with new PVC windows;
- Provision of interactive white boards in every classroom;
- Improved lighting on circulation areas and classrooms;
- A continuing programme of internal redecoration;
- Additional handrails provided by stairs.

Relating to Curriculum Development:

- Provision of staff, accommodation and resources to support individual needs;
- Development of new integrated Science faculty with improved facilities for all;
- Provision of new ICT resources for all.

Management & Maintenance issues

The following management and maintenance issues are regularly reviewed with support, as necessary, from other interested groups, such as the Health & Safety Committee.

External Issues:

- Keeping external routes, including steps and ramps, clean, unobstructed and free from surface water, snow and ice;
- Ensuring that the car park facilities benefit all users;
- Checking that major thoroughfares and facilities are kept unlocked during the working day;
- Ensuring security arrangements to assist accessibility;
- Making available auxiliary aids such as portable ramps, as necessary.

Internal Issues

Ensuring:

- wheelchair space is available in seating areas;
- appropriately experienced staff are available to cater for individual needs;
- that storage does not obstruct circulation space and WCs;
- that cleaning and polishing does not produce a slippery surface;
- trip hazards are removed;
- access between movable tables in canteen area.

Maintenance Issues:

- Maintaining doors, door closers and ironmongery;
- Maintaining ventilation and heating equipment;
- Replacing blown bulbs, tubes and starter motors quickly;
- Keeping windows, lamps and blinds clean to maximise lighting.

Communication Issues:

- Providing clear signage throughout the school;
- Removing and/or changing signage when departments relocate;
- Providing accurate information on facilities prior to arrival;
- Providing and revising all literature;
- Ensuring a permanently staffed position is available for reception and to contact emergency services during working hours.

Policy Issues:

- Ensuring that the Schools Asset Management Plan will address access issues and needs;
- Allocating and reviewing parking spaces;
- Changing signs when departments move;
- Reviewing the number of disabled people attending and needing facilities;
- Establishing and running user groups;
- Adopting a signage policy;

- Providing portable ramps;
- Ensuring responsibilities are defined within the organisation;
- Ensuring that access improvements are picked up whenever possible during maintenance and refurbishment work;
- Reviewing and improving evacuation procedures;
- Ensuring the School Travel Plan includes consideration on access needs;
- Training of staff;
- Reviewing all policies, procedures and practices;
- Reviewing the provision of auxiliary aids.

CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW