

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN (204a)

GDST Policy

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.

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 different schools, including secondary schools, is respected and planned for by the incoming School. Review meetings, parents evening and meeting 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.

Title	Accessibility Plan (204A)			Page	1 of 14
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

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. The Accessibility Coordinator should be fully aware of the responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including the Accessibility Plan. The Trust recommends that a Deputy Head take on the role of Accessibility Coordinator as this is likely the most suitable individual for the position.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admissions Policy;
- Equal Opportunity Policy;
- Inclusion Policy; and
- Exclusions Policy.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (204a)

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. Sutton 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. Sutton 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.

Schools are required to 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

Title	Accessibility Plan (204A)			Page	2 of 13
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

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 the coordinating 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.

Sutton 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 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 serviced is 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

In defining disabled pupils, we include those with additional learning needs, or any other disability.

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.

Title	Accessibility Plan (204A)			Page	3 of 13
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

- 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.

Dynamic Documentation and Planning

The Accessibility Plan (below) is a dynamic document that is reviewed termly by the SLT. Previous actions remain documented in order to show the progress made against our aims.

Title	Accessibility Plan (204A)			Page	4 of 13
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

					Plan to extend this further into a second space from September 2026, upon the new build completion. New Senior LSA appointed September 2021 to run intervention for SEND Pupils Completed and evaluated in September 2023 leading to further appointment of ALM Additional SEND Coordinator to be appointed to create full-time provision in Senior School Completed April 2024 ELSA recruited to run small group and one-to-one support for emotional literacy. Completed July 2024 Revised Process for tracking of pupils with Dyslexia as they move through KS3 Ongoing		
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Title	Accessibility Plan (2024A)			Page	6 of 13
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

					Neuro-diversity Library established September 2022 Completed Academic Learning Mentor recruited to support one-to-one access to the curriculum for pupils with additional learning needs. SHE in post from September 2024 SENDCO Designated in Prep School In post from September 2024 with dedicated space in Prep School. The development of Wellbeing Service and referral form Developed in September 2023, with further process adaptations in September 2024 including SSLG Referral meetings held weekly to discuss access for individuals to the curriculum		
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Title	Accessibility Plan (204A)			Page	7 of 13
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

					Pupil Pursuits Cycle of people with a range of additional needs/disabilities Cycle 2 commencing in January 2025 Work Scrutiny and Lesson Walk development to focus on access to written feedback for pupils with ALN. Commenced April 2024 - ongoing monitoring through 2024/25 academic year with data shared with SLT in January 2025 for action and review BSL training for all pupils in Year 7, building to GCSE in 2028 All pupils trained in basic BSL by September 2024. Level 2 introduced in September 2024. LRC Manager trains Y7 on Accessibility Aids via Microsoft LRC Manager trained August 2024		
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Title	Accessibility Plan (2024A)			Page	8 of 13
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

					All pupils to have been trained on this by September 2025		
Teacher knowledge and understanding about disabilities is good. All pupils with ALN/SEND have Pupil Learning Plans. Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with ALN/SEND. Resources are tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum. Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities.	Rolling programme of INSET on increasing access to the curriculum. Each area covered at least every 3 years.	INSET for staff in specific disabilities	ALN/SEND coordinator	INSET on Differentiation specific to subject areas Completed April 2022 Teaching EAL pupils in the mainstream classroom Completed April 2023 SEND Twilight as part of New Staff Induction – Completed and reviewed September 2023 SEND Briefing Now annually Specific Learning Difficulties Training Completed May 2024 Staff Briefing reworked to include SEND briefings regularly. Actioned from September 2024	Low cost	Staff are more aware of how to make accommodations for pupils with ALN/SEND and these pupils show at least as good average progress as other students	

	Excellent pastoral care ensures pupils make progress	SEND pupils fully integrated into the School and make the same progress as others.	Pastoral team track pupils throughout academic year.	Director of Pastoral Care	Mental Health First Aid Training for staff Completed September 2022 with 2 MHFA and addition of two further in September 2023 Mental Health in ASD Pupils October 2022 Completed Suicide Prevention Training Completed September 2022 Coaching Training Completed October 2022 Pastoral INSET Twilights: Consent Role of the Tutor Anxiety Completed August 2024 and will be ongoing, termly on relevant topics	Low cost (time)	Staff are aware of importance of mental health in supporting pupil progress.
	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		All ALN pupils have a pursuit at least once in a key stage Ongoing as at September 2024	Low cost (time)	

					All pupils with disabilities or ALN to have annually reviewed PLP. Completed September 2022		
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Delivery of Accessible Information

Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils	Converting written information into alternative formats	The School will make itself aware of the services available through the LA/other external organisations		Director of Marketing	Video prospectus planned for January 2024. Completed Website visitors signposted to accessibility read-throughs. Completed July 2023 Create recorded versions of Pastoral/Enrichment/Curriculum Guides by December 2024 Ongoing	Low Cost	Delivery of information to pupils with disabilities improved
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Premises – The Physical Environment

Sutton 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 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.

Title	Accessibility Plan (2024A)			Page	12 of 14
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO

The Accessibility Plan for Sutton High School has been carefully considered as part of the school's on-going Masterplan, which is scheduled to be complete by Spring 2027. Each phase of the Masterplan works to date have included accessibility improvements to existing buildings including new accessible pedestrianised entrance points, relocated accessible wraparound care provision, new accessible EYFS centre, accessible staff room and STEAM provision. Where new buildings have or are being added they are designed to fully meet current accessibility legislation and guidance.

Phase 3 of the Masterplan works, which commenced August 2024 include creation of a fully accessible sixth form centre, additional senior school classrooms and careers library. The building will feature step free access throughout, widened corridors and doorways, fire rated evacuation lifts, accessible access to catering facilities and suitable WC and changing facilities.

Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided	The environment is adapted to the needs of pupils as required.	Lessons and activities are located in accessible areas.	Electronic door push to be installed to doors for Science Building	DFO	Completed	Medium cost	Easier access for people with disabilities.
		Long term aspiration to have fully accessible curriculum	Step-free access to Garden Building with the use of a portable ramp	DFO	Investigated and not currently reasonably practicable.	Low Cost	Provide access to classrooms that could be used for Senior School and Prep School.
			Master planning exercise to create fully accessible curriculum	DFO	Masterplan in place and accessible on school website. Phase 1 completed October 2020 Phase 2a completed September 2022.	Low	Finalised plan

					Phase 3 commenced Aug 24, due for completed Spring 2027		
	Ensure that a pupil with a physical injury or disability is not disadvantaged or that any disruption is minimised.	Ensure that individual risk assessments and PEEPs are provided for pupils with disabilities across the school.	Ensure that staff are aware of the specific needs of the pupil and that suitable alternative provision is made where required.	DH/DFO	August 2022 Ongoing as required	Low Cost	Pupils have full access to the curriculum.
	Ensure that when refurbishments are undertaken actions are considered which would improve the access for people with disabilities. Continue to consider as part of the works planning process.	To ensure access available to pupils with disabilities both current and those who may join the school in the future.	Considered as part of any refurbishment works	DFO	Step free access to - Sixth Form Centre - Music building Due for completion Spring 2027	High Cost	Improved accessibility for all disabled persons who use the school sites including pupils, staff, parents and visitors.

	Ensure lighting within learning and office spaces meets minimum lux level requirements.	Replace old style lighting with new LED lighting Long term refurbishment of classrooms will replace with LED lights.	Commence review of classrooms and offices not affected by masterplan	DFO/EM	Whole School replacement of lighting for LED in summer 2024 Complete	Low (short term) Med (long term)	Lighting levels meet standards.
	Improve provision of disabled toilets and showers to ensure sufficient access for pupils with disabilities throughout the school day	Provide access to alternate provision in short term. Provide provision in more locations in the long term	Review current provision in conjunction with architects and ensure compliance with specific guidance regarding disabled WC's	DFO	Dec 2021 – costed plan for phase three works due for completion in 2026 Works underway, due for completion Spring 2027	High	Improved accessibility for all disabled persons who use the school sites including pupils, staff, parents and visitors.

Admissions and Curriculum

We 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 Sutton 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 extra-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 resource 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
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Title	Accessibility Plan (204A)			Page	16 of 14
Last reviewed	September 2025	Next Review	September 2026	Author/Lead	DFO