



WALTHAMSTOW HALL SEVENOAKS

Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan

Introduction:

Walthamstow Hall is committed to ensuring the best possible progress and quality of life for all our students and staff, whether disabled or otherwise. Any pupil who meets the School's general Admissions criteria and will benefit from the all-round education offered at Walthamstow Hall, will be welcomed.

The School has high expectations of all pupils and strives to ensure that each and every pupil can take part in the whole-School curriculum. We value the diversity of our School community and appreciate the contribution that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities can bring to School life.

Policy Aim

It is the School's aim to ensure that no pupil, potential pupil, or member of staff is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to any other member of the School community because of disability. The School strives to be a fully inclusive and welcoming School as our mission statement states: "Walthamstow Hall educates its pupils with academic potential to lead confident, challenging and fulfilling lives in the 21st Century". The School is committed to making reasonable adjustments to minimise any barriers to learning, participation and achievement. Additionally, the School aims to provide written information to pupils with disabilities in ways that are user-friendly and fully support the pupils in their learning experience.

The School's Accessibility Plan reflects this commitment to equality of opportunity. The School's policies on Disability, Accessibility, Equality and SEN support are formulated with reference to the DfE's Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities (January 2015) Equality and Human Rights Commission; Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled pupils (2015) and the **Equality Act 2010**.

Admissions

General: The School's literature, policy, examinations and procedures are completely neutral regarding admission of disabled pupils. The School's strategy for meeting special and individual needs is mentioned on the School's website and specific enquiries are made at interview with parents regarding any special arrangements that a potential pupil might require. Prospective parents and parents of pupils transferring to Walthamstow Hall and their current schools are invited to share info relating to any special needs.

Strategies for individual pupils will be evolved in discussion with parents to establish how the School could cope with a particular disability and to agree what modifications and adjustments could reasonably be made.

Routine treatment of any disability that has to be undertaken in School time is to be placed under the care of the nursing staff. It is expected that the parents of any disabled pupil would authorize any exchange of medical information between the pupil's GP and the nursing staff to ensure that the School is able to deliver treatment effectively and to be able to cope with any emergencies that the pupil's condition might cause. The School has procedures in place for notifying staff of pupil's medical conditions and the necessary responses to their symptoms. See Also the School's Admissions Policy.

Staff regularly review their teaching strategies to ensure that any potential barriers to learning and participation by disabled pupils are removed. The School supports teaching and non-teaching staff with a programme of in-depth training designed to raise their awareness of disabilities and to enable them to minimise any potential difficulties for pupils. The importance of using language that does not offend either staff or pupils is promoted and ensures that, wherever possible, positive examples of disability are portrayed in teaching materials e.g. displays regarding the Paralympics.

Organisation: Timetable - where a pupil has mobility problems that preclude her reaching certain classrooms, the School will attempt to adjust the timetable to bring accessible rooms into use for that year group, or to provide individual tuition. Wherever possible, ICT will be used to facilitate learning.

Outside the Classroom: Sports Facilities – level access is available to all sports facilities except the swimming pool, but a wheelchair lift is available from the basement of the building. The key is held by the pool manager.

Recreation: Common rooms are provided as a matter of course only for the Sixth Form. The common rooms in the Sixth Form Centre and kitchen are easily accessible, and access to the IT network is to be provided to allow disabled pupils to work in the common rooms.

In the Junior School, access to and from playgrounds is available via the hall side door and via the ramp and wide door to the changing room.

Welfare:

- Meals – Senior School. Meals are provided on a self-service, cafeteria-style model offering sufficient choice to meet common dietary needs.
 - i. The servery, in the east annexe, is accessible via ramped access and has double doors wide enough for a wheelchair.
 - ii. The servery counter is at wheelchair height; however, the counter is also permanently staffed and assistance can be given if necessary.
 - iii. Access from the servery to the dining hall is level and the tables are sufficiently spaced to navigate easily.
 - iv. There are always other pupils and members of staff present in the dining room, should anybody need help with carrying a food tray.
- Meals – Junior School. Disabled pupils can access the dining hall for lunch and staff are available to collect food from the cafeteria system for disabled individuals if required.
- Integration. A systematic approach is to be used to ensure that teaching staff and those with pastoral responsibilities for disabled pupils, monitor the girl's integration with their peer groups and take positive steps to promote it. In parallel, other members of the relevant year groups will be allocated to provide immediate support and companionship as necessary.

Accessibility Planning

As of 1 May 2021 Walthamstow Hall has:

- No pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- 51 pupils receiving learning support (Maths and/or English)
- No Looked After Children (LAC)
- 28 Bilingual pupils
- 65 pupils with dyslexia
- 1 physically disabled pupil (JS)

Pupils with EHCPs are monitored two times a year to assess progress. Some reasonable access arrangements for the disabled JS pupil have been implemented to enable their inclusion. All pupils are fully integrated into School life and participate in the whole curriculum including extra-curricular activities (such as School trips). We take a fully inclusive approach to our staff recruitment and aim to appoint the best person based on their skill set and qualifications and regardless of any disability he/she might have.

Governing Body

Walthamstow Hall has a Health and Safety and a separate Premises Committee that may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance. The following are included with the two Committees' terms of references:

- To review annually the School's policies, procedures and Estates as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled.
- To make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future.
- To review plans and policies as necessary and at least on an annual basis.

The School monitors the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Views of teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils are obtained and shared via staff and pastoral meetings. We use the information to refresh staff's understanding of disability and accessibility, priorities for our pupils with SEN and/or disabilities and priorities for our pupils' parents. The Governors are involved in the monitoring progress through Committees. Feedback has informed the School's 3-year Rolling Action Accessibility Plan which is a written action plan with targets. The plan and targets have been widely circulated.

The Senior Management Group (SMG) will regularly monitor the success of the plan and it will also be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. The SMG will report to the Governing Body on how targets have been met (and what impact they have had on the achievements of pupils with disabilities).

- Risk Management. This aspect of disabled access and policy fall under the consideration of the Health and Safety Committee, and will be reviewed regularly.
- Creation and Supervision of Policy. Policy for provision of disabled access is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Committee, but physical building works to incorporate facilities in new developments and as part of the conversion of existing buildings, are overseen by the Premises Committee.

NB. Policy on Access and Evacuation

It is the School’s policy not to provide mechanical means of access to areas of the site for disabled pupils from which it would be difficult to evacuate them in the event of an emergency. This means that the provision of passenger and stair lifts, which the fire service advises should not be used for emergency evacuation because of the risk of power failure, will not be fitted to allow access to areas such as the library in the Senior School and the top corridor classrooms and Art room in the Junior School.

Walthamstow Hall policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.

Reviewed May 2021
Next Review Date May 2022

Signed:..... Date:.....

Mrs J Adams
Chairman of the Governing Body

3-year Rolling Accessibility Action Plan

	Ongoing	By Whom	Timeframe	Evaluation criteria
1	All refurbishments to include more suitable lighting and colour differentiation.	Bursar/ Estates manager	ongoing	Improved accessibility.
2	Continue to look at ways of improving accessibility throughout the School sites and between buildings.	Bursar/ Estates manager	ongoing	Improved accessibility and reduction in transfer time between buildings. Recent examples include additional external lighting.
3	Investigate lighting and control systems to include movement sensing when appropriate.	Bursar/ Estates manager	ongoing	Improved room use and potential energy savings.
4	Improve access to the curriculum and learning support including wider use of ICT both in lessons and in examinations where appropriate and in accordance with JCQ regulations.	Deputy Head/Network manager	ongoing	
	2021-22			
1	Continue to look at ways of improving accessibility throughout the School sites and between buildings.	Bursar/ Estates manager	ongoing	Improved accessibility and reduction in transfer times between buildings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled access ramp to Swimming Pool remains under consideration.
2	Review procedures of best practice in line with any changes to official guidelines.	Deputy Head	ongoing	
3	Assess provision of lifts and their suitability – Senior School.	Bursar/ Estates manager		All lifts fitted remain operational and are routinely serviced and checked.
	2022-24			
1	Continue to look at ways of improving accessibility throughout the School sites and between buildings.	Bursar/ Estates manager	2023	Consideration of provision of Ramp to pool.

2	Lighting and control systems	Bursar/ Estates manager	2022-24	Ongoing replacement of old fluorescent lights with LED lighting; potential energy savings and improved levels of lighting.