

Accessibility Policy

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1. Statement of intent

Sutherland House School Braithwell is committed to taking all reasonable steps to avoid placing any individuals with disabilities at a disadvantage, and works closely with disabled pupils, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove any potential barriers to their learning experience.

This policy outlines the principles that the school is committed to following throughout all accessibility planning activities to ensure that all disabled pupils are able to enjoy and access all aspects of educational life in the same way as other colleagues.

All autistic pupils are considered to have a disability as a consequence of their autism and the school has been designed around the needs of these children and young people. They can be hypersensitive to sound, light and temperature. Autistic people can also find transitions very difficult and can prefer to understand what routine they are following i.e. what to anticipate. Where somebody has these needs, and they are not well met this can lead to periods of distress and behaviours that place themselves and others at risk. This is not true of all but given the higher level of need of the pupils in our care, it is likely to apply to a proportion of pupils attending the school at any one time.

The specific measures the school has taken to ensure the school is accessible are outlined within the Accessibility Plan.

The ways in which the school fosters inclusion and equality for pupils who share other protected characteristics are outlined in the Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and the ways in which the school ensures its practices and environments are accessible and inclusive for staff are outlined in the Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

This policy must be adhered to by all staff members, pupils, parents and visitors.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- Part five of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE 2024 Keeping Children Safe in Education

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Medication Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- School Development Plan

- SEND and Inclusion Policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher, along with all staff and trustees are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher in consultation with staff, pupils, young people, parents and any other relevant party will review and revise the Accessibility plan.

4. Accessibility Plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

AIM	CURRENT PRACTICE	OBJECTIVES	DATE	SUCCESS CRITERIA
<p>Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school offers a personalised approach to the curriculum for all pupils • We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils e.g. EHCP provision • Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities • Curriculum progress is tracked for all pupils using evidence for learning /engagement or progression steps • Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for all • The curriculum is reviewed regularly to make sure it meets the needs of all pupils • Pathway 1 and 2 are personalised wherever possible • Dysregulation is supporting through trauma informed approaches • Spaces available to help students to self-regulate. 	<p>To continue to provide personalization to subject delivery and content – in line with likes/dislikes and EHCP requirements</p> <p>To continue to regularly review the curriculum pathways (and wider offer) in line with pupil cohort</p> <p>To provide effective spaces for regulation and relaxation both indoors and outdoors</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Pupils are motivated and engage in learning</p> <p>Learning is purposeful and draws on interests and strengths of young people</p> <p>Pupils develop independence and employability through the curriculum</p> <p>Pupils progress towards targets</p> <p>Multi-sensory learning in all classrooms</p> <p>Relaxation areas are accessible and used appropriately by all children and young people</p>

<p>Improve disability access to the different levels of the school</p>	<p>The school site is located across two building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is full access to the outdoor areas, dining area and ground floor main building. • Access to these areas can be gained from the car park via the visitor's / pupil entrance. • Disabled toilet access in place within these areas. 	<p>To provide full disability access to the entire school building.</p> <p>Maintain access to the main building. Improve access to the outdoor areas and sixth form building.</p>	<p>Submission for enhancement CAPEX within the 2026-7 window</p>	<p>The site continues to be accessible to those with and without disabilities.</p> <p>To obtain full access to the outdoor area by converting all steps in the garden to ramps. To obtain access to the sixth form building via the use of a mobile or permanent ramp into the building.</p>
<p>Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability</p>	<p>Our school uses a range of communication methods to make sure information is accessible. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal signage • Large print resources • Pictorial or symbolic representations • Preparatory work and in-advance communication using SEN strategies: now/next, symbolic representations, social stories • Some staff use BSL and/or Makaton to support pupils with Speech and Language difficulties. • Pupil friendly, visual policies available. • Use of social stories where appropriate to communicate with pupils. 	<p>To continue to offer visual and/or symbolic representation for information purposes.</p> <p>To refine pupil-friendly and accessible versions of key policies, including behaviour, curriculum and safeguarding.</p>	<p>Ongoing across academic year 2025-2026</p>	<p>All pupils have equal access to information being shared.</p> <p>All pupils can access the content of the curriculum despite SEND</p> <p>All pupils have access to, and understand, key policies such as Safeguarding, behaviour and Curriculum</p>

5. Equal Opportunities

The school strives to ensure that all existing and potential pupils are given the same opportunities, and is committed to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness. The Accessibility Plan will detail any barriers which are hindering the opportunities for pupils with SEND. The aim of the plan is to take appropriate measures in order to overcome these barriers, allowing all pupils equal opportunities.

Staff members will be aware of any pupils who are at a substantial disadvantage due to their SEND and will take the appropriate steps to ensure the pupil is effectively supported. Wherever possible, teaching staff will adapt their lesson plans and the curriculum to allow all pupils to reach their full potential and receive the support they need. The school will ensure that all extracurricular activities are accessible to all pupils and make reasonable adjustments to allow pupils with SEND to participate in all school activities.

6. Physical Environment

SHS Braithwell is committed to ensuring that all children, young people, staff members, parents and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within the school premises.

The school has been designed around the needs of autistic children and young people as they will be the predominant occupiers of this building. Whilst we have undertaken all endeavours to accommodate other disabilities, where this conflicts with the needs of our client group we have prioritised meeting the access needs of the people using the school. Nobody will attend this service without support needs relating to autism. Because of the nature of the work we do, which requires staff to be physically able to support pupils, we generally do not have school staff that have mobility needs.

There is an accessible toilet on the ground floor and 3 other toilets, 2 on the first floor and one on the ground floor of the garage outbuilding. 1 of the toilets on the first floor is a wet room with a shower facility.

Sutherland House School is on three floors, the ground floor of the school has a greater footprint than that of the first floor and second floor. The second floor is intended for staff only use. As a provider of autism services we know that providing lift access is often problematic. People can become fixated on the lift and spend large parts of the day just accessing the lift. As a result, lifts often get broken and in a fire if someone's usual access is via a lift, it could become impossible to persuade them to evacuate by other means. To that end all activities available on the first floor are also replicated on the ground floor, i.e. there are no spaces that are unique to the first floor.

The colour scheme is deliberately low arousal throughout the building and where possible the flooring will run without thresholds to minimise the barriers to transition.

Signage throughout the building will be clear and utilise symbols as well as words. This will be true of space utilisation as well as fire evacuation. Many autistic people rely on visual cues to help navigate a space.

All pupils at Sutherland House school Braithwell will have a person-centered individualised support plan. This will include risk assessments unique to that person using the building and also a personalised evacuation emergency plan.

Accessible parking is available either in front of the garage or in the purpose-built car park to the rear of the property. There is one additional ground floor entrance. From here access to the building is through the pedestrian gate into the garden area and through the front door which

has a level access.

The school will ensure that accessibility audits are conducted for those within the school community to ensure that specific needs are taken into account; however, in general, the school will make its best endeavours to anticipate potential access needs that may be encountered in the future and to ensure that the physical environment is as accessible as possible for all current and prospective pupils.

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when new legislation or guidance concerning equality and disability is published. The headteacher will review the policy in collaboration with staff and trustees.