



BENENDEN SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2022-2025

Issued by:	First Deputy
Last review:	17 February 2020
Next review due:	February 2025
Most recent edit:	2 February 2022
Circulation: (please highlight relevant circulation)	Staff Governing Council Website Parents Students



The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to employees of Benenden School (Kent) Limited and its subsidiaries (collectively 'Benenden' or 'the School') regarding increasing access to all areas of the School.

Ethos and aims

Benenden strives to be a fully inclusive and welcoming school. We are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all pupils can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning and ensure that each and every pupil can participate fully in the life of the School.

Definition of disability and scope of the plan

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. According to the Equality Act 2010 a child or young person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The School's Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions to the:

Curriculum	increase the extent to which all pupils with a disability can participate in the School's curriculum;
Physical Environment	improve the School's physical environment for the purpose of increasing the extent to which all pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of the complete education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and
Written Information	improve the delivery to pupils with disabilities of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled, as well as to improve the accessibility of School information to any parents who may have a disability

How the plan is developed, reviewed and monitored

The plan is coordinated by the First Deputy, with input from the Director of Finance and Operations, Director of Estates and Grounds, Academic Deputy, Head of Academic Support & SENDCo, Assistant Head: Head of Co-curricular and the Deputy Head Boarding and Pastoral Care. The following areas have been considered when developing and reviewing the plan:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Co-curricular activities
- Education
- Exclusions
- Governing body representation
- Physical school environment
- Selection and recruitment of staff
- Sporting education and activities
- Staff training
- Welfare

The School has also consulted staff with responsibility for the induction arrangements for new pupils to ensure that the particular needs of disabled pupils are recognised in advance, that suitable staff training is provided and that any modifications to the curriculum or premises are fed into the plan before the arrival of the new pupils.



The plan is reviewed by the Senior Management Team on a regular basis, and at least annually. The School's governors are ultimately responsible for ensuring the implementation of the accessibility plan during the period to which it relates. A new plan will be drawn up every three years.

More detailed documents on the delivery of elements of the plan are held in the relevant area of the School. In particular, the Site Master Plan holds the overview of the development of the physical infrastructure of the School. Both the Master Plan and this Accessibility Plan should be considered to be working documents, which will continue to be updated and amended during their life cycles.

The plan should be read in conjunction with the School's Admissions Policy and Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy.

Current good practice

We gather information about any disability or health condition in the early stages of the admissions process through communication with pupils and parents for pupils who are new to the school. Where necessary we provide reasonable adjustments, such as additional time, the ability to use a computer, large font papers or a scribe during the assessment process.

For pupils already at the school we ask parents to keep the school informed of any changes to the information about their children that they have provided. This can be provided at any time but is confirmed by the parent annually as part of the data collection process.

When recruiting staff, we ensure equality and appoint the person with the skills and qualifications appropriate to the post without prejudice.

Our Curriculum

Throughout the School we offer an ambitious academic curriculum that is intellectually challenging and rigorously assessed. It fosters in our students a love of learning and inquiry. We value learning that will encourage active participation, critical thinking, and the freedom to learn from mistakes. Our curriculum provides students with the intellectual breadth and depth as well as the high level skills necessary for demanding, professional employment beyond university. Pupils with Specific Educational Needs or Disabilities are supported through the use of 'Teaching Points', which are documents that outline to staff any specific provision that pupil may need. Our co-curriculum is equally ambitious and enables our students to develop a range of skills as well as exposing them to a range of activities and experiences that can help them to discover new interests. Particular activities in the co-curricular programme can be adapted to enable participation from students with disabilities.

Our Physical Environment

The landscape of Benenden School is nationally significant and creates an important setting for the school. The House and Gardens comprises of the mansion house, ancillary school buildings, the terrace gardens and the Pleasure Gardens located to the south west from the chapel and school hall. The formal terraces date from the building of the extant mansion house in the mid-19th century, separating this area from the park on the south and east. The nature of the grade II listed building, and some of the parkland, present specific access challenges that continue to be reviewed through our accessibility plans. The school is keen to ensure that the site is accessible as possible to all people. In all new buildings and projects, access to all members of the school community is the highest priority. The nature of the estate, and particularly the older elements of the site present significant challenges in terms of the cost of implementing the desired level of disability access.

Improving access to the curriculum

Targets	Action and Resource Required	Timescale (Year 1/2 /3)	Who	Evidence of Implementation, Impact and Outcomes
Enable staff to continually update and increase their knowledge and understanding of needs of all pupils to remove any barriers to learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide training on practical differentiation strategies available in the classroom. 	Y1-3	Academic Deputy	Continual training on SEND to staff in line with the current cohort.
Continue to leverage the benefits of technology in supporting improved access to the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff training on use of Teams and other platforms to support pupils with specific needs Exploration of other software and devices that could support access 	Y1-3	Director of Digital Strategy	Staff training logs Lesson observations Pupil feedback
Ensure that students are able to raise any queries, issues or concerns about access or provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain as a standing item at Pupil Forum Pupil Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee to consider these areas and feed back via appropriate staff 	Y1-3	First Deputy	Minutes of Pupil Forum and EDI committee
Adaptions to the curriculum to meet the needs of individual learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastoral support including timetable adaptions. Staff training from specialists as appropriate (speech and learning, behaviour, sensory support). Specific training in word processing skills such as touch typing. Use of access arrangements for assessment. 	Y1-3 Y1-3 Y1-3	Deputy Head Boarding & Pastoral Care SENDCo & Exams Officer	Training carried out by external specialist or learning support team. Exam and admissions assessment data
Improve educational experiences for hearing impaired pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of radio aids when required. Consider installing hearing loop / sound field systems if recommended for any individual. 	Y1-3	SENDCo Director of Estates	

Improving access to the physical environment

Targets	Action and Resource Required	Timescale (Y1/2 /3)	Who	Evidence of Implementation
Investigate and review access to estate grounds and all school buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit of existing situation and update records written and drawn. Review by external DDA consultant 	Y1	Estates Director: Capital and Grounds	Procurement strategy under review for studies and consultants in preparation for work on the 20 year masterplan
As part of the 20 year masterplan prioritise accessibility and build in parameters for improving access to both building and grounds across the Estate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review above audit and develop a strategy for improved accessibility Workstream and Engagement with a focus on accessibility Identify quick wins, medium and long term goals 	Y1	Estates Director: Capital and Grounds	Work on 20 year masterplan due to begin April 2022
Improve continuity of Lift services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit of Lifts and their condition Ensure regular maintenance and service programme 	Y1 – Y3	Estates Director: Capital and Grounds	Norris lift investigation booked for February Half term 2022, it forms part of the pre planning and design work for the refurbishment of Hemsted and Norris.
Reduce reliance on mechanical means ie Lifts etc, to negotiate level changes where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a strategic approach in developing briefs for buildings and grounds that prioritise an integrated approach to changes in level. 	Y1 – Y10	Estates Director: Capital and Grounds	
Improve accessibility to Boarding Houses and accessible facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy to ensure sufficient provision across age groups. 	Y1 – Y5	Estates Director: Capital	Refurbishment programme underway. Medway for cohort of 11 year olds and Marshall for 12 to 16 year olds has been completed, Summer 2021. They include

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which houses will be accessible and include accessible showers/ bedrooms and social facilities 		and Grounds	accessible bathrooms and bedrooms at ground floor. Access to ground floor to be provided via portable ramp.
Access to Medway and Marshall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of portable Ramp for front entrance Going forwards external works to integrate permanent solutions with landscape. 	Y1	Estates Director: Capital and Grounds	
Improve inclusion for children who maybe undergoing gender transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit provision of individual bathrooms/shower facilities and single rooms. Through refurbishment of boarding houses introduce greater levels of privacy with individual bathrooms and single rooms. 	Y3	Estates Director: Capital and Grounds / Deputy Head Boarding and Care	Medway for cohort of 11 year olds and Marshall for 12 to 16 year olds has been completed, Summer 2021, improving the provision in these two houses.
Access to Teaching spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a pupil or member of staff may have mobility difficulties the School will always attempt to rearrange rooming to ensure all lessons are on a ground floor. An updated audit of all teaching spaces to be carried out in order to be clear on which are most accessible and to be prioritised for any re-rooming, with measures then considered for making any remaining rooms more accessible 	Y1	Estates Director: Capital and Grounds / Deputy Head Academic	
Improved access to Hall and recital spaces, music department		Y1		New building due to open later this year which is fully accessible and DDA compliant

Improving access to information

Targets	Action and Resource Required	Timescale (Y1/2 /3)	Who	Evidence of Impact / Outcomes
Offer the provision of all key documents in a larger typeface, with read-aloud technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider high visibility option for the website and parent portal. Ensure all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats. Investigate read-aloud technology Provide large-print versions of emails sent to parents through isams (as the auto-enlarge function on email browsers is not compatible) 	Y2	Director of Marketing and Communication	
Improve awareness, and use, of read-aloud and live transcription technologies to support pupils, staff and parents with visual or auditory difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for staff on the use of these technologies Training for pupils on the use of these technologies Guides made available via the parent bulletin of how to use these technologies during Teams Live events and similar presentations 	Y1-3	Director of Digital Strategies Director of Marketing and Communication	
Review the use of ICT to support students with disabilities in the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually research new technologies for individuals with learning difficulties or any with hearing or visual difficulties. Sound facilities are optimised e.g. portable hearing loops, adapted headphones (e.g. music, MFL). 	Y1 - 3	Deputy Head Academic	
Improve signage and external access for visually impaired people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit of signage around the school estate. Addition of improved signage where necessary. 	Y1 - 3	Director of Estates	

