



WESTMINSTER UNDER SCHOOL

Disability Access Policy

Written by:	MJWa
Version number:	v3.1
Effective date:	April 2021
Summary of changes:	Formatting changes Minor updates
Approved by:	SMT
Related policies:	Policy on Admissions Policy on Special Education Needs and Disabilities Policy on Educational Visits Health and Safety Policy
Audience:	Governing body, parents, prospective parents, staff
Last version:	V3.0
Last review date:	January 2020
Next review date:	Lent term 2024
Person(s) in charge of review:	Bursar

This Disability Access Policy covers the period from April 2021 to April 2024.

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed dynamically towards the end of each academic year to reflect information provided relating to new entrants to the School, or if the needs of any pupil already in the school change as a result of injury or diagnosis.

Introduction

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001 laid down a duty for schools to plan progressively the increase of accessibility to schools for pupils with disabilities. This duty commenced in September 2002.

Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, and the requirement for schools to have an Access Strategy in place, came into force in April 2003. From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. Essentially, this places on schools specific duties:

- Not to discriminate against, or treat less favourably, pupils and prospective pupils with disabilities in the provision of education and associated services in schools;
- Not to discriminate in respect of admissions and exclusions specifically.

The Act places emphasis on making ‘reasonable adjustments’ and having plans in place to deal with short and long-term issues relating to school adaptations. There is no statutory requirement to incur significant additional expenditure to meet these new duties, either in capital or revenue terms, but the School is expected to use their existing resources. Under the legislation the School is also not required to remove or alter physical features. The School will provide auxiliary aids and services where there is any possibility that, but for the provision of the auxiliary aid, a disabled pupil would be put at such a disadvantage in comparison to a pupil who are not disabled.

Independent schools receiving local authority placements (i.e., a funded EHCP) do not have to meet maintained school legislation (The Public Sector Equality Duty) in matters such as producing a written ‘disability equality scheme’, a written ‘race equality policy’ or a written ‘gender equality policy’, although some public bodies may require these as a condition of funding. We will respond on an individual case basis.

Objective

The aim of this policy and plan is to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum, as well as to improve the physical environment. The Governing Body recognises its responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 which prevents discrimination against disabled people in their access to education. Westminster Under School is committed to providing a full curriculum to as many pupils as possible and aims to enable all young people to achieve their full potential, academically, emotionally, physically and spiritually. The School will explore all

methods of providing and improving access to its buildings for people with limited mobility, while respecting the historic integrity and quality of those buildings. Where physical access remains difficult or impossible the School will look at introducing alternative forms of interpretation in order to extend access as far as practicable. Interpretative resources will also be used to meet the needs of pupils and visitors with cognitive and sensory impairments.

The aim of this policy and plan is to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum, as well as to improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided. At the same time, we intend to improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils.

The Governing Body of Westminster Under School recognise the need to allocate adequate resources to the implementation of the actions required to ensure pupils with a disability can take advantage of the education and benefits, facilities and services that make up Westminster life.

Westminster Under School aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind. Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The policy and plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our School's Complaints Procedure covers the accessibility plan. Anyone who has concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

The School

Westminster Under School (the School), is a vibrant, intellectual, selective school based in the heart of London. It aims to provide an environment in which all boys are able to reach their full potential both academically and pastorally. The School embraces its duty¹ to provide such an environment, and the principle aim of this policy is to ensure that appropriate responses are made to meet the needs of those with disabilities or differences that require physical alterations to the fabric of the School. Like many other schools, some subject areas are assigned designated classrooms which mean that pupils move around the buildings necessitating the use of steps and stairs in most cases to access their classrooms. Lifts are available for use when needed in the two academic buildings and step-free access is available in other buildings. Pupils with impaired mobility are therefore unlikely to be disadvantaged. The School has enabled pupils with accessibility issues to enjoy a full educational experience by use of local measures and every effort will be made to continue this.

Provision made for those Boys with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) is outlined

¹ 'SEN Code of Practice' (2014), 'The Equalities Act' (2010), 'Disability Discrimination Act' (1995)

in full in the School's SEND Policy but the types of difficulties that may be dealt with in general include:

- Specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger's Syndrome or AD(H)D, for example;
- English as an additional language;
- Physical or medical disabilities;
- Behavioural and emotional problems;
- Pupils who need support due to school absence over a long period of time;
- Adjustments for temporary incapacity due to injury or illness

Admissions Arrangements

Every boy who applies to join the School or joins the School is important to us and no specific disability will be a barrier to admission. Reasonable adjustments are made whenever possible in the admissions procedures for pupils who have disabilities.

Physical Access

The School is committed to improving the physical access to the site for those who use the School facilities. We regularly review and take steps to improve the physical environment of the School in order to increase the extent to which disabled boys are able to take advantage of the education and associated services offered by the school. Where a boy with a physical disability takes up a place at the School, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure equal access to educational spaces, as well as ensuring that the curriculum and learning resources are made available.

Arrangements for providing access to boys with a disability

At the School no boy will be treated less favourably than any other pupil for a reason that relates to his disability. The School will make all reasonable adjustments possible in order to allow all pupils to maximise their learning opportunities.

Current Provisions to improve accessibility:

- When necessary the training of staff to increase awareness of the issues around individuals, such as:
 - A pupil with severe physical disabilities
 - The impact of severe medical conditions on a pupil
- Where appropriate, room changes will be made in certain subjects to allow easier accessibility to lessons.
- The School regularly monitors the physical accessibility of classrooms and has made adaptations accordingly, such as the provision of a lift within the side entrance to Adrian House.
- All individual needs (medical and learning) are flagged on the School database so that teachers can easily access the needs of pupils. This includes the provision of Personalised

Learning Plans (PLPs), as well as supporting information on specific learning differences and further support strategies.

- There is a clear process for staff to raise concerns about individuals.
- Access arrangements will be considered within the classroom as well as in all internal school examinations as well as external examinations.

Additional examples of current practice that takes into consideration the needs of pupils with disabilities:

- We offer a differentiated curriculum for all pupils
- We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum
- Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities
- Curriculum progress is tracked for all pupils, and for those pupils with a disability, particular consideration will be given to the impact of their disability on their progress
- Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs
- The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils
- We allow and encourage pupils with specific needs to prepare and present their work in formats that suit them
- We ensure that all staff have regular high quality INSET on SEND matters, and that individual pupils are routinely discussed at weekly staff meetings.
- We provide access, via WUSMIS, to appropriate summaries of information about pupils' individual needs and recommendations for their support/differentiation
- Both the SENDCo and Assistant Master, Pastoral, monitor the welfare and mental health of pupils with disabilities, and provide additional emotional support, including through the School Counsellor, as necessary

Where possible, pupils with disabilities and their parents will be involved in discussions about the adjustments made on their behalf.

Appendix 1 - Accessibility Report: Fabric of the Building

Area	Action to be taken	Status
<p>Classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils</p>	<p>Classrooms used by disabled pupils may need extra space assigned to that pupil. Classrooms are large enough comfortably to hold twenty pupils but it will be necessary to plan to locate any teacher or child with a physical disability requiring a wheelchair, in one of the larger classrooms.</p> <p>Timetable music in the hall for class if access to the basement too difficult.</p> <p>For any child with visual difficulties, a common measure would be to sit that child near the front of any classroom.</p> <p>For hearing difficulties, some form of amplification system that could follow the pupil around the school, such as a portable amplifier linked to a microphone held by the teacher, is preferable to a room-based solution because we have so many rooms on site.</p> <p>Physical teaching spaces are inspected every two years as part of Departmental Review.</p>	<p>No wheelchair in use currently.</p> <p>If required.</p> <p>Already in action – remind staff each term as required.</p> <p>Acquire if required.</p>

Differentiation of the curriculum	<p>The SENDCo liaises with outside agencies and the teachers to ensure that the needs of any child with special requirements can be accommodated and provides a mechanism for feedback from teachers and parents to ensure that issues arising can be dealt with as they arise.</p> <p>SENDCo actively briefs teachers on special needs of pupils via attendance at weekly teacher briefing sessions and written reports from teachers.</p> <p>For disabilities such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and other forms of learning difficulties, the school's SENDCo liaises with Educational Psychologists to implement recommendations.</p>	<p>Already in action - completed as required.</p> <p>Continue practice.</p> <p>Feedback to staff each half-term, guidance on the Learning Development section of WUSMIS.</p>
School Visits	Where a child has a disability, every attempt will be made to include them in whatever activity is being planned.	Planning of trip to include adjustments necessary in order for pupil to have equal access wherever possible. Risk assessment for each trip and visit to site.
Computer Access	Ensure IT suite is available to pupils with disabilities.	For a pupil with visual impairment, a larger keyboard with yellow letters on keys, or similar, would be purchased if required.
Visual Impairment Adjustment	Signs erected are readable by visually impaired pupils. Pupils will have the option to sit at the front of classes. SENDCo will assess and provide for individual need regarding reprographics	Staff training as required from SENDCo.
Physical Impairments	School is well catered for with lift access and chair lift. Handrails to be added internally as necessary	Annual H&S Review
Medical Conditions	Staff have regular training on AAIs and on how to cope with epilepsy, diabetes etc.	Three-yearly First Aid training for all staff members with more frequent short updates..

Physical Adaptation	Training will be arranged for staff to enable them to learn how they may assist in reducing the impact of various disabilities as appropriate.	SENDCo speaks to staff during staff briefings where physical adaptations are required.
Alternative formats	Consideration must be given to adopting good print guidelines. (e.g. font size, type, colour, etc). ICT should be investigated to see what alternative formats are feasible.	Computing Department will consider and assist with what alternative formats are feasible.
Seating along footpaths in Vincent Square	New picnic tables required for playground	Installed
Signage	Ensure signage easy to read and well lit	Bursar to explore improvement with visibility and lighting as part of Departmental Reviews, normal walkarounds the school, etc.
Door entry system	Ensure door locking devices are at correct height.	Locks will be lowered as new doors are fitted.
Ease of entrance	Ensure each building has one entry route without significant steps. Order adjustable ramps if needed.	In place.
Reception	Provide space for a wheelchair	Already in place in Adrian House and George House
Corridors	Provide extra handrails where required	To be done as required.
Security keypads	Ensure keypads are installed at suitable heights	Already in place
Accessibility to lavatories	Install facilities for wheelchairs during refurbishments	Already available in George House. Review facilities in Adrian house 2021/22
Heights and sizes	Ensure towel holders and hand-driers are at an appropriate height	Already in place
Grab rails	Fit grab rails where need arises for specific individuals	If required
Slip resistant surfaces	Look to provide these during refurbishments.	Already in place

Seating	Provide range of heights	Available by redistributing furniture as necessary
Desks	Provide range of heights	Available by redistributing furniture as necessary
Windows	Ensure blinds operating	H & S Review

Appendix 2 - Westminster Under School Buildings

Requirement	Access Now	Work needed
Adrian House	Yes	Access to the Music Department in the basement could be difficult for the physically impaired. Moving music lessons to more accessible rooms for pupils concerned is an option.
George House	Yes	The building is fully compliant with the needs of pupils with physical disabilities.
Pavilion	N/A	The Pavilion is being rebuilt and will be fully accessible when complete.
Sports Centre	Partial	This building was acquired in 2012. Level access is possible and it is well served by lifts and also ablutions and toilets for the disabled. Access to all areas for sport is possible via lift.

Appendix 3 - Full description of each Great School building occasionally used by Westminster Under School

Building	Description	Requirement	Priority
Manoukian Music Centre	This is a converted building on three levels including the basement. The building is DDA compliant with lifts to all areas. Disabled toilet facilities are available in the basement.	The building is to be surveyed during 2020 to assess the need for additional access and / or support rails.	Low
Millicent Fawcett Hall	This is a converted small theatre used constantly for daily drama lessons and regular stage productions. There is a non-DDA compliant passenger lift to all floors and level access from the street entrance. Disabled toilet facilities are available.	The building is to be surveyed during 2020 to assess the need for additional access and / or support rails.	Low