



# WETHERBY HIGH SCHOOL

## Accessibility Plan

**This policy applies to staff, Governors, students, parents and carers**

### **Reviewing Committee: Resources**

Responsible SLT member	-	C Scaife
Delegated policy updater	-	C Scaife
Responsible governor committee	-	FGB
Specific governor advisor (if required)	-	J Eaton

**Publication date: January 2024**

**Last review date: January 2026**

**Next Review date: January 2027**

## Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The Department for Education (DfE) has published advice on the Equality Act for schools, which explains that schools must have an accessibility plan aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled students

## Definition of Disability

Disability under the Equality Act 2010 is defined as having a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

- 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- 'Long-term' means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

Some children defined as disabled, who for instance have arthritis, may not be defined as having SEN. Some children defined as having SEN, who for instance may have a behavioural difficulty, may not be defined as being disabled. The plan addresses the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. While some students with English as an additional language (EAL) will also have special educational needs and/or disabilities, students will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught)

## Planning Duty

Wetherby High School recognises its duty under the Equality Act 2010. We endeavour to give all children in our care the best education possible underpinned by our school values and high expectations. It is our aim to meet the needs of all students, we will work with students and parents/carers to overcome potential barriers to learning in all aspects of school life.

This plan shows how Wetherby High School intends, over time, to increase the accessibility of our school for disabled students, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

Wetherby High School is committed to an inclusive curriculum and increasing access to the school's facilities for all by:

1. **Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum.**

This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. Additional arrangements would normally be considered on an individual basis, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to ensure individual students can access the wider curriculum and fully engage in school life. In some cases, this involves working with other agencies to ensure safe access to practical elements of the curriculum and/or extra-curricular activities. Where this requires access to specialist equipment and/or furniture Wetherby High School will meet costs deemed reasonable in line with our duties under the Equality Act.

## **2. Improving access to the physical environment of the school.**

This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

Wetherby High School currently comprises of a number of very old buildings with specific limitations on their adaption due to the construction methods used at the time, their current age and anticipated life span. It is therefore difficult in many cases to make significant structural changes as these would be cost prohibitive and/or structurally impractical. As we work with the Department for Education (DfE) and BAM to plan and build the new school building it essential the buildings and wider school site layout are designed and built with access and inclusion arrangements which meet current legislative requirements and best practice. This is a key part of the building design and layout from the design and planning stages through to completion. This will enable us to make provision, such as lift access to upper teaching spaces, that is not currently possible, as well as improving day to day operational accessibility to all aspects of school life for students, staff, visitors, parents and carers.

Ramps are available for access to most ground floor spaces and the Kiosk and we have 2 temporary Ramps that can be moved around site as required to support accessibility, however currently some physical assistance is still required to manage doors as these are not configured for wheelchair access.

Following an accessibility audit carried out in 2024 we took the following actions:

- Purchase of 2 temporary ramps to support access across site
- Added accessibility fittings to key toilet facilities to make these more accessible within the constraints of their size.
- Re-positioned the door access unit for Reception, to an appropriate height for Wheel Chair users.
- Purchased an Evac Chair for the tower.

## **3. Improving the delivery of written information to disabled students.**

This will include planning to make the written information that is normally provided by the school to its students, available in an accessible format to disabled students or parents and carers. Arrangements would normally be considered on an individual basis to ensure individual students and/or parents and carers can access written information in the most suitable form and could include large type, specified fonts/colours or braille where required.

### **Consultation with students, parents and disabled people**

At Wetherby High school we have good ongoing communication with students through student council and respond to their feedback. Coaches have good regular communication with parents and carers and the school issues wider questionnaires to gain specific feedback from parents and carers as appropriate. Formal and Informal consultation with the public, including parents, carers and students has taken place in line with planning for the new school building.

## **Audit of existing provision**

### **1. Curriculum**

- Inclusive venues for residential visits have been identified.
- All students are encouraged to take part in a range of physical activities. Where appropriate, these are adapted and differentiated to support inclusivity of students.
- All school visits and clubs are available to all students.
- Key staff are trained in the administration of medicines to support our student with medical conditions. This training is identified and carried out in partnership with the school nursing service.

Children with SEN are offered an appropriately differentiated curriculum if a student does not make progress and shows signs of difficulty in some of the following areas:

- acquiring literacy and numeracy;
- presenting persistent social, emotional and mental health difficulties;
- sensory or physical problems;
- communication or interaction difficulties

The school follows an 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' approach. Assessments will allow the child to show what they know, understand and can do, as well as to identify any SEN. Following assessment, we put a passport in place detailing appropriate adjustments to Universal Provision in the classroom or additional targeted support. These passports are regularly reviewed to ensure the student is supported through reasonable adjustments to make progress.

Furthermore, where appropriate, students are invited to take part in independence drop down days to develop specific skills to prepare them for adulthood. Students with sensory and physical needs are provided with specialist equipment.

Where students require reasonable adjustments to be made for their exams, they are provided in line with JCQ's Exam Access Arrangements policy.

When necessary, referrals are made to other agencies to ensure students receive the assessments and plans to support their learning. Wetherby High School work with agencies to put into place reasonable adjustments which will support the student in their learning and access of school life and community.

Individual Health Care Plans are in place to support students with specific ongoing underlying medical health issues, these are reviewed as appropriate.

### **2. Physical Environment**

- The LCC Accessibility Audit Template was used in 2024 to complete a full review of the school site and identify actions to improve accessibility within the constraints of the site and existing buildings.
- Wheelchair access is now possible for most areas of the ground floor, however in some cases this requires access through other internal spaces and in most cases this also requires some physical assistance to manage door access.

- The school buildings are circa 1962 and are not built for modern inclusive access, the corridors are narrow and there is no lift, in both cases it would be cost prohibitive to carry out works to remedy these due to the structure, construction methods used and lifespan of the buildings. Currently wheel chair users would need to have lessons and activity spaces timetabled on the ground floor and transition between learning areas before or after whole school change over periods. They would also need a buddy to assist with door access. In the new school building we would expect full accessibility, including a lift and disability compliant door access.
- There is a fully accessible toilet in Design and Technology (G/010a), there are additional toilets that have been latterly adapted with wider access and drop-down grab rail in the changing spaces within Block A (G/0065) and B (G/0066). In the new build there will be an appropriate number of fully accessible toilets and changing facilities.
- Accessible parking spaces have been allocated/marked and kept available for use when needed. Planning for the new school will include an appropriate number of accessible parking spaces, including at least one for EV charging access
- Yellow marking of steps and kerb edges is in place in external areas and these are maintained by the site team. Following the planned site development, the school will review requirements for markings across the site.
- The emergency evacuation system is a legacy system and does not have a visual component, Fire Wardens are trained to ensure a full evacuation across the buildings and would assist individuals who have not heard the sounders for the alarm. Planning for the new school buildings will include a fire alarm with visual and auditory components. There is an Evac Chair located in the tower block to aid egress.
- Radio Aids are provided for students when needed/recommended.

#### **Future Actions:**

Provision of training on use of evacuation chairs for Fire Marshalls

In the event that a student on roll is a wheel chair user, to ensure the location of temporary ramps support their access to the Gym/Theatre and Sports Hall and that these are regularly inspected by the site team.

### **3. Written Information**

- The school converts documents to alternative formats, drawing on advice from support services when it is recommended by a service for students and parents/carers.
- Staff provide alternative formats of information e.g. pastel backgrounds, coloured paper or dyslexic friendly fonts for our students who require these for accessing written information.
- The school will keep up to date with available technology and practices to support individual students with SEN or disabilities, drawing on advice from the Support Services.
- School will ensure that top-up funding and allocated budget is used to provide assistive technology, where this is required.

- For parents with a hearing impairment, school provide BSL trained interpreters to attend meetings and school events (when attendance of parent/carer is confirmed) to ensure parents/carers can be involved in the student's progress and school life.
- Where appropriate, school convert letters and information into an appropriate format and readability level for parents and carers who are known to have a learning difficulty.

## **Policies**

Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with the school's aim and equal opportunities policy and the operation of the school's SEN/Inclusion Policy.

The overarching principles of the Access Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies.

## **Reviewing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Plan**

- Adequate resources will be allocated to enable implementation of the plan.
- The plan will be informed by feedback from parents, students and people with disabilities.
- The plan will be kept under review and revised as necessary, including the appropriate involvement of Governors.
- The plan will be available on the school website or on request from the school.
- The plan will be subject to monitoring by Ofsted during inspections.