

# POLICY STATEMENT



Policy	Accessibility Policy/Plan 2020 -2023
Date Written	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2018
Written by	Safeguarding Officer
Approved by	Leadership Team
Date of Approval	Sep 2018
Next major review date	Sep 2021
Location and disseminations	A copy of the policy can be found on the school website.
The context of the policy and its relationship to other policies	This policy should be considered in conjunction with other written policies - Admissions Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy; Equality and Diversity Policy; First Aid Policy; Special Educational Needs Policy; Trips Policy

## Introduction

**The Disability Discrimination Act – DDA as amended by the Disability Act 2001 and the Equality Act 2010 requires all schools and academies and LAs to plan to increase over time, accessibility for disabled students.**

This policy is drawn up in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and in conjunction with the Children’s and Families Act 2014. The school also draws upon the guidance laid out in the May 2014 DfES “The Equality Act 2010 and schools” document and the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 document.

In planning accessibility strategies the school may consult with other departments through the school, The Health and Safety Officer, SEND Officer, Designated Safeguarding Lead, also local disabled voluntary organisations and other outside agencies working in conjunction with the School.

Buckswood School is required to plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled students
- Improving access to the School’s physical environment(buildings)
- Improving written information for disabled students

## Key Objective of this Policy

To reduce barriers to the curriculum and to fully enable participation in the School community for students, and prospective students, with a disability by:-

- not treating students who are disabled less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- making reasonable adjustments for students who are disabled, so they are not put at a substantial disadvantage;
- drawing up plans to reasonably eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and for increasing over time the accessibility to the school community for students, and prospective students, with a disability

### **Definition of Disability**

Disability is defined within the Equality Act 2010 as follows:

“a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities”.

This definition is broad in context, and can include children with a range of impairments such as, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, ADHD, ADD, diabetes or epilepsy, where the effect on the pupil’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities is adverse, substantial and long-term.

Some types of very significant dyslexia or dyspraxia can also be included in this definition. All students with cancer or surviving cancer, HIV, CF or multiple sclerosis are also included from the point of diagnosis.

In the context of Buckswood, children have a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities available of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in the L A.

### **Definition of Normal day to day activity**

This is impacted if the impairment impacts one or more of the following:

- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Perception of risk of physical danger
- Memory or the ability to concentrate, to learn and to understand

The SEND framework is designed to meet the needs of individual children, some of whom may be disabled, who need provision that is additional to or different from, that which is normally available in schools.

### **Definition of long term**

A long term condition is defined as any that lasts for more than one year.

### **What defines ‘reasonable adjustments’?**

In the Equality Act 2010 as a whole, there are three elements to the reasonable adjustments duty that relate to:

- Provisions, criteria and practices
- Auxiliary aids and services including assistive technologies
- Physical features

In determining what is reasonable the School will have regard to:

- The financial resources available to the School
- The costs of any particular alteration to the premises, staffing arrangements, or special equipment required
- The practicality of making reasonable adjustments
- The extent to which aids and services will be provided via a Statement of Educational Needs (Educational Health and Care Plans), personal welfare plans and personal evacuation plans, psychological report, or by provision paid for outside the school’s resources
- Health and Safety requirements
- The interests of other students
- The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting or other standards

### **Disability and Special educational needs**

Some children with a SEND need, may also have a disability, although this is not always so, and there is a recognition that one can exist without the other.

The following table illustrates the overlap between SEN and disability definitions:

<b>Special Educational Need</b>	<b>Both SEN and Disabled</b>	<b>Disabled</b>
Dyslexia – mild/moderate	Motor impairment (long term)	Asthma
Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties		Diabetes
Dyspraxia – mild/moderate	Hearing impairment / deaf	Cancer Recovery
Speech Impairment	Visual impairment / blind	Mental Health Issues

Other learning difficulties not mentioned	Very significant dyslexia or dyspraxia	Disfigurement
	Non-verbal / mute	Eating Disorder
	ADHD / ADD	Lack of Limbs
		Sickle Cell Anaemia
		Gross Obesity
		Very Short Stature
		Incontinence
		Epilepsy
		Cystic Fibrosis
		Multiple Sclerosis
		Significant Allergies

### **Temporary Disabilities**

We recognise that some students at the school may become temporarily disabled through broken bones. The school nurse will provide a risk assessment for the injured person and reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate that student. Personal plans will be written if necessary

### **AIMS**

We aim to:

- Identify students with special educational needs and disabilities and ensure that their needs are met
- Ensure that students with special educational needs and disabilities are able to join in with all the activities of the school .
- To ensure that all learners make the best possible progress
- To ensure that parents are informed of both their child's special needs and progress and that there is effective communication between parents and school

### **Identifying needs and general information**

Buckswood is a school where acceptance of a pupil is based on whether the school can appropriately meet each child's needs. The SEN policy gives detailed information about how individual needs are met; the teaching and learning, special arrangements and specialist support in the school.

Buckswood School recognises difficulties of older established buildings but ensures wherever possible and within financial constraints, we are compliant with DDA regulations. With new buildings we are compliant.

Buckswood is not a specialist independent school within the meaning of the Children's and Families Act 2014, and is not registered with the Secretary of State under section 41. However, we aim to comply as far as possible with the SEND Code of Practice.

Buckswood may, from time to time, chose to admit a pupil subject to a Statement or EHC, if parents/carers express a wish for the School to be named, and if this is agreed by the

Local Authority, and where the school can fully and clearly meet the child's needs. This is an unusual and rare arrangement at Buckswood and we would consider acceptance if we could meet the specific needs.

A detailed SEND list is kept and all staff are provided with information about the children with additional needs. The school works closely with outside agencies and in conjunction with the LA for the statemented/EHC children. A programme of continued professional development as well as in school INSET is provided to help support the school staff in meeting the needs of children with learning differences and physical disabilities. Staff meetings are held to discuss pupil issues as well as to plan for students who are joining the school.

There is a strong welfare support system in place at Buckswood. House staff/Heads of Department, Heads of Year and Form Tutors, play an important part in the welfare of the children along with other boarding staff and the schools' nurses.

The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead, five Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and House Prefects who help new children to settle in along with a comprehensive induction programme for children. There is a clear complaints procedure of which students as well as parents/carers are made aware.

## **1 Information gathering**

Within the current school population, there are currently zero students with an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) on the SEND Register.

Disabled students currently in the school have the following needs: (\*they may, or may not have a DIAGNOSIS – confirmed diagnosis – and a number of our scholars have EFL/EAL needs)

Cognition and Learning – Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia

Communication and Interaction – ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder, including Asperger's Syndrome)

Physical and Sensory – Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired (note – these can be contributory aspects of other SEND)

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) – Anxiety, Depression, ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), (note – SEMH can manifest as behavioural)

There are also scholars who are EAL/EFL and who are 'low achievers'.

Students falling within the definition of disabled will have a wide range of needs and requirements including: mobility impairment, SENDsory impairment, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, epilepsy, asthma and progressive/degenerative conditions. The school must not automatically consider students with a disability to have

special educational needs, as can be seen in the chart. The DDA definition states that ‘a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

## **Impact Assessment**

For the purpose of the DDA 1995 requires Buckswood School to consider the needs of students in relation to physical adaptations, curriculum access and auxiliary aids and services. These areas also fall within the scope of the SEND framework. Please note that these duties are often ‘anticipatory’; Buckswood needs to consider the requirements of current and future disabled students. This means that the school is expected to make reasonable enquiries to find out whether children currently on roll, as well as those seeking admission, have a disability.

The duty not to discriminate covers all aspects of school life, including extra-curricular activities, educational visits and school trips. The duty to make reasonable adjustments refers to the full range of policies, procedures and practices of the school. When considering whether a step is reasonable, the school may take into account the need to maintain:

1. Academic standards
2. Available resources
3. The practicalities of making a particular adjustment
4. The health and safety of the disabled students and others and the interests of others.

It is the view of both the Department for Education and the Disability Rights Commission that, where schools have already developed inclusive cultures and practices, these legal duties should mean little extra work. The school does all that is reasonably practicable to meet the needs of the disabled students, staff or visitors.

The Principal and Learning Support Specialist will work closely with the relevant advisory bodies in order to provide the most appropriate support to students with disabilities. This process invariably involves working closely with the student and the student’s family. Every effort is made to integrate disabled persons into the mainstream activities of the school.

## **2. Identifying the main priorities for the deciding actions**

The accessibility plan is required for:

- Increasing access for disabled students to the curriculum
- Improving access to Buckswood’s physical environment
- Improving written information for disabled students

The following plan outlines Buckswood’s role in relation to Access and

Disability.

### **Involvement of disabled students, staff, parents and other users of the school**

For students with an Educational, Health Care Plan of SEND or those on SEN Support, the views and aspirations of disabled students are formally gathered annually through the annual review process. This seeks to establish what is going well and also any concerns or barriers to progress from the student's point of view.

Their parents also have the opportunity to express their views either in writing or simply verbally at the review meeting. This includes the opportunity to express any concerns or queries they may have regarding their child's progress and the provision in place for them.

### **How to increase disabled students' access to the curriculum:**

- Early analysis of needs through assessment and reporting on entry to school
- Progress monitored and shared with all staff
- Individual or small group interventions, provision of specialist help or support
- Building a bank of specialist support staff
- Staff training for specific issues
- Translation/cultural support sought if applicable
- Access to specialist sensory services as applicable eg sight impairment
- Behaviour support plans and personal welfare plans to be put in place and changes to school policies if appropriate

### **Areas for development:**

- Questionnaire / audit issued to appropriate parents and analysis of results
- Amendments of the Access Plan as a result of information gathered
- Ongoing training of staff
- Ongoing building and analysis of tracking systems
- Ongoing building of relationships with specialist teachers and trainers
- Ongoing consideration of policies in light of events that may occur such as unsafe behaviour that impacts on the child and others, recognising that adjustments may need to be made for SEND difficulties

### **Details of existing facilities to assist access**

Some of Buckswood's school buildings are accessible and others are not, notably the older Grade II Listed buildings. By the end of this school year (2020/2021) the school will have investigated how the majority of classrooms, offices and student bedrooms can be accessed by wheelchair in discussion with the architect, Building Regulations Authorities and Planners (by way of example, the music block and the ramps in Rowling House and the sinks in the main kitchens were adapted in 2007 to allow an employee in the Catering Department to use them in accordance with her job description.) The school will hire a

specifically adapted minibus for trips attended by students with physical disabilities and any newly leased vehicles will be of the required accessibility standards as directed by PSVAR 2020.

### **Areas for Development**

- Improve external safety for visitors and students for example by ensuring edges, steps etc. are clearly marked and well lit.
- Ramps where appropriate to provide access to buildings.
- Disabled access /toilet signs
- Disabled toilets/fire safety
- Boarding
- All new buildings to be in line with current regulations

### **Delivery of information to disabled staff, students, parents and visitors**

At Buckswood we aim to make provision as required viewing the holistic profile of each pupil or parent. The following list outlines some of the ways we aid access:

- Visual timetables and information presented in different ways for students with disabilities
- Website made more friendly for mobile devices
- Parents accessed by voice and paper if necessary
- Access arrangements for public and school exams
- Learning support individual programmes to target areas of weakness
- Translators provided for parent consultations if necessary
- Identification of technical support programmes in school and updating of software and hardware as required
- Differentiation of teaching including QFT to allow good progress to be made by all
- Ongoing staff training sessions in the provision of instruction for students of all abilities, with a focus on SEND provision.

### **Areas prioritised for development:**

- Ensuring that all classrooms have projectors and relevant connections to integrate ICT into lessons, thereby improving accessibility to the curriculum
- Ensure that there are toilet facilities available during the school day that are accessible to all
- Relocation of lessons if necessary to lower floors of buildings to enable access
- Improved lighting outside of classrooms to reduce the difference when leaving a classroom during hours of darkness
- Improved lighting on walkways around school
- Provision of an accessible toilet in School House reception
- Non-slip treatment of decking areas.

## **3. Making it Happen**



- Implementation of accessibility policy is the responsibility of co-principals in conjunction with the proprietor, health and safety officer and along with the learning support co-ordinator
- Clear allocation of resources
- An indication of expected outcomes for performance criteria
- Clear timescales
- A specified date to process for review

Short Term: Reference to accessibility has been included in school overview since 2015. Improvement in information provided to prospective parents in relation to the School's disability and access policies.

Medium Term: Continual monitoring of the needs of students to ensure future refurbishment work benefits students with physical disabilities. If needs are identified, seek advice from Learning and Safeguarding Leads on appropriate design features. Identified needs are identified and addressed whenever they might arise.

On-going. Commitment to providing reasonable adjustment to the school environment to meet the needs of any disabled person. Review all school policies. Improved awareness of the desirability that the school does not discriminate the needs of disabled students, staff or visitors. Fully compliant buildings.

Longer Term: The School will continue to incorporate current accessibility levels in all areas of the building and refurbishment works. Our policy ensures optimum standards where this will better suit the needs of our students, staff and visitors to the School. All stakeholders will benefit from the fully inclusive nature of the School building.

Under the guidance of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sep 2020) individual plans will be drawn up for vulnerable students to reduce the impact of peer on peer forms of abuse and reduce the risk of use of force and for positive handling. Training for staff will also be given. This may particularly be relevant for students with SEND. (see also Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.)

## **Admissions**

Parents/carers of prospective students should notify the school of any disabilities and learning difficulties as early as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements for any visits to the students' previous school. We welcome students with disabilities and special educational needs providing that our site can accommodate those needs. Parents/carers should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report or medical report at the earliest opportunity but specifically during the registration stage of the admissions process. We can then discuss thoroughly with parents/carers and their medical advisers, the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child and whether we can meet their needs before a place is offered.

Once we have assessed a child's needs and offered a place, the school will do all it reasonably can to ensure that the child can, with 'reasonable adjustments', access the curriculum, whether in the classroom or through other means. In order that all our students may have the fullest possible experience at the school, we try and ensure that all its students can participate fully in all aspects of school life including trips, sports and events, but must ensure that no pupil's safety or education is put at risk by the needs of another individual.

### **Withdrawal of a Pupil**

If, following the process of consultation and the making of all 'reasonable adjustments', it is the professional judgement of the Principals that the school cannot provide adequately for the pupil's disability or special educational needs, parents/carers will be asked to withdraw the pupil. The same is true if it becomes apparent that a prior undisclosed need is unable to be met by the school during the course of the child's education at Buckswood. In such cases, every reasonable effort shall be made by the school to assist in finding a suitable placement in another school.

In order that Buckswood is fully compliant with the Equality Act, all staff are made aware of the duties towards children who are disabled and the 'reasonable adjustments' needed for particular children. These are outlined in Care plans and/or IEPs and/or Welfare Plans prepared by the school's nurses, Boarding Staff, Learning Support staff or those responsible for pastoral pupil care.

### **Information about the implementation of the SMT's policy on students and staff with any form of disability**

The School management have decided that given rapid growth in the school plant that the Accessibility Plan is subject to annual review and planning and is in hand to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 to further promote disability equality. However, we appreciate that the nature of the buildings could limit some mobility and this is looked at on a need identification basis.

### **Accessibility Policy/Plan**

The Schools Accessibility Policy/Plan can be accessed on our website using the following link <https://www.buckswood.co.uk/about-us/policies/>

### **Concerns or complaints**

Buckswood has an internal complaints procedure for families of current students. Beyond this, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>) provides a confidential help line and a conciliation service.

The School also recognises that disabled students or those with special educational needs or learning difficulties may be at risk of being bullied. The School has an Anti-Bullying Policy which makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will

be taken very seriously.