



## Accessibility Policy

### Introduction

The GDST aims to treat all pupils, staff, prospective parents and other members of the school community favourably, and wherever possible, take reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage. The Equality Act 2010 imposes duties on schools not to discriminate against, or treat less favourably, disabled pupils or prospective pupils in the provision of educational services. This policy sets out the GDST's commitment to ensuring accessibility to education for disabled pupils, both in terms of education itself but also the physical access of our schools.

### What will the Accessibility Policy Do?

The GDST recognises its duties under the Equality Act and takes a positive approach in making its Schools more accessible in terms of improving access to the curriculum, physical access to education and associated services; and delivery of information to disabled pupils.

Whilst respecting the individuality of each school, the GDST will seek to provide consistent, ongoing guidance and support to all schools to ensure that a coherent approach is adopted by each school.

### 1. Improving access to the curriculum

The Trust will issue regular guidance, and provide focussed training, support and advice to assist each of its schools in taking all reasonable steps to ensure that its curriculum is as accessible as possible to its disabled pupils. This may include teaching and learning, and the wider curriculum, such as participation in after-school clubs and visits. The Trust will regularly review its policy towards Inclusion and will update its schools, where appropriate, on any changes to this policy or related guidance.

### 2. Physical access to our Schools

Whilst the GDST firmly believes that the main emphasis of its accessibility planning should be on access to the curriculum and education, it recognises that alterations to its premises are likely in order to enable disabled pupils to take advantage of education, facilities and the services the school covers. Any alterations will be judged against the test of reasonableness, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The GDST will review its schools' accessibility plans on a regular basis in order to prioritise any adjustive capital works to achieve the best possible results across all its schools in terms of value for money and available time and resources. The requirements for Accessibility Plans are detailed below.

Wherever possible, the GDST will endeavour to integrate any adjustive works into the existing maintenance and capital works programmes so as to make best use of the Trust's resources.

The GDST will also review the impact of any adjustive works against its Asset Management Plans for each site to ensure that resources are targeted to guarantee the sustainability and cost effectiveness of any development. All of these factors will be combined to ensure that the GDST adopts a reasonable approach to its adjustive work programme.

### **3. Provision of information to pupils with a disability**

It is our aim to ensure that the transition of pupils with a disability to different schools, including secondary schools, is respected and planned for by the incoming School. Review meetings, parents evening and meeting with external agencies (as required) will be held to improve the flow and delivery of information to pupils with a disability to them, their parents and the wider community. This may involve planning on how to make written information accessible to disabled pupils within a reasonable timeframe, including handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events.

#### **Accessibility Plan**

Each School will also be responsible for preparing its own Accessibility Plan, as required by the Equality Act, which will set out how it intends to achieve these goals. Schools should regularly monitor, review and update their Accessibility Plan. Although not required to be a lengthy document, the Accessibility Plan must be sufficiently detailed to allow clear information about actions taken and planned to be easily identified. The Accessibility Plans must be reviewed and updated regularly, at least every three years.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the Trust's Equal Opportunity Policy and Inclusion Policy.

#### **Accessibility Co-ordinator**

Each School will appoint a sufficiently senior person to be responsible for all accessibility issues, referred to as the Accessibility Coordinator. The Accessibility Coordinator should be fully aware of the responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including the Accessibility Plan. The Trust recommends that a Deputy Head take on the role of Accessibility Coordinator as this is likely the most suitable individual for the position.

#### **Related policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admissions Policy;
- Equal Opportunity Policy;
- Inclusion Policy; and
- Exclusions Policy.