BREDON
SCHOOL

Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan

Date: October 2021
Author: Bursar
Review Cycle: Annually
Next Review Date: October 2022

Bredon School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education; the Proprietary Body also known as the Governing Body. Any reference to Governor's means any Director of Cavendish Education.

This Policy document is one of a series of Bredon Policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive, formal Statement of Bredon's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each and every one of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this Policy needs to be read alongside all of these Policies in order to get the full picture; in particular, it should be read in conjunction with the *Equality Policy, The Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.*

All of these Policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to evidence the work that the whole School is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

'To be a small, family school that genuinely focuses on the individual; ensuring each pupil reaches his or her personal potential and destination by way of a rich and diverse journey based on breadth of opportunity, support and continuously striving towards excellence.'

In all Bredon Policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" imports the meaning parent, guardian, carer or any person in whom is vested the legal duties and responsibilities of a child's primary caregiver.

Bredon employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure compliance is met and the best practice is implemented:
Peninsula HR Online
Peninsula Business Safe (Health and Safety)
Atlantic Data (DBS)
Educare (online CPD)

The Accessibility Strategy:
Bredon School fully supports the aims and principles of the Equalities Act (2010). Bredon School will seek to facilitate these principles in an appropriate and proactive manner by:

- auditing and reviewing our current approach to accessibility to include our Disability Policy.

- putting in place an appropriate accessibility strategy and plan

- provide a workable structure to enable effective ongoing evaluation and modification of the plan.

- Involve disabled people in the development of the scheme.

The Accessibility Plan will:
- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.

- improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of the education services provided or offered by the school.

- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided to pupils who are not disabled (taking into account the views expressed by the pupils or parents about their preferred means of communication)

Disability Policy

Bredon School actively pursues an equal opportunity policy and does not discriminate against pupils on the grounds of disability, be it in terms of admissions procedures or in the provision of education and associate services.

Bredon School will regularly review the policy and provisions.

General:

Bredon School is a mainstream Independent school with a deserved reputation in the field of Dyslexia. Around 70% of the pupils use the Learning Support Department and around 43% of pupils at Bredon School are statemented or have Education, Health and Care Plans. This element combines favourably with the fundamental ethos of the school i.e. that the school focuses on the individual's needs and caters for a wide variety of young people, be it through cultural or socio-economic backgrounds, academic ability or educational needs.

Consequently, over many years, an inclusive and non-discriminatory policy of admission has been in place. This policy was further enhanced with the adoption of the SEN Framework and Codes of Practice. Providing for the needs of the individual has been a critical corner-stone during development of the curriculum and provision of services related to the curriculum (e.g. delivery of information to pupils and access arrangements for examinations). The 'family' nature of the school means that structures are in place to ensure ready communication with parents to discuss the needs of their child in terms of special provisions in coursework, examinations etc.

Similarly, during improvements in the physical environment of the school, consideration has been made of accessibility levels for all members of the school.

Our approach to and understanding of disability within the school set-up has been considerably enhanced by the fact that over the years numerous pupils have had a variety of disabilities. The expertise and experience of the staff dealing with pupils with difficulties has been helped by input from experts, parents of these pupils and the children themselves. This includes when formulating the policy and plan.

An initial review of the Policy, Plan and Action Plan was carried out in October 2003 with further reviews having taken place on an annual basis and new three year plans having being made in April 2006, April 2009, April 2012 and April 2015 and the latest review took place in August 2020

Admissions Procedures:

Admission to the school depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the admissions criteria and the school being reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers. There should be every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at the school.

Such inclusive policies underpin the general ethos of Bredon School and undoubtedly enhance the nature of the School's education and life. In all our policies, equal importance is given to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil, or potential pupil, at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.

The School asks parents to complete an application form in respect of a prospective pupil at the time of registration. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any request for confidentiality.

The School's admissions literature, policy, examinations and procedures has been reviewed and a form has been introduced (to be treated as confidential if the applicant or parent require) giving the School details of the nature and effect of any disability so as to enable it to consider any adjustments it might need to make.

Audit of current accessibility:

An initial audit and review of the current situation was carried out in October 2002, April 2006, April 2009, April 2012 April 2015, 2018 and 2020. To aid in this initial exercise, the attached tick-list (DfE – 2002, now called DCSF) was used.

Recent improvements to the admissions procedures:
- review and modification of admissions policy to include an equal opportunities clause
- the creation of an 'admissions panel' including staff from different areas of the school, to ensure all applications are reviewed from a wide variety of perspectives (2014).

Recent improvements to the school curriculum and delivery of information:
- modification of subjects on offer to pupils at KS4 and Sixth form to ensure they are appropriate for children with SEN (2016)
- improvement in levels and nature of support provided for pupils; both those with SpLD and those simply in need of extra support, including new resources for improving the provision of information
- use of cream coloured paper for worksheets (2013)
- all teaching resources to be made available electronically where possible to aid students who use assistive technology (2014).
- computer readers for use in examinations (2014).
- accredited training in SpLD for teaching staff (2014, 2018)
- accredited training in Autism Awareness for teaching and boarding staff (2016, 2018)
- Assistive technology to be used in examinations (2015)
- Assistive Technology available on all chromebooks (2018)

Recent improvements to the physical environment (using direct proactive input from a pupil with physical difficulties and his parents):
- purchase of ramps for classroom access (2011 & 2013)
- construction of concrete ramp to new greenhouse (2011)

- lower height of dedicated computer desk (2010)
- improvements to surfaces outside catering rooms (2010)
- provision of hand rails to steps outside Citizenship RE and Spanish classroom (2013)
- appropriate access to a new SMART building, with lift access to the first floor, in accordance with planning duties (2006)
- appropriate access to the main Classroom Block to include a lift to the first floor (1998)
- provision of a ramp into the main Pull Court building for access to medical, dining, WC, assembly hall and classroom facilities (Summer 2002)
- provision of hand-rails by steps near the DT area (Summer 2002)
- improvement of surface of the steps into cabins.
- implementation of a rolling programme to improve path surfaces (H&S Meeting Summer 2003)
- provision of a disabled toilet in Pull Court (Summer 2003)
- Construction of wooden ramp to Speech and Language Cabin (2014), RE and Spanish (2014), Drama Room (2015).

The Accessibility Plan:

This plan is aimed at:
- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum
- improving the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is already provided in writing to non-disabled pupils

The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Physical layout of the School:

One of the obvious problems (in common with many other schools) is the lay-out of the school. This covers a wide area and consists of many separate buildings (including the Main Building of Pull Court which is Listed, of several storeys and without lifts). This situation has grown up since the school was founded 50 years ago. Another problem, again common to many senior schools, is the system of having fixed classrooms for each subject, based on the valid grounds of having all the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires pupils to walk from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs.

The boarding facilities pose similar problems to a greater degree. It is not hard to conclude that any pupil with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether, from access to some of the educational and other facilities the school offers (see notes on Pull Court). Nor can these matters be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments, short of making major alterations to physical features of the school at prohibitive cost. Even the fruition of current long-term plans can only go some way to ameliorate the position.

The 'new' blocks which house numerous classrooms, laboratories, library and sports hall have easy access to all ground floor rooms and a lift enables access to all areas of the first floor.

Numerous problem areas have been identified:

Pull Court:
Wheelchair access is possible to all rooms on the ground floor. However, there are no lift facilities to the rooms or dormitories on the first and second floors. This therefore will prevent access to any pupils unable to use the stairs; i.e. preventing them from realistically boarding. Currently, there are no reasonable adjustments that can be made to this situation. Equally, there is currently no feasible and reasonable way of providing alternative boarding accommodation on the ground floor or elsewhere on the campus. This situation will be monitored and considered in any future plans regarding building developments or boarding re-organisation, though currently there are no proposed changes to either.

CISCO:
This is sited on the first floor of a separate technology block and is only accessed by stairs. There are plans to review all the technology areas and appropriate access will be considered in such planning.

Food Technology Rooms:
The theory room is accessible to all, though the practical room is not. A ramp has been put in place by the outside door.

Farm:
Parts of the farm are not accessible to all pupils. It would not be reasonable to put in modifications at this moment in time.

Paths and drives:
Some paths and areas of the drives are in a poor state of repair but there is reasonable access to all areas. A rolling programme of repair has begun and several problem areas have already been addressed.

Education:
Issues relating to the structural access of pupils to specific areas of the school for educational reasons are highlighted above.

All aspects of the curriculum are accessible to every pupil. By the very nature of the school, extra support is available to all children that have learning needs; following a protocol of structured assessment carried out by the SEND Department. All members of the SEND team are qualified and experienced in their fields.

Some pupils are currently given individual support for specific subjects that cause them difficulties or where there are important safety considerations, e.g. sciences, technology, PE and farm studies.

The levels and nature of such support, including staff deployment, is regularly reviewed. All pupils are expected to participate in sporting and recreational activities and consideration/adjustments are always made to suit the needs of individual pupils (see details below).

Staff awareness and training is regarded as vital in this area. At least one session of every staff INSET day is allocated to special needs issues and training, including the use of outside experts.

The problems of physical access directly due to the fixed classroom system has been discussed and where possible classes could be re-allocated to suit an individual's needs (though consideration would be made to ensure the other pupils were not disadvantaged by such a move).

Specific learning aids are provided for pupils that require them; e.g. angled tables, different font, coloured overlays and paper. Guidance for such aids is provided through the Access Department, pupil/parent input, educational psychologist reports, etc.
Extra support is readily provided for students undertaking examinations; e.g. extra time, readers, writers and specific aids.

Recreational Activities:

As mentioned above, we expect all pupils to participate in activities, to suit their interests and abilities – and all do. Certain activities may prove difficult for some of our children

though, thanks to the high number of teaching staff who all offer at least one activity; we do provide a large number and considerable variety of activities.

If participation in certain activities would have Health and Safety implications, careful discussion would take place with the pupil and his/her parents to ensure acceptable alternatives could be taken up.

Sporting Education and Activities:

We expect all pupils up to the Sixth Form to participate in sporting activities, to suit their interests and abilities. There is an emphasis on differentiated activities to enable all children to take part in sport. Not only do we offer a large range of sports, but we offer both highly competitive 'school team' sports and the same activity with less competitive, usually less physical, more skill-based bias e.g. school team rugby and non-contact tag rugby. Such alternative activities generally have increased staff: pupil ratio and all staff are either specialist sports coaches or have been given training in such activities.

The P.E staff are always considering new options to enable all pupils across the board to participate more widely and more fully in sport.

Through the SEND Department the school is also registered with the School Games partnership, allowing access to accessibility sports such as New Age Kurling and Boccia.

Welfare:

The welfare of all our pupils is taken seriously at Bredon; whether day pupils or boarders.

We have a strong pastoral support structure for all our youngsters, initially based around the Personal Tutor system and supported by Houseparents, Assistant Housestaff, nurses and members of the SMT.

Training of all staff (teaching and non-teaching) in welfare issues is important; therefore, it is structured and frequent. Staff, students and parents know of the welfare systems and procedures that are in place, helped by regular promulgation.

Welfare support is enhanced by being a small school with small classes and a supportive pastoral and boarding system. Helplines, complaints procedures, access to an independent listener and a counselling service are all in place. The school encourages respect for all, has strict rules and procedures regarding bullying and the pupils are regularly encouraged to 'talk to someone' if they have any problems, concerns or worries.

The school has a well-organised Health and Wellbeing Centre with a team of highly qualified and very experienced staff. These areas of welfare support for the pupils are regularly reviewed and improved where necessary.

Summary:

The nature of Bredon as a school and the machinery that is currently in place means that pupils with disabilities are well catered for. Therefore, awareness and observance of the principles underpinning the Policy and the Strategy are relatively high-profile. We

are, however, very conscious that complacency must be avoided and hence, there is regular debate and review of many of the above issues.

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Identifying Barriers to Access: A Checklist.

This list should help you identify barriers to access that exist in schools. The list is not exhaustive. It is designed to encourage a flexible approach to the further questioning of the accessibility of your school.

Section 1: How does your school deliver the curriculum

QUESTION	YES	NO	*Comments/Examples*
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training teach and support disabled pupils?	✓		
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?		✓	Not all, we seek to make reasonable adjustment as required.
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?	✓		
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	✓		
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	✓		
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	✓		
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?	✓		
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	✓		
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?	✓		
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	✓		
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	✓		Decision made in conjunction with parents
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	✓		
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	✓		

	YES	NO	
Is staff deployment considered in relation to disabled pupils?	✓		
Are timetables altered to accommodate disability?	✓		
Are pupils with special needs e.g., Dyslexia provided with extra lessons. How are they charged?	✓		If required. See fee schedule for costs
Are staff trained regarding specific pupils' potential difficulties prior to their arrival at school, with the help of information provided by parents and other sources of expertise?	✓		

Section 2: Is your school designed to meet the needs of all pupils?

QUESTION	YES	NO	Comments/Examples
Does the size and layout of the areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?	✓		With reasonable adjustments. (using specific entrances etc.) Except Land based studies due to safety working with livestock.
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?	✓		Due to the age of some of our buildings, while access would be possible, it would not be without constraint.
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	✓		Any future landscaping plans would improve the routes for all pupils
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up in informing ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?	✓		Fire alarm has the capacity for beacons, pager and pillow shakers if required
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?		✓	With reasonable adjustment

QUESTION	YES	NO	Comments/Examples
Could any of the decor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?		✓	
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?	✓		
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment?	✓		Induction loop installed in sports hall.
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	✓		
Do we provide specialist desks and chairs to allow for disability?	✓		We would make reasonable adjustment
Do we provide aids for pupils e.g. extra robust scientific glassware, specialist pencils and pens?	✓		When requested and if required
Does the school provide access to disabled toilet facilities for pupils and visitors?	✓		Smart building ground floor
Do we provide disabled toilets at all events?	✓		If required

Section 3: How does your school deliver materials in other formats?

QUESTION	YES	NO	Comments/Examples
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	✓		
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	✓		

Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	✓		E.g., Read-write software available
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	✓		
Does the school make adjustments to learning materials as appropriate for an individual visually or hearing impaired pupil?	✓		
Is disability addressed in the other policies (bullying, equal opportunities, disciplinary and complaints policies?	✓		
Are auxiliary aids made available and how are they charged?	✓		Provided by parent in conjunction with medical advice
Are pupils encouraged or able to use their own laptops to assist with their learning?	✓		Chromebooks used throughout the school
Do we acknowledge the need of the disabled within our admissions policy and Procedure?	✓		
Does our marketing material acknowledge the needs of the disabled		✓	
Are all events risk assessed to include a section relating to the needs of the disabled?	✓		When required
Do we have an equal opportunities employment policy and procedure for disability in place, published and displayed?	✓		
Do we include disability awareness in our staff training programme?	✓		Educare modules
Does our bullying policy cover disability?	✓		

Have we anticipated common disabilities and identified a range of potential adjustment e.g., with the school nurse	✓	
Do we have an Administration of Medicines policy	✓	
Is First Aid policy/training adapted to disability?	✓	
Is our special needs policy inclusive of all disability issues?	✓	

Section 4: Action Plan 1st September 2019 - 31st August 2020

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Date	Success Criteria	Review
L2 fire alarm system being installed throughout the school to aid effective evacuation of the site especially for people with ASD/ Sensory disorders.	BK to liaise and oversee upgrade of present fire alarm system to new evacuation system.	Dec 2019	New fire alarm system installed that allows the use of vibrating pillows, beacons and pagers Effective and calm evacuation procedures process during drills / real life situations.	Ongoing
Increased use of OT support aids to reduce the difficulties experienced by students with physical / sensory difficulties in class.	OT coordinator (LRJ) to introduce more support aids in the classroom and monitor their effectiveness. OT (Jenny Thornton) & OT coordinator (LRJ) to provide training to staff on effective use of support aids.	Oct 2019	Reduction in the difficulties experienced by students with physical / sensory difficulties within the classroom Teaching staff knowledge increased regarding effective use of support aids	Ongoing

Maintain access to all buildings in Bredon School through use of ramps and handrails	KW/BK to assess and prioritise areas needing work and add them to maintenance schedule.	Dec 2019	Increased / improved physical accessibility to Bredon School buildings. A reduction in the need for alternative arrangements across the school site.	Ongoing
When required include disability matters to the H&S committee and report to Governors	Annual review of improvements to be provided as part of H&S report		Report to governors	
Disabled parking areas	Designated space created near Pull Court		A disabled space will be marked out in the visitor bays	
Reduce background noise/consider acoustics	Survey required in response to need			
Improve classroom organisation for disabled users	Adapting classroom ergonomics to suit the needs of the pupils		When required make reasonable adjustment	
Organise training for relevant staff	Book relevant training and implement focus on the need identified by current pupils		If applicable	