



Southend High School for Girls

Accessibility Policy

Last reviewed: May 2017

To be reviewed: May 2020

Accessibility Policy and Plan

Governor Policy 1S Issue 1 of Edition 3	Author: S. Caink	Authorised by Board of Governors.
Accessibility Policy Appendix A: Accessibility Plan	Date First Authorised: 13/11/2003	Page 2 of 5.

Reviewing authority: Board of Governors

Formal Review: Every 3 years, next review due by May, 2020.

Date for review	Reviewed by	Reviewed by Board	A	B	C	Date of new edition
November 2004	Updated by S. Caink 11/04.	Signed by Chairman of Governors	X			02/12/04
January 2007	Updated by S. Caink 01/07.	Signed by Chairman of Governors		X		25/01/07
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February 2012	Reviewed by S. Caink (Unchanged)	Signed by Chairman of Governors	X			08/05/12
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May 2020						

A = accepted with no amendments

B = accepted with amendments

C = new edition created

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Background

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 came into effect on 1 September 2002. This Act removed the previous exemption of education from the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, ensuring that discrimination against disabled students is unlawful. Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by SENDA 2001 makes it unlawful for a responsible body to discriminate against a disabled child in relation to admissions, education and exclusions. **The legal duties for education providers are not to treat disabled students less favourably, without justification, for a reason, which is related to their disability, and a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people that are disabled are not put to a substantial disadvantage to people that are not disabled in accessing education.** The equality Act 2010 simplified laws putting them in to one piece of legislation. The academy will endeavour to adopt the recommendations set out in the Special Education Needs & Disability Code of Practice arising from the Children and Families Act 2014.

Southend High School for Girls Academy Trust Accessibility Policy and Plan

This policy sets out how Southend High School for Girls Academy Trust aims to improve its accessibility, over time. The aims of the strategy are to improve access to the physical environment and to overcome barriers to learning, as well as to deliver information to people with a disability, and to try to anticipate problems that would make it difficult for disabled persons within our premises.

Improving access to the school's buildings.

It is the policy of the school to improve access for disabled persons to all buildings and to facilitate free movement for the disabled within each building. We recognise that disabled persons include the visually impaired and hard of hearing, or those with other impairments, as well as wheelchair users.

In recent years five passenger lifts and two stair lifts have been installed and so, in addition to being able to access the whole of school's ground floor areas, people with a disability and wheelchair users can now move to the upstairs: - Technology and Sports Blocks, the Sixth Form and the humanities and science classrooms. The Drama Studio and VI F classrooms installed in 2014 have graded paths that facilitate wheelchair access in to the buildings.

The school has established ICT suites in a variety of locations throughout the site. An array of recently installed wireless network points also mean that disabled persons can gain access to the internet from all areas of the school.

The upper three floors in the Tower block are now the only areas within the school that are not physically accessible to wheelchair users. Until the school is able to provide access to these floors it will be necessary to accommodate disabled wheelchair users in ground floor classrooms.

Whenever new building are constructed or existing buildings are renovated active consideration will be given, as a priority, to improving accessibility. This includes providing accessible student workstations and washrooms. Directional signage will be appropriate for the visually impaired and steps taken to ensure the safety of the hard of hearing.

At the point where rooms are being redecorated or new furniture acquired consideration will be given to: - widening doors; changing colour schemes; fitting acoustic material / microphones; the installation of workstations with additional space / wider access; special computer equipment and larger keyboards, appropriate lighting.

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Until the school is fully accessible to people with a disability, students and staff will continue to pay close attention to the needs of disabled people visiting the school. This will involve the careful preparation of Individual Health Care Plans and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans. Reserved car parking spaces are maintained adjacent to all school buildings for use by vehicles that transport disabled persons.

Increasing access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum

It is the stated policy of the school that all departments differentiate their curriculum in order to make it accessible to all students. Support is provided to those students believed to be underachieving whilst the most academically able are challenged and extended. Practical and technical support of various kinds will be provided to assist disabled students, e.g. specialist strategies to aid learning and organisation, adaptable ICT computer equipment, in-class practical support for a severely epileptic or visually impaired students; specialist equipment for the partially sighted and hard of hearing, as well as mentoring by staff, professional consultants and counsellors as well as by older students.

It is essential that the atmosphere in classrooms is stimulating, positive and supportive and that differences between students are recognised constructively, and catered for. School policy requires schemes of work and lesson plans to reflect the different needs and abilities of students in terms of - activities, level of support and resources used in the classroom. Resources are adapted according to the needs of the students.

Relevant staff are made aware of specific known medical problems and are expected to take appropriate action and to be sensitive and discreet. Additional support is provided if necessary. Due to the layout of the building, in particular the Tower, it is not currently possible to provide fully for those with severe and permanent mobility difficulties. As the building is altered and extended this issue is being addressed, and overall accessibility has been improved significantly.

Students with temporary mobility restrictions can have their classrooms reassigned to the ground floor and be permitted to leave lessons early to avoid congestion in corridors. The safety and wellbeing of students with special needs in emergency evacuation situations is considered, and emergency evacuation chairs are positioned adjacent to all stairwells.

Similarly, planning and risk assessments for visits and trips take into account the particular needs of disabled students.

Students with SEN are allowed additional time in examinations and the school applies to the Examination Boards for special consideration of their needs.

Southend on Sea Borough Council is able to provide further educational support for people with a disability within the borough. A directory of services is available from the Civic Centre. The directory details how schools may access special audio / visual equipment and literature in alternative formats for the visually impaired and hard of hearing. The Council can also produce documents in braille. The school will maintain contact with the council via the Social Inclusion Trainer from time to time (Tel: 534389) in order to remain abreast of the services available.

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Appendix A

Southend High School for Girls Academy Trust Access Plan

Plan	Benefit / Objective	Timescale	Responsibility
Whenever rooms are being renovated management will give active consideration, as a priority, to: - widening access to desktop workstations, the installation of blinds, and the appropriateness of: - colour schemes, lighting and acoustics.	Ensure all rooms are appropriate for the needs of disabled students / visitors.	Ongoing.	Bursar, Premises Manager.
Lobby EFA for funds to install a lift in all new building of two floors or more.	Accessibility of school physically increased.	Ongoing	Headteacher, Bursar.
Differentiate curriculum	Ensure that the needs of disabled students to access curriculum are met.	Ongoing	HOF's, SLT, Teachers.

Recent developments to improve accessibility include: -

- The installation of: two stair lifts, four platform lifts and one passenger lift.
- Accessible washrooms fitted in each building with wash and toilet facilities.
- Concrete graded ramps built to all main entrances.
- Several classrooms have accessible workstations, including science and food technology.
- Access to ICT through an extensive network of computer suites and wireless internet access points.
- Tailor made ICT equipment provided to several individuals.
- Reception area developed with low-level desk space and appropriate lighting. Portable ramps available.
- High visibility markings painted on leading edges.
- Reserved parking for vehicles driven by disabled drivers.