



Accessibility Plan

Purpose of the Accessibility Plan

The purpose of this plan is to show how our educational setting intends, over time, to increase accessibility and over time ensure total accessibility to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information so that all children with a disability can take full advantage of their education and associated opportunities. It will also cover reasonable changes and plans to ensure that protected characteristics as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010 are not discriminated against.

Wildwood Nature School is committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all children, staff, families and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. It is committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

The attached Accessibility Plan shows the measures taken in developing the sites and locations used by Wildwood Nature School and in planning an accessible curriculum. It also details planned developments that will take place over the three-year period after opening.

What is in the Plan

The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

- Improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Increase access to the curriculum for children with a disability, expanding and making reasonable adjustments to the curriculum as necessary to ensure that children with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are non-disabled children. 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. It

also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment where funding allows, which may assist these children in accessing the curriculum.

- Improve and make reasonable adjustments to the delivery of written information to children, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

Review and monitoring

The accessibility plan (below) is an evolving document under frequent review rather than a policy reviewed every 2-3 years.

The effectiveness of the plan will be monitored through the Board of Trustees, staff meetings and the democratic processes within Wildwood Nature School. This will be ongoing and the plan will be adapted as necessary, and a formal review will take place each year.

Wildwood Nature School acknowledges that there is a need for on-going awareness-raising and training for staff and trustees in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter.

National approach

The Equalities Act 2010 (replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995)

In England the Equalities Act applies to all maintained and independent schools. The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of the school, which for Wildwood Nature School is the Proprietor, to discriminate against, harass or victimise a child or potential child:

- in relation to admissions
- in the way it provides education for children
- in the way it provides children access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a child or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The Act specifies the legal duties for schools with regards to implementation of an accessibility plan (paragraph 3 of schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010) which are aimed at increasing the extent to which disabled children can participate in the curriculum, improve the physical environment to enable disabled children to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled children.

Any persons acting on behalf of the school, including employees, are liable for their own discriminatory actions and the responsible body is also liable unless it can show it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the individual from undertaking the discriminatory action. This policy deals with the way Wildwood Nature School treats its children and prospective children. The relationship between one child and another does not fall within its scope, however, Wildwood Nature School must treat bullying related to protected characteristics equally with other forms to ensure it is not guilty of unlawful discrimination (see our *Anti-Bullying Policy*).

The definition of disability includes a wide range of identified needs including hidden needs such as dyslexia, autism, special speech and language needs and ADHD. These may all amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

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

Some people are automatically covered by the definition, such as those with:

- Cancer
- Multiple Sclerosis
- HIV infection
- severe disfigurement.

There are special provisions within the Act for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

The Equality Act says there's a duty to make reasonable adjustments if someone is placed at a substantial disadvantage because of their disability compared with non-disabled people or people who don't share the disability; substantial means more than minor or trivial.

Reasonable adjustments only have to be made if it's reasonable to do so and decisions will be based on:

- the disability
- how practicable the changes are
- if the adjustment would overcome the disadvantage being or likely to be experienced
- the size of Wildwood Nature School
- how much money and resources are available at the point of decision being made
- the cost of making the changes
- if any changes have already been made and the impact, they have had

Protected characteristics (personal characteristics to which the law applies) covered by the Equalities Act 2010 are:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity

Financial planning and control

The Trustees, head of school, and finance staff will review the financial implications of the accessibility plan as part of the standard budget review process.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

PHYSICAL ACCESS TO SCHOOL BUILDING				
Accessibility outcome	Action to ensure outcome	Who is responsible	Timeframe	Notes
Easy access to the hall for all (inc all children and adults) including those with mobility issues	Movable ramp to allow access to main entrance	Trustees	Ready for opening	
	Accessible toilet near the front of the building		Ready for opening	
	All learning space on one level	Head of school	Ready for opening	
	Medical room at the front so accessible		Ready for opening	
	PEEPs for children with mobility issues		Ongoing	
	When planning future premises work, the school will take account of the needs of students, visitors and staff with physical difficulties and sensory impairments.			Long term
Ensure stage is not a barrier to full access for people with mobility issues	No learning activities or facilities for the children are located in the rooms behind the stage – staff only access – so no children are excluded by not being able to easily access these rooms	Head of school	Ongoing	
	No learning activities to take place on the stage if there are children with mobility issues in the group.	Class teacher	As required –	
	No fixed/permanent facilities or resources aimed at children to be located on the stage, so that children with mobility issues are not excluded.	Trustees Head of school	During premises renovation Ongoing	
	Install stair lift or similar at the side of the stage to provide access to the stage and rooms behind for those with mobility issues	Trustees	LONG TERM GOAL When budget allows– date TBC – review yearly	

			Or on employing a staff member with mobility issues	
Ensure acoustics of hall (naturally very echoey) are not distracting or distressing for children with sensory difficulties	Measures to soften the acoustics as the hall is very echoey, which could be a problem with people with certain conditions/disorders – including drapes suspended from the ceiling, a ‘forest’ of foam tubes	Trustees	Ready for opening	

EQUAL ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM				
Accessibility outcome	Action to ensure outcome	Who is responsible	Timeframe	Notes
All young people will be able to access the curriculum through delivery of a curriculum which is fully accessible to young people with any type of difficulty or disability.	We have a very high staff:pupil ratio and key person system, meaning that teachers have time to focus on and plan for the needs of their key children when delivering the curriculum.	Head of school	Ready for opening	
	The school curriculum is planned to be inclusive and to develop understanding of the importance of inclusivity and protected characteristics. See the <i>Equality Policy</i> for more detail. Also, it is planned in such a way that there are no topics or subject areas that could not be accessed with reasonable support/adjustments by any child with moderate SEND.	Trustees	Ready for opening	

	The SEND lead is responsible for supporting class teachers and ensuring that all reasonable adjustments are made to ensure full access to the curriculum for children with SEND. See <i>SEND Policy</i> for more details on levels and types of support.	SEND lead	Ongoing	
All young people with SEND will be able to access the Forest School provision	High staff ratios mean that children with SEND are well supported in the woods, in terms of access to the learning and in terms of H&S. The needs of any SEND children are borne in mind when planning any FS activities and adjustments are made to ensure access. For example, special tools for tool work or harnesses/additional adult support for tree climbing Individual risk assessments for specific children are done to ensure their safety in the woods.	SEND lead Forest School lead	Ongoing	

TRAVEL BETWEEN THE SCHOOL BUILDING AND OUTDOOR LEARNING SITES				
Accessibility outcome	Action to ensure outcome	Who is responsible	Timeframe	Notes
Safe bus travel to Queens Wood for children with sensory and mobility difficulties	Short walk to bus stop from school and bus stops right outside entrance to Queens Wood at the other end. Only one bus – no changes needed. Double decker – wheelchair-friendly.	Class teachers	Ongoing	

	<p>Not busy routes so seating possible.</p> <p>Avoid rush hour to ensure seats are available and the bus is not too crowded.</p>			
Safe walking to local sites for children with sensory and mobility difficulties	<p>Allowing long walk times with time for breaks</p> <p>Quiet routes if necessary for children with sensory difficulties</p> <p>Staff ratios to allow for support for children with SEND</p>	Head of school	Ongoing	

Accessibility Plan review

Policy created: October 2022

Last reviewed:

Last modified:

Next review date: October 2023