



Accessibility Policy

Gateways School
Independent Day School for Boys and Girls

Policy Aims

This policy plan sets out the aims of our approach to improving accessibility to a Gateways education in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Legislation and guidance

Gateways School's Accessibility Plan is prepared in accordance with the following statutory and regulatory frameworks to ensure full compliance with the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 and the ISI Inspection Framework 2023:

- **Equality Act 2010 – Schedule 10**

This plan fulfils the statutory requirement under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable access for disabled pupils.
- Improve the delivery of written information to disabled pupils.

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments and promoting non-discrimination in all aspects of school life.

- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**

The plan incorporates provisions to ensure the school environment is safe and accessible for all pupils, staff, and visitors. Risk assessments are conducted for physical access, lighting, signage, and emergency evacuation procedures.

- **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**

The school undertakes dynamic and site-specific risk assessments to identify and mitigate hazards that may affect accessibility. These are reviewed regularly and integrated into the school's maintenance and development planning.

- **SEND Code of Practice 2015**

While not mandatory for independent schools, Gateways School adopts best practice from the SEND Code of Practice to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes the graduated approach to identification, provision, and review.

- **Children and Families Act 2014 – Section 20**

The plan reflects the statutory definition of SEND and the entitlement to inclusive education. Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Related school policies

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

- Admission Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

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- Education Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Scope and Application

This policy applies to the whole school and is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to ensure that all learners with a particular need can access the school, its curriculum and / or its facilities.

The Governing Body receives annual reports on accessibility and is responsible for ensuring the school meets its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Policy definitions

Gateways recognises that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial and 'long-term' means 12 months or more. A pupil with a disability is not assumed to have a special educational need under the terms of the Education Act 1996 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015, and vice-versa. The needs of each pupil with a disability will be given individual consideration. It is the school's policy to not treat a person with a disability less favourably for a reason related to their disability than a person who does not have a disability, without justification.

At Gateways, we use the definition for SEND from the SEND Code of Practice (2014). This states that a child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility Plan is available to parents, pupils, and staff via the school website and upon request from the school office.

Access to the Curriculum					
Area	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Monitoring / Success Criteria
Identifying needs	To ensure that, any underlying learning need that a pupil may have is identified as early as possible.	Review of assessment and screening processes to ensure all pupils who require an assessment/screener are able to have access to an assessment/screener that enables them to access the curriculum, wider school life and exams	Class teachers, SENCos	Review Autumn 2026	Increased attainment and a reduction in pupil anxiety levels.
Dyslexic/Dyscalculia	To ensure pupils are able to access their learning and make progress within the classroom.	Use of assistive technology, coloured interactive whiteboards, scaffolded and differentiated curriculum, bespoke learning styles depending on visual or verbal preference. Use of lighting. Additional group provisions and access to learning support dependent on complexity of need. Pupil passports in place for complex needs and shared with staff. Additional assistive technology invested in and additional resources for all needs. Behaviour plan amended for child with EHCP.	School SENCos and Deputy Heads	Review Autumn 2026	Pupils with dyslexia/dyscalculia demonstrate improved engagement and progress; staff report confidence in using strategies; pupil passports are consistently used and updated.

Neurodiversity	To ensure pupils are able to access their learning and make progress within the classroom.	Supported in accessibility as above. Scaffolded and differentiated curriculum. Bespoke timetabling for complex needs in younger children. Staff can adapt consequences from the behaviour policy to better meet the needs of the child. Use of assistive technology, additional support provided through learning support. LS department and Pastoral team work closely to provide further adaptations or interventions to support SEN children's emotional wellbeing. Pupil passports completed for complex needs and shared with staff. Additional assistive technology invested in and additional resources for all needs. Behaviour plan amended for child with EHCP.	School SENCos and Deputy Heads	Review Autumn 2026	Pupils with neurodiverse profiles demonstrate improved engagement and emotional wellbeing; staff report confidence in adapting provision; pupil passports and behaviour plans are consistently implemented and reviewed.
Irlen/Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome	To ensure pupils are able to access their learning and make progress within the classroom.	Use of coloured overlays or coloured books where appropriate. See strategies mentioned above. Pupils provide their own coloured overlays or tinted glasses, coloured exercise books can be given by the LS department. Pupil passports completed for complex needs and shared with staff.	School SENCos and Deputy Heads	Review Autumn 2026	Pupils with Irlen Syndrome report improved visual comfort and engagement; staff consistently implement recommended adaptations; pupil passports are used to inform teaching.
EAL	To ensure pupils are able to access their learning and	Additional support provided through learning support. Use of Mandarin teacher to aid language transition. Use of a buddy system	School SENCos and Deputy Heads	Review Autumn 2026	Progress of EAL pupils is at least in line with their peers; staff report confidence in supporting EAL learners; pupils demonstrate

	make progress within the classroom.	for new to the language. Use of translation tools through assistive technology. Additional assistive technology invested in and additional resources for all needs.			improved language acquisition and engagement.
Physical impairment (Visual/Hearing)	To ensure pupils are able to access their learning and make progress within the classroom.	See strategies mentioned above. Additional equipment including assistive technology, enlarged e-books, enlarged and coloured exercise books, coloured keyboards, use of audio books and voice dictation technology, personal lighting, enlarged resources, additional 1:1 support. Personalised support from visual impairment, or hearing impairment, team in the Local Authority.	School SENCos and Deputy Heads	Review Autumn 2026	Pupils with visual or hearing impairments demonstrate improved access and progress; adaptations are consistently implemented; feedback from pupils and staff confirms effectiveness of support.
Access to the physical environment					
Area	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Monitoring / Success Criteria
Risk assessments	Ensure safe access and emergency procedures for all pupils, parents and staff	Conduct accessibility-related risk assessments and update evacuation plans where necessary	Health & Safety Officer, SENCos	Reviewed annually or as needed	Pupils with physical movement impairments are able to access all required areas of the school independently or with minimal support; staff consistently implement room adjustments and use available facilities (e.g. lifts); feedback from pupils and parents confirms adequacy of access arrangements.

Physical impairment (Movement)	To ensure that pupils are able to access the buildings / rooms they need within the school	Use of handrails for all staircases. Good lighting in all corridors and rooms. Health and safety warnings in science laboratories. Timetabling of alternative rooms with step free access when required. Use of lift in Schofield building. Plans for the new Prep building to incorporate step free access on the ground level and an internal lift.	Operations Manager and Deputy Heads	Review Autumn 2026	Pupils with physical impairments can access all teaching and communal areas independently or with minimal support; alternative rooming and lift access are consistently applied; feedback confirms adequacy; future building plans prioritise accessibility.
Physical impairment (Belongings)	To ensure that pupils are able to access the learning materials they need within the school	Where a pupil with physical needs requires assistance with carrying books or their Surface Pro, this is provided by pupil buddies or staff. Lockers to store personal belongings are provided to minimise the number of items that need to be carried.	Class teachers, Form Tutors, Pastoral Leads	Review Autumn 2026	Pupils with physical impairments can access required materials with minimal support; lockers and buddy systems are used effectively; staff consistently implement support strategies.
Access to information					
Area	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Monitoring / Success Criteria
Written and digital information	Ensure written and digital information is accessible to all	Provide large print, overlays, audio formats, translated materials, keyboard only access and screen reader capability etc where necessary	All staff producing any written or digital content	Review materials after each use	Written and digital materials are accessible; staff apply features consistently; feedback and reviews support ongoing improvements.
Access to enrichment opportunities					
Area	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Monitoring / Success Criteria
Academic	Ensure pupils with SEND and disabilities can	Audit participation rates; adapt materials and venues; provide staff training.	Super-Curricular Coordinators,	Review Autumn 2026	Increased participation and positive feedback from pupils with SEND.

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	access academic clubs and extension activities.		SENCo, Heads of Department		
Non-Academic Enrichment	Ensure inclusive access to trips, sports, arts, and leadership opportunities.	Review risk assessments; provide 1:1 support; consult pupils and parents.	Educational Visits Coordinator, Pastoral Leads	Annual planning cycle; pre-trip checks	All pupils offered opportunities; adjustments documented and implemented.
Performing Arts	Enable pupils with disabilities to participate in drama, music, and productions.	Adapt rehearsal spaces; provide sensory-friendly options; liaise with families.	Head of Drama, Music Coordinator	Per production/event	Participation and enjoyment evidenced through pupil voice and staff feedback.
Sports and Physical Activities	Ensure physical education and sports are accessible to all pupils.	Modify activities; provide adaptive equipment; train PE staff.	Head of PE, SENCo	Ongoing; termly review	Pupils with physical needs participate safely and confidently.
Leadership and Pupil Voice	Promote inclusive access to school council and leadership roles.	Ensure meetings are accessible; provide mentoring and support.	Pupil Voice Coordinator, SENCo	Annual elections; termly review	Representation of SEND pupils in leadership roles.
The Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team in consultation with pupils, parents, and staff. Feedback informs updates and ensures continued relevance and effectiveness					