



SIR WILLIAM BORLASE'S  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# Accessibility Policy

Senior Leader Review Lead : Operations Manager with SENDco

Last Reviewed: June 2023

For review by: Buildings Committee/ PDW Committee

Buildings Committee



*Inspire  
Empower  
Shape The Future*

## Introduction

Sir William Borlase's Grammar School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access to all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to continued positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

The SWBGS Accessibility Plan is linked to linked to guidance issued by the Local Authority and is also available at:

[https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/schools/documents/governors/access\\_guideliens.pdf](https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/schools/documents/governors/access_guideliens.pdf)

It is also linked to the school's annual Health and Safety Audit, conducted in June/July each year. This document will be considered when drafting school policies and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes. The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three year period ahead of the next review date.

## Aims:

This plan sets out the proposals of Sir William Borlase's Grammar School to maintain and increase access to education for disabled students in the areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act 2010:

1. increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
2. improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.
3. improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.
4. Improving knowledge and understanding among other staff and pupils. Sir William Borlase's Grammar School also recognises its responsibilities towards disabled staff and parents/carers and will:
  - monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunities
  - ensure that staff with disabilities are supported with special provision to ensure that they may carry out their work effectively without barriers and where necessary, undertake reasonable adjustment to enable staff to fully access the workplace
  - ensure that disabled parents/carers are supported and can access school information and events readily.



## **Scope:**

Within the terms of the Equality Act 2010, the term 'disability' is defined thus: "a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to day activities". Physical and mental impairments include, but are not limited to, sensory loss, cerebral palsy, diabetes, arthritis, epilepsy, mental illness, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) such as dyslexia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Behaviour difficulties are only included if they relate to underlying physical or mental impairment or result from a recognised mental illness. The SEND Report at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School includes students with both physical and mental challenges. Within the terms of this document, "curriculum" is both teaching and learning within school time and participation in after school clubs, leisure, cultural and sporting activities and school visits.

## **Strategy:**

Sir William Borlase's Grammar School aims over time to increase the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors including those with disabilities. Our strategies include:

Having high expectations of all our students.

Finding ways in which all students can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music and extracurricular activities.

Planning out of school activities including school trips so that students with disabilities can participate.

Setting admission criteria which do not discriminate against students with disabilities or treat them unfairly.

Devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for students with disabilities.

Planning the improvement and the modification of the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of students with disabilities.

Raising awareness of disability amongst all school staff providing written information/ electronic communication for students with disabilities in a form which is user friendly.

Using language which does not offend in all literature and making staff and students aware of the importance of language.

Creating an inclusive school community for all students and staff through our teaching of the school values.

## **Planning Duty 1: Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.**

Sir William Borlase's Grammar School Curriculum provides a breadth and depth of academic learning and cultural experience to excite and extend all our students. It is rich in knowledge and in opportunities to develop creativity, instilling a life-long enthusiasm for learning.



At the present time all students access every aspect of this curriculum, whatever their disabilities. In order to improve access, over the past few years we have worked in collaboration with the Local Authority in order to improve access for those with mobility difficulties, through the installation of disability lifts in key areas of the school; installation of ramps and the removal of physical barriers.

In 2009 the school undertook an audit of the site in order to prepare access for a pupil with mobility difficulties. This audit was undertaken in collaboration with the prospective pupil, her mother, her current support staff from her primary school, the specialist teaching services and the school's own SEN staff. All identified issues were addressed as part of preparations for her entry into the school.

In 2020, the school welcomed a student with visual impairment. In readiness, the SENDco worked with the site team, student, his parents and teaching assistant to identify adaptations necessary to ensure the full curriculum and extra curricular opportunities could be accessed. This continues as the student moves into new year groups and building works take place on the school site, eg the new sports venue.

All new buildings and amendments to buildings are built with disability access. This includes the new Sports Hall and related developments of 2021; the new toilet suite of 2022 and is incorporated into the upgrading of the new Hall for 2023. (See detail below)

As part of the Year 8 PSHE programme, students and staff regularly conduct a Disability Access Assessment of the School's buildings and facilities. We often have intermittent wheelchair users and there are also several students with hearing impairments. All of these students fully access the curriculum and extracurricular activities, as desired. Key areas for future improvements include:

On-going Strategy:

Continually auditing adjustments being made to the curriculum to accommodate disabled students e.g. timetabling and in-class support.

Provide training for all staff on adapting the curriculum as needed:

Provide INSET to all staff from specialist teachers to ensure all students they teach are able to access the lesson content.

Ensure equal access for disabled students to school clubs, school visits and extra-curricular activities.

Ensure new infrastructure developments support the needs of disabled students.

Risk assessments and planning of trips to include accessibility references.

## **Planning Duty 2: Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.**

The school has made a committed effort to improve the physical environment for disability access with lifts installed across the school. In 2017, a new classroom block was opened attached to the



old Hall Block, providing a large, ground floor accessible catering area and lifts up to the upper floors of H Block.

In 2021 the school opened its new Sports Campus including Netball Courts, Astroturf, Football Training Field and a Sports Hall including a Fitness Suite. The campus was designed to enable students with disabilities to access all areas after consulting with Sports Able and Horizon Sports.. This includes ramped paths to the outdoor facilities and wide gates; a wider sports hall allowing run-offs for wheelchair sport and accessible toilets. The Sports Hall is a single-storey building.

In the summer of 2021 the school completed further improvements to the school's infrastructure, converting parts of the H Block building on the ground and first floor and improving other areas of the school; these improvements all recognise the needs of disabled students. The new development includes:

A new ground floor, gender -neutral toilet block including accessible toilets and all toilets with wider than standard doors and cubicles.

A new ground floor classroom.

A new first floor classroom accessible by lift.

Ground floor language assistante rooms.

Ground floor Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 offices with learning support spaces attached.

Movement of the School Counselling Room to create a more focused Student Support Area

The Rowing Weights Room moved to the ground floor.

Peripatetic Music Rooms and Recital Room accessible by lift.

Additional ground floor assembly and lecture space.

Wellbeing and decompression room in ground floor Cloisters to support children with SEN and a range of health and wellbeing challenges.

In 2023 the school is developing a new ground floor science lab and redeveloping the school hall and canteen; this work is being done taking full account of disability access needs.

Several areas of the school are still identified as presenting potential access problems, all of which will require collaboration with the Local Authority as part of their ongoing improvements to school sites. Priority areas include:

a. The Chapel.

b. The Dance Studio (there is Lift Access via the LRC but two small steps to negotiate up to the studio.) The school has a three year plan to move the Dance Studio; in the meantime we can timetable a Dance Class in the accessible theatre and old gym if this was needed.

In addition the school has identified a key area for improvement to be the removal of "trip hazards" around the school site, mostly relating to lack of bag storage in corridors and other public areas. This being addressed as follows:

New bag racks were constructed in 2017 which have partially addressed this.

In Summer 2021, the school has invested in new banks of lockers for Key Stage 3. The school has invested in new lockers for the Sports Hall to store bags of students when in games lessons.

Students are instructed to place bags sensibly outside assembly halls and on bag racks.



The school plans a review of whether to install further lockers and expand the new locker policy to other Key Stages during 2023/4.

The school recognises that storage issues in and around the Theatre at times of shows and performances need addressing to ensure clear access at all times. In 2020 the school allocated an additional space for theatre storage that was previously an unused changing space. In the summer of 2021, with the completion of additional changing in the Sports Hall, storage space has been created in a second small changing space next to the theatre foyer. The creation of the Music Recital room allows the Music Room nextdoor to the theatre to be used for storage during productions and performances. We will continue to monitor this.

The school also highlights steps / slopes / stairs with yellow stripes to highlight potential hazards

### **Planning Duty 3: The duty to improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils.**

The school currently fully complies with this duty. We share information and curriculum resources via our google based system, making all learning resources and information available to students and parents electronically as needed. We are able to provide audio feedback on the curriculum online as needed. Borlase@home, our virtual learning system was able to fully support disabled students.

### **Planning Duty 4: Improving knowledge and understanding among other staff and pupils.**

The school is committed to ensuring this is delivered annually to Year 8 students as a key module of their PSHE programme. This was done as a virtual event in 2020. There is a range of presentations in assemblies for staff and students from Charity groups improving knowledge and understanding; the school supports a range of charities which are chosen by the student body and cover both local and national foci.

### **Evaluation of the plan:**

The following “success” measures have been considered:

Satisfaction of disabled pupils and their parents:

Students fully access the curriculum, including Dance and PE. When needed we were able to provide physiotherapy in a designated space for a student.

Evidence of involvement of disabled pupils in the full life of the school:

Those with relatively minor hearing impairment also gain full access to school life. For example, full participation by pupils with hearing impairments, in the school’s music and dance programmes. Students with minor and significant visual impairment access the full curriculum and play sports and take part in performing arts. Where students have needed temporary wheelchair access we have enabled them to access the curriculum and their activities as needed.

Staff confidence in teaching and supporting disabled pupils:



Over the past year staff confidence in dealing with mobility disability issues has grown very markedly. This plan will be reviewed every 3 years by the Buildings Committee of the Governors. See Plan below.



Curriculum	Sir William Borlase's Grammar School will aim to make reasonable adjustments in order to enable disabled students access to the full range of educational opportunities and extracurricular activities provided. The needs of a student will be assessed on an individual basis.		Action taken in response to individual needs.
Access to Curriculum Create effective learning environments for all.	Reinforce responsibilities of all teachers as outlined in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement. Ensure all classrooms and resources are organised in accordance with pupil need. Ongoing programme of staff training in disability awareness to reflect diverse needs of students within the school and anticipatory duties. Seek issues and feedback from pupils e.g. "Review PE and Staying Healthy Curriculum.	Ongoing via CPD  CPD Ongoing  Ongoing via CPD	All Staff Action taken in response to individual needs.(Business Manager and teachers) Assistant Head (Student Council), teachers.
	Ensure there are school activities accessible to all students. Continue hosting an area event for partner schools e.g. Dance show and forthcoming Holyport work to raise Disability Awareness.		Business manager to identify contingency budget for cover for extra curricular activities if needed. Adjust risk assessments for trips and extra curricular activities as needed. Annual Year 8 Event.
Premises Review site access to meet diverse needs of pupils, staff, parents	Review personal evacuation plans.	July 2023 and ongoing	Business Manager, SENDCo





and community users.			
Communication Availability of documents in alternative formats.	<p>Large print and audio formats etc as required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitor uptake of documents in alternative formats</li> <li>▪ Review accessibility of newsletter and letters for parents.</li> <li>▪ Homework information available as information sheets in alternative formats as appropriate</li> </ul>	September 2024 and annually.	Adjustments made in accordance with individual needs. SEDNCo and the School's Specialist Teacher.
Attitudes Promote positive attitudes to disability	<p>PSHE Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review Assembly Programme: widen focus of Different/Same theme and include SMSC info</li> <li>▪ Involve local disability groups in assemblies and visits to school</li> </ul>	July 2023 and ongoing.	Assistant Head - Pastoral/Head of PSHE/ Assistant Head Associate Assistant Head Tutor System/ Head/ HOKs Deputy Head Teacher/ All Staff and students.

