

RIDGEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN



Introduction

It is the aim of Ridgewood High School to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that the schools facilities, services, policies and procedures are made accessible to students, prospective students and our adult users with a disability. Our Key Objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to enable full participation in the school community. At Ridgewood High School, we value all of our students and we are committed to supporting equality of opportunity. For this to become a reality, we must work towards ensuring that barriers to learning are removed and students, through reasonable adjustment, can have equal access to learning, where reasonably possible.

This Accessibility Plan is compliant with current legislation and requirement as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. The School Governing Body is accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on the progress of the Accessibility Plan.

RHS Improving Access for Disabled Students

Accessibility strategies aim to

- (a) **increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the schools' curriculum;** This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school events, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.
- (b) **improve the physical environment** of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered.
- (c) **improve the delivery of written information** to disabled students of information which is readily accessible to students who are not disabled. This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its students available to disabled students. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events.

Delivery of the curriculum

We will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

In defining what is reasonable the school shall take into account:

- the cost and feasibility of making specific alterations to the school premises.
- implications on financial resources to the school and local authority and the likelihood of funding being available to offset this.
- staffing requirements.
- health & safety considerations.
- the interest of the student, staff member or visitor.

Access

At RHS we make reasonable adjustments, where possible to accommodate the needs of applicants, students, parents/carers, visitors and members of staff who have disabilities.

For **access to the main hall**, caretakers make available a rear entrance with flat access. This hall is also accessible via a (steep) ramp at the front entrance, there is also a toilet available near this entrance, which has disabled facilities.

Access to H Block. Full disabled access is possible on the lower floor and a passenger lift allows access to the upper area of the new build. The Disabled lifts are regularly serviced. A disabled toilet is located on both floors.

G/D Block. Full disabled access is possible on the lower floor and a passenger lift allows access to the upper area of the new build and the first floor of G and D block. A disabled toilet is located in reception and a further care room is located behind main reception. The very top floor of D block is only accessible by steps.

Access to the remaining buildings, Technology (which also houses Learning Support), Maths and PE are all on flat surfaces.

Dedicated disabled parking bays are clearly marked in the school main car park, adjacent to an accessible ramp, with flat access available through all new block entrance points.

Disability and the School Culture

Definition

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA): "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 normal day to day activities".

Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments and also hidden impairments. Substantial means 'more than minor or trivial', long-term means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months.

Principles

- i) Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the school's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEN policy;
- ii) The school recognises its duty under the DDA
 - not to discriminate against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
 - not to treat disabled students less favourably
 - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage
 - to publish an Accessibility Plan
 - The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality
 - The school provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual students considering the graduated response as stated in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 (6.44-6.56). Examples such as
 - setting suitable learning challenges
 - responding to students' diverse learning needs
 - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual and groups of students

Admissions

Parents/Carers of prospective students must notify school of any disabilities in advance of registration and must discuss with the school what adjustments could reasonably be made to accommodate their child. The school may request a full report from a doctor or educational psychologist to help determine whether it can properly fulfil its legal and moral responsibilities to the child and its contractual duties to the parents/carers.

- In particular, the school will do all it reasonably can to ensure the child can, with reasonable adjustments, access the curriculum.

- The school also encourages all of its students to participate in extracurricular provision, trips and extended school activities as part of its ethos of inclusiveness, but we will ensure that no student's education or safety is put at risk by the needs of another individual.

Existing Students (Withdrawal of a Student)

The school recognises that medical and psychological conditions can develop in existing students which may require adjustments to be made to the way in which the curriculum is delivered. Parents/Carers must disclose to the school, in confidence, any known medical condition, health problem or allergy affecting existing students.

If following the process of consultation and the making of all reasonable adjustments, it is the professional judgement of the head teacher that the school cannot provide adequately for the students' disability or special educational needs, parents/carers will be asked to withdraw the student, in such cases every reasonable effort shall be made by the school to assist in finding a suitable alternative placement.

Existing Staff Members

The school recognises that medical and psychological conditions can develop in existing staff members which may require adjustments to the way in which they are employed. Existing staff members must, as soon as possible, disclose any known medical condition or health problem. Where appropriate the head teacher shall set up a consultation process through occupational health so interim measures can be put in place to support the staff member, any long-term requirements may be determined. The school to the best of its ability will make adjustments as are reasonably practicable to allow the staff member to continue at the school. Where this is not possible the school will seek HR advice and follow alternative appropriate policies 'Managing Sickness Absence' policy.

Monitoring and Evaluating

In the process of its review we will take into consideration the views of disabled students, their parents/carers and other relevant stakeholders. We will continually review implementation of this plan, the environment of the school, resources, the way we plan, prepare and deliver the curriculum and how we provide information for students.

Contacting school

Opinions of the student and parents/carers and outside professionals are important to us. If parents/carers have any complaints, compliments or suggestions you are welcome to contact school reception who will connect you with the appropriate person.

If you are unable to resolve your issue to your satisfaction you can seek advice from SENDIASS (SEND Information, advice and support services).

SENDIASS CONTACT DETAILS

The Information, Advice and Support Service Network (IASS Network) website: (<https://cyp.iassnetwork.org.uk/>)

Dudley SENDIASS: <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/information-for-parents/dudley-sendiass/>

Telephone 01384 817373

Ridgewood High School takes guidance from Dudley Council on all policies that are adopted through the council procedures. We recognise that this policy is designed with disabled people in mind. This policy has been undertaken in consultation with school members, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, school governors and the Local authority.

The delivery of written information The plan is also available in the following formats, on request to info@ridgewood.dudley.sch.uk : email; enlarged print version; other formats by arrangement.