



## Accessibility Plan and Disability Policy 2023-2026

<b>Member of Staff Responsible</b>	<b>Bursar</b>
<b>Date of Policy</b>	<b>July 2023</b>
<b>Date for next review</b>	<b>Sept 2026</b>
<b>Approved By Governors</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Distribution:</b>	<b>All</b>

### Introduction

We strive to be a fully inclusive and welcoming school and therefore aims to ensure that each and every pupil can participate fully in the life of the School. Our aim is to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible.

We welcome boys with special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can offer them the support they require (there may be an additional charge for this support where more specialist support is required). We welcome boys with physical disabilities provided that our site can support their needs.

A child or young person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal daily activities (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

Rokeby School believes in **Inclusion and integration** as an intrinsic part of its aims in order to present all of those who are successful in gaining a place at the school with opportunities to gain access the entire curriculum.

Inclusion and integration applies, but is not restricted to:

- Boys with Special Educational Needs or other learning needs.
- Boys with disabilities or physical difficulties.
- Boys whose first language is not English.
- Minority ethnic groups.
- Boys who are Gifted and talented.

The School's Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions to increase the extent to which boys can participate in the School's curriculum and school life.

### The Curriculum

There is one full time teacher (SENCO) and two part time teachers in the area of Special Educational Needs/Additional Learning Needs, who are specifically focussed on assisting boys with specific learning needs. In addition the school uses the services of other specialists including speech therapists and occupational therapist.

The department has finite resources and cannot meet the need of all disabilities. Though this is not exhaustive, such difficulties, as might be supported by the Department, comprise for example:-

- a) Specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D

- b) Physical or medical disabilities
- c) Behavioural and emotional problems
- d) Boys who need support due to school absence over a long period of time

The department staff are responsible for:

- a) Overseeing identification, referral and assessment of additional needs
- b) Developing and coordinating support systems
- c) Managing other staff and providers in the learning support team
- d) Managing the budget and other resources
- e) Maintaining records and ensuring relevant information is communicated to other staff, particularly at transition points
- f) Tracking and monitoring pupil progress
- g) Advising and supporting non specialist staff, and contributing to INSET
- h) Ensuring appropriate access arrangements are in place for external assessment
- i) Working with parents
- j) Liaising with external agencies
- k) Monitoring and evaluating the impact of policy and provision
- l) Keeping up to date with relevant legislation, research and current good practice, and revising policies and procedures as necessary
- m) Working closely with the Head and SLT to advice on policy development and relevant aspects of whole school planning.

### **Associated Services (e.g. after school care, extra-curricular activities)**

Wrap-around care is available to all boys and is fully staffed by employees of the school. Boys may go to Breakfast Club which is in the dining hall before school starts from 7.30am and go to Homework Club after school finishes until 6pm each day. The Dining Hall and ALC both requires the use of a fold-up ramp to negotiate the single steps for each if accessing from within the school grounds. Both of these activities could be moved to accommodate short-term requirements.

The school offers a wide-range of extra-curricular activities which boys can volunteer for, although the clubs do have limit on numbers due to staffing levels. Currently, these include subjects such as Sport, Music, Chess, Drama, and Coding.

### **Behaviour and Discipline Policies**

Through Rewards and Sanctions the school aims to cultivate in boys an acceptance and recognition of responsibility for their own decisions and actions and for their consequences. A high standard of behaviour is expected at all times as set out in the Behaviour Code of Conduct.

We aim to cultivate an atmosphere where respect is shown by pupils and staff towards each other and each other's property. We expect high standards of behaviour and believe that this can be achieved in a positive manner and certainly not by creating a repressive or dictatorial regime. Consistency should be shown at all times. Good behaviour will be promoted in all aspects of school life, through well prepared, differentiated and stimulating lessons, Personal and Social Responsibility (PSHE), Assemblies and Tutor Periods.

Any discipline and behaviour policy has to be flexible and by its very nature cannot prescribe the course of action which will be taken in every circumstance. It is important for the well-being of pupils and staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and the smooth-running of the school that everyone is aware of the standards expected within the school community. Children need to know the boundaries and what will happen if they overstep them.

Staff must be seen to be fair. Children need to know that all staff will react in the same way. Consistency is of paramount importance and all decisions will be made with the wellbeing of all our

pupils in mind. Sharing of information occurs regularly in staff meetings and in annual handover meetings.

### **Physical Environment – the limitations**

One of the obvious problems which the school has (in common with many other schools) is the site which consists of separate buildings, the main one being an old ‘building of interest’ in a conservation area, without lifts and the other buildings which have grown up around it since the school moved to its present premises in 1966. In addition the school and its grounds are on a slope which means there are changes in levels to get into the different buildings and outdoor spaces.

Another limitation is the system, again common to many schools, of having subject specific classrooms for the older boys (Years 5 and above), based on the valid ground of having all the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires boys to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts.

Any pupil with impaired mobility is going to be disadvantaged by these factors, if not prohibited altogether in extreme cases. These matters cannot be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to the main frame of the school at prohibitive costs.

The Lower School (Reception to Year 2) was rebuilt in 2012 and this is fully accessible with a lift and a disabled toilet. Also this houses the school medical room as well. However, there is no step free access to the Dining Hall, which makes it harder to support a boy with long term physical needs.

### **Physical Environment - reasonable steps and adjustments**

We regularly review and take reasonable steps to improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled boys are able to take advantage of education, and associated services, offered by the school.

Where there are accessibility issues the first aid team and/or the H&S co-ordinator in conjunction with the relevant member of teaching staff will meet with the boy and his parent(s) to understand the nature of the issues and to discuss proposed solutions. This will result in putting in place a risk assessment agreed with the parent(s) and a PEEP (personnel emergency evacuation plan).

Where possible and necessary for short-term requirements, lessons will be timetabled in accessible classrooms for individual boys. For teaching Year 3 and above we are able to make use of the ground floor of the Science Block as well as Bennett and Bronte for other classroom teaching. However, some specialist teaching areas such as Art are not accessible.

Where required, we make arrangements for pupils with accessibility issues to be assisted by members of the support staff to their allocated teaching area. They can be assisted by support staff at break, lunch-time and after school if required.

### **Responsibility for the Plan**

The school will review accessibility needs within the Education, Welfare and Staffing Committee as well as within the Finance Committee. The areas to keep under review include, but are not limited to:

- To review the school’s policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities.
- To make recommendation with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future;
- To review access to the curriculum

- To review the school's Learning Support Policy and the level of support provided;
- To review and revise as necessary the school's Accessibility Policy;

The School will consult with staff who have the responsibility for the induction arrangements for new pupils to ensure that the particular needs of pupils are recognised in advance, that suitable staff training is provided and that any modifications to the curriculum or premises are fed into the plan before the arrival of the new pupils.

### **Three Year Plan**

**We will ensure all admissions/entry documentation is sufficiently positive in its statements regarding inclusion.**

**We have modified the admissions policy so that parents of prospective pupils are required (previously they were "advised") to tell us of any special educational needs or disabilities in advance so that we can assess the need and make adequate provision.**

**We are increasing the level of learning needs and pastoral support available to the boys.**

**We are introducing 1:1 iPads for the older boys which may enable more differentiated learning to take place.**

**We will ensure that any new builds or renovations in the school take into account disabled access and disabled facilities.**

**We will ensure that new school transport when procured is accessible.**

## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

### *Improving accessibility to the physical environment*

	Targets	Action and Resource Required	Timescale	Responsibility	Evidence of Implementation
Short Term	New coach and minibuses to be accessible.	Incorporate into the tender documentation.	Ongoing	Transport Manager	New vehicles.
	Hall to be readily accessible by wheelchair.	Purchase a ramp that allows access via the doors at the southern end of the Hall.	Summer 2023	Premises Manager	New ramp(s)
	Ensure the circulation areas are clear of obstructions that could be hazardous to people who are blind or partially sighted.	Part of lock/unlock routine and training for staff and boys.	Ongoing	Premises Manager	Clear circulation routes and areas.
	Do not leave doors half open and be aware of head height restrictions.	Training	Ongoing	All staff	Doors not left half-open and any head height restrictions are clearly marked.
	Good lighting allows people to make the most of their remaining vision.	Improved lighting in the Reception (part of the Hall Project)	2024-25	Bursar and Governors	Better lighting
	Ensure external lighting is suitable and on at appropriate times	Review and change.	Easter 2023	Premises Manager	Completed in Easter 2023.
	Steps are less hazardous if clearly marked.	Look at step markings and markings for slopes.	Autumn 2023	Premises Manager	Clearly marked.

Medium Term	Next building renovation to include disabled visitors toilet and accessible classrooms. Also to ensure clear signage, route markings, clear markings and improved lighting in Reception.  Ensure signage is clear.	Planning permission applied for in terms of the Hall Project	2024 -2026	Governors	Minutes of Strategy and Board meetings
Long Term	Continue to review the needs of the pupils and staff and look at requirements for any alterations such as: access to specialist teaching areas, hearing loop.	EWSC to lead on changes required for pupils and staff.	As required	Governors	

### ***Improving access to the curriculum***

	Targets	Action and Resource Required	Timescale	Responsibility	Evidence of Impact / Outcomes
Short Term	Analysing data to ensure we do not inadvertently discriminate against pupils with a disability or SEN.  Provide more spaces for pastoral support and SEN	Data Manager to review.  Splitting Hawkins into 2 and converting the Lower School reprographics space into a learning support area.	2023-24  Summer 2023	Data Manager  Premises Manager	Progress reports  Spaces physically re-purposed.
Medium Term	Review the need to provide specific training for staff on how to support pupils with a particular disability	INSET training	2022-25	SEN coordinator	Training review

Long Term	Additional small group rooms available for all the peripatetic teachers and therapist working with the learning support boys (currently school LS staff x3, ELSA x3, OT, SALT x3 sharing 3 spaces)	Strategic Development Plan	2023-25	Governors and SLT	Additional learning spaces available for peripatetic teachers
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### **Improving access to Information**

	Targets	Action and Resource Required	Timescale	Responsibility	Evidence of Impact / Outcomes
Short Term	Review if information such as handouts, timetables, and information about school events can be disseminated in alternative formats such as large print, audio using ICT, or providing the information orally.	Awareness of need to be put in agenda of SEN meetings and Marketing meetings	Ongoing	SEN coordinator/ Marketing Officer	SEN review Marketing plan
Medium Term	If required, train teachers to present information to groups in a way which is user friendly for disabled pupils - e.g. by reading aloud video or TV/whiteboard projections and describing diagrams.	Teacher Training	As required	(SEN coordinator) Deputy Head	Training records
Long Term	Being adaptable to change as pupil or staff needs change and provide the right equipment to provide information	As required	As required	Admissions and SLT	Provision of equipment and its use

# **DISABILITY POLICY**

## **THE Legal Context**

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in connection with the provision of goods, facilities and services. Where a physical feature, including one related to the design or construction of a building or the approach or access to it, makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of a particular service, the service provider will have a duty to take such steps as are reasonable, in all the circumstances of the case to:

- Remove the feature.
- Alter it so that it no longer has that effect.
- Provide a reasonable means of avoiding the feature.
- Provide a reasonable alternative way of making the service in question available to disabled people.

## **Disability**

Part I of the Act defines what disability is and therefore who is protected under it. The definition is broad "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out day to day activities".

## **Reasonable Adjustment**

As part of the plan the service provider must make "reasonable adjustments" to overcome identified problems.

The act lists a number of factors, which may have a bearing on whether it is reasonable to have to make a particular adjustment although there may be other relevant ones:

- The effectiveness of the step in preventing the disadvantage.
- The practicability of the step.
- The financial and other costs of the adjustment and the extent of any disruption caused.
- The extent of the service providers financial or other resources.
- The availability to the service provider of financial or other assistance to help make an adjustment.
- Until case law appears, it's too early to say what a "reasonable adjustment" will be in practice.

Coombe Croft (Main Rokeby School) is a house of 'interest' within a conservation area.

## **Rokeby School**

Under the Disability Act we as the Service Provider must prepare a plan for accessibility for the school and grounds.

To achieve this, the plan will focus completely on wheelchair access on the approach to the inside and the grounds of the school. Other auxiliary aids and adjustments can only be addressed when a disability is identified in a prospective pupil.

The school is basically in four parts, the original Coombe Croft Building (Main School), the Lower School, the Hall/Music/Science Block and the ALC. We also have a Sports Ground and Pavilion in Worcester Park.

To achieve an accurate picture of the physical features that will impact the use of a wheelchair the plan is in three parts:



1. Routes from the side gates to Coombe Croft, mainly for Year 4 to Year 8. Access via the side hall gate and side door.
2. Routes to the Lower School for the Reception classes, Years 1 and 2. Access is via the side hall gate.
3. Routes for the whole school to access the Main Hall and PAH in the Lower School and ALC. Years 3 to 8 to access the Music, Science and Maths room. Access is via the side hall gate.

Where a feature is identified, a "reasonable adjustment" will be suggested but it must be accepted that in some cases, due to various factors, a positive adjustment may be not viable. At the conclusion of the report a three year prioritised action plan will identify the achievable reasonable adjustments.

## **Coombe Croft – Main Building**

### ***The approach***

The tarmac surface approaching the main door of the school is even and well maintained. The area is well lit at night. The pathway from the main entrance gates to the front door is 1100mm wide. This would allow access to a wheelchair user but at busy times would restrict at the same time the use of pushchairs or a mother shepherding several young children.

There is no dedicated disabled parking bay on the front drive and without such a facility dropping off and picking up a person in a wheelchair would cause extensive congestion problems for other parents.

The front entrance doors are double and would allow good access. There is a step up to through the opened door. This would restrict a wheelchair from entering the building. The entry bell is too high for a wheelchair user.

### ***Reasonable adjustments***

The cost of widening the path would be prohibitive and would greatly reduce the space available for cars manoeuvring at drop off and pick up times. It would be anticipated that a person in a wheelchair would be accompanied, so the use of the footpath would be limited.

There are "reserved" parking spaces for visitors that could be adopted and signed as a disabled bay.

The front doors are not typically used by pupils. If a child is accompanied, another person can alert the front desk and a portable ramp can be put down to allow access.

## **Entrance Foyer and Ground Floor rooms**

The entrance foyer is bright and well lit. The Reception desk is low. The visitors' toilet to the left is not accessible, as the door is not wide enough and it has been built underneath a set of stairs.

The door from Reception into the ground floor corridor acts as a security door as well as a fire door. Therefore, it is typically kept closed to prevent visitors wandering off into the school.

The corridors are only 1200mm wide, creating a one way access only when a wheelchair is being used. There are steps along this corridor. At the end of this corridor there is a fire door to the outside exit door which opens outwards.

Pupils on a day to day basis access the main building via the side gate and a side door. There is a step into the building.

There are only two classrooms on the ground floor. The Brodie classroom has heavy double doors that open outwards. This leads into the DT room again with very heavy sound proof double doors. There is a fire exit from the DT room with 3 stone steps to the terrace area. A ramp requires 1200mm width and these 3 of stairs are 2800mm wide.

### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

It is not feasible to alter the corridor width due to the house layout. The external door is automated. A portable ramp is available for the steps.

### **Route to First Floor**

The first floor is accessed by stairs and is on three levels, with the boy's toilet being on the higher section and therefore is not accessible.

The double fire doors open inwards by the art foyer, but they are wide enough for wheelchair access. There is access to the Music suite via double sound proof doors. All doors in the Music suite have been adapted to allow movement of pianos and are wide enough for wheelchair access but due to the requirement for soundproofing they are very heavy.

The corridor is narrow but passable creating a one way access only. The stairs to the third floor are steep.

### ***Reasonable adjustments***

There is insufficient room to put in a ramp by the corridor stairs and so it is not feasible to alter the corridor levels or width due to the house layout.

### **Route to Second Floor**

The second floor is accessed by stairs. The fire doors open outwards. There are stairs along the corridor. The toilet is not adapted for the disabled.

### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

There is insufficient room to put in a ramp by the corridor stairs and so it is not feasible to alter the corridor levels or width due to the house layout.

### **The Centre Staircase**

These stairs are very narrow and consist of 38 steps with narrow turning space.

### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

It would be impossible to make any worthwhile adjustments.

### **Main Stairs to First Floor**

These stairs are the central Historic Visual Feature of Coombe Croft allowing access to first floor classrooms, Library and Learning Support.

### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

None to this staircase.

### **Access to the Hall/Changing area and Premises Office**

Access to the hall is via one step. The doors open inwards or outwards. Access to the premises office is via double doors. Access to the boys toilets is along a corridor and access to the changing rooms is a large single door.

### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

Ramp to Hall. There is insufficient room to provide a disabled toilet in this area.

### **Access to Dining Room**

Access from the outside is via Stone steps that lead from the Terrace. A ramp requires 1200mm of width. The steps are 2000mm wide which would allow only 800mm of step to be retained. This is a major route at lunch times.

### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

A ramp could be constructed but due to the height change it would either need to be very long or in sections and the garden would have to be altered.

### **Terrace to Playground**

There is a ramp to the main playground and a ramp from the main playground to the astro turf. The access from the ground level of the lower school to the adventure area is level.

### **Playground to Adventure Play area**

Using the ramp from the playground, along the centre terrace and down the side slope of the far garden area, through the gate. This also allows access to a side door into the Lower School. There is a disabled toilet on the ground floor of this building.

### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

There is insufficient width to install a ramp to the adventure area from the playground. If needed access can be obtained via the side astro turf.

### **Route to Lower School and PAH**

Access to the Lower School is via the side hall gate and paved pathway to the doors to the Lower School building. The doors to this building are automated. There are steps down to the Reception classrooms. There is a lift access to the right of the hallway in the Lower School which accesses both floors used for teaching purposes.

Access to the Lower school can be via the playground.

### ***Reasonable Adjustment***

None required

### **Route to Science**

Access is via the side hall gate down a paved pathway. There is access to the downstairs science laboratory, however a small lip has to be negotiated. The second floor access is via a staircase. There are no toilets in this block.

### ***Reasonable Adjustment***

The stairs are very narrow. A stair lift to the first floor could be fitted, but this would restrict a two way flow.

### **Route to ALC and Year 3 -5 changing rooms and toilets**

There is one step into this building. There are two steps up and two steps down to the younger boys changing and toilet facilities. There is an outside access to the playground but this is via a stone staircase.

### ***Reasonable Adjustment***

A portable ramp can be provided for access to the ALC. However due to the width of the outside path installing a permanent ramp is not feasible.

It is not possible due to the configuration of the staircase and building to gain access to the toilets and changing area from inside this building or from outside for a person in a wheelchair.

### **Routes from George Road to the Sports Grounds in Worcester Park.**

Transportation is by the school coach to the sports grounds and for home games. There is a disabled lift in this coach and an area for a wheelchair. The away games are by school minibus, these have disabled access.

#### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

None needed for access to sports grounds. A wheelchair user would not be participating in a rugby, football or cricket match. Year Groups are mixed for home and away games and a disabled pupil would continue to be with his year groups at the school pitches.

#### **Sports Grounds**

The driveway is laid with shingle. There is a paved pathway from the car park to the pavilion. There is a ramp into the pavilion and disabled toilet in the building.

#### ***Reasonable Adjustments***

None needed.

### **CONCLUSION**

This report by examining "Routes" clearly shows the major problems that exist at Rokeby in providing adequate access to areas in and around the school.

Consideration must also be given to the physical dimensions of the learning areas, some of which are so small, a wheelchair would not be able to manoeuvre to participate in normal class activities.

Some of the corridors are so narrow a wheelchair would completely block areas used frequently by the majority.

As part of our fire prevention resources at present two fire doors automatically close which would trap a wheelchair user unless they were accompanied by a full-time carer.

Normal fire doors are by the very nature of their construction heavy, especially the doors in the Music Suite.

This school has a caring ethos and we support fully the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act. If required funding would be made available to make reasonable adjustments, but as this audit makes clear we have little scope for practical physical change that would give better access without embarking on major capital projects.

The School is basically an old family house that over the years has been converted into the format we see today.

Access to certain parts (especially the top floor of the main school) are very narrow.

Classes and facilities range over three levels with narrow corridors and steps. Old fittings that make the fabric of the school so attractive do not lend to modern conversions.