



## Beths Grammar School Accessibility Policy and Plan

### 1. AIMS

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- 1.1 Increase the extent to which students with protected characteristics can participate in the school curriculum
- 1.2 Improve the physical environment of the school to enable students with protected characteristics, to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- 1.3 To improve the delivery to students with protected characteristics of written information which is provided to students who are not disabled
- 1.4 To provide equality of access to the building and use of facilities to all staff, adult users and visitors.

Beths Grammar School aims to treat its students, staff and visitors fairly and with respect. Its objectives are to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and to promote positive attitudes to all those who have protected characteristics.

### 2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This document meets the requirements of [schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010](#).

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled 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 undertake normal day to day activities. The law on disability discrimination works in only one direction; it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

Protected characteristics include age, gender reassignment, disability, marriage & partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairment such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

### **3. THE SCHOOL SITE**

Much has been achieved over a number of years through building projects, improvements and refurbishment with accessibility principles central to designs including:

- The Individual Educational Needs (IEN) Department is located on the ground floor in an area close to a ramp and disabled parking
- The administration building is easily accessible and access to the adjoining Performing Arts area is via a ramped corridor. Reception is located at the front of the site and has low counter access and a hearing loop. There is designated parking for disabled persons.
- The ICT resource rooms (ICT 4 & 5) offer opportunities for all to experience new teaching and learning approaches. The centre provides a base for independent learning and research during, and beyond, the school day. Care has been taken to make physical access as easy as possible.
- There is a passenger lift in the science block
- The Conference Room and millennium conference centre are easily accessible and have a hearing loop
- There is clear signage around the site
- There are accessible toilets and changing facilities around the site
- Every classroom has an interactive whiteboard or screen
- There is a continuing programme of internal and external decoration
- There are additional handrails by stairs.

### **4. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

When improvements are made to the site/buildings, the school will seek to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are met. The environment is adapted to the needs of the students as required and includes:

- Ramps
- Dropped kerbs
- Passenger lift
- Disabled parking bays
- Disabled toilets
- Changing facilities

Measures in place to address external issues include:

- Keeping external routes, including steps and ramps, clean, unobstructed and free from surface water, snow and ice
- Ensuring the car park facilities benefit all users
- Checking that major thoroughfares and facilities are kept unlocked during the working day
- Ensuring security arrangements assist accessibility
- Making available auxiliary aids such as portable ramps, as necessary.

Measures in place to address internal issues include:

- Wheelchair space is available in seating areas
- Appropriately experienced staff are available to cater for individual needs
- Storage does not obstruct circulation space and toilets
- Cleaning and polishing does not produce a slippery surface
- Trip hazards are removed or resolved
- Access between movable tables in the canteen area.

Regular maintenance provided includes:

- Maintaining doors, door closers and ironmongery
- Maintaining ventilation and heating equipment
- Replacing blown bulbs, tubes and starter motors
- Keeping windows, lamps and blinds clean to maximise lighting.

The long-term objective is to review disabled access to all school buildings and includes investigating the feasibility of providing access to the top floor of the science and main teaching blocks. In the short-term, and if the need were to arise, room timetabling would be adjusted to an accessible area on a permanent basis.

Gradual adjustments will be made to buildings/rooms to accommodate different needs as they present themselves.

## **5. THE CURRICULUM**

At Beths you will find an ethos in which working hard and wanting to achieve are the norm. We are ambitious for the young people in our care and seek to help them to secure the very best outcomes of which they are capable. Beths is also a supportive, harmonious and caring environment. We respect and celebrate the diversity that exists among our students and staff. The school is renowned for its enviable co-curricular enrichment programme that, through sport, the arts and music, clubs and societies, nurtures the whole person.

Our inclusive ethos is encapsulated in our values. These were agreed by a panel of students, staff and governors and include Excellence, Community and Respect.

We aim to encourage:

- High aspirations and achievement
- High standards
- A strong work ethic and dedication
- Embracing technology
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Growing in confidence
- Effective communication
- Enjoyment of learning
- Tolerance
- Freedom
- Building of positive relationships
- Development of the whole person
- Social community and cohesion
- Creating and making the most of opportunities.

Beths Grammar School aims to include all students, including those with protected characteristics, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this include:

- Having high expectations of all students

- Finding ways in which all students can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music and drama
- Planning out-of-school activities including all school trips and excursions so that students with protected characteristics can participate
- Devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for students with protected characteristics
- Raising awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through training and thereby enabling staff to continually update and increase their knowledge and understanding of the needs of all students to remove any barriers to learning
- The provision of a specialist SEND department
- The PHSE curriculum encompasses diversity and the equality act and is continually reviewed to improve the delivery of information
- Continuous communication (to work in partnership) with external agencies and parents thus creating and evaluating individual support plans
- Medical needs handbook circulated to staff with recommendations of support

Beths Grammar school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, which means schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against students because of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief. Beths works in co-operative and productive partnership with the Local Authority and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners and to explore how different needs can be met most effectively. By completing the Bromley/Bexley Nursing Service Template review we provide for a better understanding of us by them. Beths Grammar regularly reviews and evaluates the breadth and impact of the support given/offered or accessible.

The school will involve a range of stakeholders, including its disabled students, parents and members of its wider community, in accessibility planning and will incorporate their views into its scheme. It will review the ways in which further improvements may be made to improve the involvement of disabled students, staff and parents year on year.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

## **6. DELIVERY OF INFORMATION**

Beths Grammar School uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This includes:

- Improved signage and external access for visually impaired people
- The provision of key documents in a larger typeface
- Use of ICT to support students with disabilities in the classroom including electronic devices that facilitate writing for those with need or temporarily injured.

The school medium-term objective is to ensure all students can see and hear lessons and participate fully in lessons. Beths Grammar will:

- Provide improved signage where necessary
- Provide read-aloud technology or in a different language
- Improve delivery of information to individuals with disabilities.

The school's long-term objective is to:

- Undertake an audit of the classrooms and other learning spaces to ensure the position of screens/boards and sound facilities are optimised
- Research sources of alternative formats, including costings, using RNIB guidelines
- Research high visibility options on the website
- Add a statement about the availability of other formats of documents
- Ensure all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats
- Consult with students to review their experience
- Research new technologies for individuals with specific learning difficulties or any hearing or visual difficulties
- Ensure sound facilities are optimised for subjects such as music, MFL i.e. portable hearing loops, adapted headphones.

## **7. GENERAL**

Beths Grammar School also aims to include all members of the school community, including those with disabilities by:

- Providing written information for students with disabilities in a form which is user friendly
- Using language which does not offend in all its literature and make staff and students aware of the importance of language
- Removing and/or changing signage when departments relocate
- Providing accurate information on facilities prior to/on arrival
- Revising literature on a regular basis
- Ensuring a permanently staffed position is available for reception and to contact emergency services during working hours
- Updating maps of buildings following changes
- Replacing signs correctly after redecoration
- Taking disabled persons into account when reviewing policies.

## **8. MONITORING**

Beths Grammar School recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that students with protected characteristics are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

*Reviewed Spring 2023  
Next scheduled review date Spring 2026*