

# Rowdeford School Accessibility Plan

2015-2018



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# Our Mission Statement, Aims and Vision for Inclusion

## Mission Statement

"To be at the forefront of specialist education; providing excellent learning opportunities in inspirational environments and developing core values, communication and independence"

## School Aims

1. To enable our pupils, through a values-based curriculum, to become citizens who contribute positively to wider society
2. To set high expectations for the academic, social and personal development of all members of the school community within a supportive, caring, safe, challenging and inspiring learning environment, in which every individual can meet their full potential.
3. To ensure that pupils receive provision that is at the forefront of specialist education.
4. To develop in pupils social, moral, spiritual and cultural attributes helping them towards a happy and successful adult life.
5. To teach pupils essential communication, literacy, numeracy, life and vocational skills, helping them towards a full and independent adult life.
6. To develop an interest in, and motivation for lifelong learning.
7. To enable pupils to develop their independent, collaborative and creative skills.
8. To raise self-esteem and confidence, and to empower pupils to become valued and valuable members of the community, both local and global.
9. To ensure positive partnerships with families based on mutual trust and respect.

## Vision for Inclusion

Our vision for inclusion is for every pupil in our school to achieve the aims set out above, both in school and within their local community. Also, for pupils' unique needs to be recognised and met as soon as possible, which is achieved through development of highly effective transition programmes, both as they join the school and prepare to leave to move on to the next phase of education. Our Accessibility Plan intends to achieve this vision by empowering these young people to achieve all that they can.

We believe that our parents, carers and school should work together to provide the best and most accessible opportunities for our pupils, and we will do all we can to ensure that any barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude are removed.

We will ensure that we:

- continue to develop our school culture, policies and practice in order to include all our pupils;
- access the right training and ongoing professional development to enable our continued focus on the process of further developing inclusion;
- develop our inclusive approach on respect for difference and a commitment to building relationships that benefit every child and young person;
- offer all our pupils excellence, choice, flexible and appropriate personalised support, and facilitate the inclusion of their views.

In the future, we intend to ask our pupils and their parents/carers about 'Inclusion' via annual questionnaires. Their responses will help us to continue to develop our Accessibility Plan.

# Rowdeford School - Accessibility Plan Statement

2015-2018

## National Background

Improving access to education and educational achievement for disabled pupils<sup>i</sup> is essential to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation in society, access to employment opportunities and inclusion within mainstream education.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 amended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by introducing new duties on Local Authorities (LA) and Schools in relation to disabled pupils and prospective pupils. From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. The main duties are not to treat disabled pupils less favourably and to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage. Additional provision under the new Equality Act 2010 was introduced in September 2012, and relates to the requirement for schools to provide Auxiliary Aids for disabled pupils subject to the Reasonable Adjustment duty.

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) introduced the duty to promote disability equality from December 2006. This duty applies to EY settings, schools and LAs. Schools and LAs have a planning duty to prepare and publish accessibility strategies and access plans in order to increase over time the accessibility of school buildings, and access to education and information for disabled pupils. Schools' Accessibility Plans should also consider access to after-school activities and Extended School activities if they are based on their school site.

## Key National Documents

SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010010.htm>

Children and Families Bill 2013

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/childrenandfamilies.html>

Draft legislation on Reform of provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (TSO September 2012)

Removing Barriers to Achievement

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20080906003404/http://teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/senstrategy/>

Equality Act 2010 (Schedule 10)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>

## Our School Context

Rowdeford is a successful, forward-looking, secondary, co-educational special school for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties, of whom up to 16 may board. Ofsted reported the school as being 'Good' in 2016 and the school is highly regarded in the community. The main school is housed in a Georgian building and there are new classrooms and a sports hall, which are set within beautiful and extensive grounds.

Through our aims referred to above, we will endeavour to develop learners who are:

- self-aware, and have the necessary skills and knowledge to take on challenges of the future;
- confident learners who are adaptable and resilient, can think independently and communicate effectively;
- self-directed and can question, reflect and persevere, active contributors, able to work effectively with others.

In order to achieve our aims and support our inclusion principles, our school will focus holistically on:

- Access to the Curriculum
- Access to the Environment
- Engagement with children, young people, and their parents/carers
  - Access to Information (both written and electronic)

## Access to the Curriculum

In line with the Professional Standards Framework for Teachers (September 2016), and a quality first teaching approach, we will endeavour to:

- adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils;
- know when and how to *differentiate* appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively;
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these;
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development;
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them<sup>ii</sup>.
- 

We will:

- plan for and teach children with learning needs through a range of proven interventions;
- use a range of inclusive teaching strategies;
- be fully conversant with the range of catch-up programmes;
- take an informed and independent view of the possible literacy and mathematics interventions that are available;
- ensure the effective supported transition of all young people, with particular attention to the needs of vulnerable children;
- evaluate the outcomes of our current additional provision and the value for money it provides (including the use of Pupil Premium and Catch-Up Grants);
- make informed decisions about how best to target available funding in the future;
- recognise and unlock the potential of pupils and develop a strong culture for success;

- enhance the life chances of all children;
- provide effective professional development for staff and governors;
- keep parents and carers informed.

## **Monitoring**

Actions and developments will be monitored by the Senior Leadership

## **Access to the Environment**

Rowdeford School is aware that reasonable adjustments may be needed to the classroom and school to create safe spaces, calming areas and workstations for pupils with Autism Spectrum (AS) or Behavioural or Emotional Difficulties. Since September 2012 there has also been a requirement to provide Auxiliary Aids for Disabled pupils subject to the Reasonable Adjustment duty<sup>iii</sup>.

We also ensure that an accessible building audit is completed every 5 years and that any recommendations contained within the audit are given due consideration by the Finance and Premises Committee. Approved action points are incorporated into budget plans, subject to sufficient funds being available. This is reviewed and updated annually. The most recent audit was completed in July 2015.

We access the best advice and guidance from the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) for supporting pupils on the Autism Spectrum, including a 'Sensory Audit for the School Environment' as well as referring to the SWASS (Support in Wiltshire for Autism: School Strategies/Early Years and Foundation version).

We also engage with support services from health and education who can advise about adaptations to the inside and outside environment for individuals to help include pupils with sensory integration needs. This includes advice and guidance relating to:

- issues of physical space and how to reduce distractions;
- opportunities to present information visually;
- providing organisational strategies to complete activities;
- having visual structure to help with organisation, increase clarity and provide instruction.

## **Cognition and Learning**

We will:

- aim to follow the guidance provided in the Wiltshire Indicators and Provision Document (WIPD), which relates to children and young people with Special Educational Needs in Wiltshire's Early Years settings, primary, secondary and special schools;
- provide relevant and appropriate advice, training and assessment;
- follow the guidance outlined in SWASS (Support in Wiltshire for Autism: School Strategies)
- to ensure that we comply with the Enhanced Learning Provision guidance for pupils on the autism spectrum, e.g. provide a social area for unstructured times and life skills work, including an option to eat lunch in this area; provide specialist individualised resources and a flexible timetable.

## **Communication and Interaction**

We will:

- ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to existing classrooms and school accommodation to reduce distractions, such as creating individual work stations;
- consider how the environment may cause sensory overload (e.g. lighting, noise levels, odours) and take steps to minimise this for pupils experiencing difficulty;
- maintain systems to assist safe travel around the school for pupils who are socially vulnerable e.g. accompanying the pupil from lesson to lesson;
- follow the guidance outlined in SWASS (Support in Wiltshire for Autism: School Strategies);
- ensure that specialist advice and training is sought from the Specialist SEN Service and Educational Psychology Service regarding curriculum access and wider issues, whenever necessary;
- ensure that we refer to the Enhanced Learning Provision guidance for pupils on the autism spectrum, e.g. provide a social area for unstructured times and life skills work, including an option to eat lunch in this area; provide specialist individualised resources and a flexible timetable.

## **Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development**

We will:

- uphold Equality Act 2010 legislation, which states that schools are required to ensure disabled children are not treated unfavourably because of a reason arising as a consequence of their disability, and to make adjustments to ensure they can access all the benefits of their education and not be placed at a disadvantage. These protections apply equally to policies on behaviour, including blanket discipline policies which do not take account of disabled children's different needs; <sup>iv]</sup>
- include the need to look at underlying causes of behaviour and in particular unmet learning needs when developing a school Behaviour Policy. If a child or young person has special educational needs or a disability, policy should include the need to conduct a review of the appropriateness of the provision being made for them
- consider ways in which we can gain the views of pupils who have difficulties with social and emotional aspects of learning to inform plans for strategies and practice that can enhance their social and emotional well-being and mental health.

## **Sensory /Physical**

We will:

- Take into account the sensory needs of our pupils when developing new areas (e.g. trim trail) to ensure all pupils are able to maximise their enjoyment and appreciation of the school site;
- Provide opportunity to all pupils to access the sensory room, and ensure the equipment is well maintained at all times

## **Physical/Medical**

We will ensure that:

- handrails are provided that do not end before the top or bottom step;
- a suitable space is available for therapy or medical needs;
- school staff are available to liaise with visiting professionals;
- staff attend manual handling training, where manual handling is a component of the support being provided;

- the installations of height adjustable desks/work surfaces are incorporated into the specification of any new classrooms;
- pupils with mobility difficulties are taught in accessible teaching rooms;
- venues for educational trips and visits are accessible for pupils with mobility difficulties;
- A suitable medical room is identified and made accessible to all pupils as needed, which will offer privacy and comfort.

## Visual

We will ensure that:

- we carry out painting of edges of step and ramps
- general and room signs are easy to read and at the correct height
- door handles are of good contrast,
- PE equipment such as benches, where possible, will be made to contrast against the floors/walls of gym
- lighting on stairwells is adequate
- handrails are provided that do not end before the top or bottom step
- we have systems in place to assist safe travel around the school site e.g. keep corridors clear of lockers, bags and clutter; have one way travel systems in narrow corridors
- we regularly audit the school site for potential trip hazards such as loose drain fittings or curled up carpet edges.

## Hearing

We will:

- ensure all new building complies with the *Acoustic Design of Schools* guidance (BB93<sup>v</sup> )
- provide rubber feet or 'hush ups' for chairs in classrooms where hearing impaired students are studying
- consider the acoustic environment and take steps to improve the sound and reverberation levels, by use of carpets, curtains, hush boards, ceiling tiles, close fitting doors etc.
- consider installing soundfields into new and existing classrooms as these benefit all pupils, improve behaviour and concentration, and take away the strain on teachers' voices
- ensure that teachers attend the training provided by the Advisory Teacher for Hearing Impairment that is provided free of charge to schools with HI pupils.

## Buildings

Our school will endeavour to ensure that:

- all new or remodelled buildings for SEN accommodation include withdrawal spaces, work stations or alternative classroom layouts, and internal or external time out spaces, including all necessary detailed design features;
- building improvements to help individual pupils will be progressed where individually appropriate and an efficient use of resources; minor adaptations to existing classrooms or buildings may be undertaken if it will provide for the needs of an individual pupil and where there is clearly an efficient use of resources;
- reasonable adjustments are made, including the new requirement to provide Auxiliary Aids for Disabled pupils subject to the Reasonable Adjustment duty<sup>vi</sup> These adjustments will also take aspects of Health and Safety into account where relevant and appropriate, for example, in relation to issues of buildings' security;
- we have an up to date Accessibility Plan that has been agreed by the Governing Body

## **Admissions**

Our school will not take any action that might discourage the admission of any pupil with a disability. However, our residential boarding provision is located on the first and second floors of a Georgian building, which is not currently accessible to wheel chair users. Local Authority staff will continue to be involved in assisting with issues regarding individual placements.

### **Monitoring**

Actions and developments will be monitored by the Senior Leadership

## **Engagement with young people, parents/carers and partners**

Rowdeford School recognises that our parents and carers have a key partnership role to play in the development of appropriate services that meet the needs and aspirations of our school and the local community<sup>vii</sup>. We will continue to seek their views through a number of methods including annual questionnaires, Annual Review meetings, PEP meetings, Parents' Evenings and other opportunities as appropriate.

### **Monitoring**

Actions and developments will be monitored by the Senior Leadership

## **Access to Information**

Rowdeford School recognises that we have a statutory duty to provide Accessible Information to our parents/carers and pupils, and we will strive to meet the most effective levels of communication with all members of our school community.

We will endeavour to make all written communication suitable to the intended audience, including pupils, parents and other stakeholders by

- explaining the measures that we are taking to promote accessibility to the curriculum and environment in our prospectus;
- providing accessible information for disabled pupils, and their parents/carers, including disabled parents/carers;
- where necessary, providing sign language interpretation for parents, or information in alternative formats, e.g. using a specialised computer programme for visually impaired;
- being clear about where parents/carers can obtain paper copies of information should parents and carers not have access to the internet.

### **Monitoring**

Actions and developments will be monitored by Senior Leadership

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

(a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

(b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

The term 'special educational needs' (SEN) has a legal definition:

"A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her"

*(Draft legislation on Reform of provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs: September 2012)*

## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN: 2015-2018 ROWDEFORD SCHOOL

### Plan Statement

1. The Rowdeford School Accessibility Plan has been written in conjunction with pupils, staff and governors of the school and will advise other school planning documents. The plan has been reviewed to incorporate the key objectives contained within 'Accessibility Strategy for Educational Settings in Wiltshire' (Wiltshire Council 2013) and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes, and provide a projected plan for the three year period ahead of the next review date.
2. The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the LA will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.
3. We are committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action with regard to the Equality Act 2010 and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.
4. The Rowdeford School Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for pupils, staff and visitors to the school in a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant and timely actions to:
  - increase access to the **curriculum** for all pupils, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of duties under the Equalities Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits;
  - improve access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary - this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and also covers the provision of specialist or **auxiliary aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;

- improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe;

5. Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

6. The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents

- Curriculum Policy
- Equality Objectives
- Single Equality Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Health & Safety Policy (including off-site safety)
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- School Development Plan
- Asset Management Plan / Suitability Survey
- School Brochure / Prospectus and Vision Statement
  - Staff complaints procedure
  - The Accessibility Strategy for Educational Settings in Wiltshire 2013-2016

7. The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility is based on the Access Audit undertaken in July 2015 (on behalf of Wiltshire Council) and subsequent areas identified by staff, pupils and others. It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the on-going period.

8. The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website and made available in printed format upon request

9. The Accessibility Plan will be monitored by Senior Leadership and reviewed annually by the FGB.

10. The Accessibility Plan may be monitored by Ofsted during Inspection processes in relation to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## Recent School Developments:

Date	Development
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electric sockets relocated in Food Technology to be accessible to wheel chair users</li> <li>• Purchase of a range of specialist stationery equipment to assist pupils in developing fine motor skills</li> <li>• Overhead hoist purchased for use in Physiotherapy room</li> <li>• Hoist purchased so trampolining and Rebound Therapy is now accessible to all pupils</li> </ul>
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access improved to the entrance to the woodlands to ensure all pupils are able to participate in outdoor activities</li> <li>• Automatic door access installed at various locations around the school to enable wheelchair users to move around independently</li> <li>• Sound buttons installed outside rooms and offices to enable visually impaired pupils to identify the room</li> <li>• Thorough research and risk assessments completed to enable all pupils who wish to attend residential trips</li> <li>• Computer Club relocated as necessary to ensure no pupil denied access</li> <li>• Outdoor 'trim trail' installed to include a sensory path which enables mobility impaired pupils to participate alongside their peers</li> <li>• External signage installed around the school which gives clear instruction and direction for movement around the site</li> </ul>
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A raised bed created in the Victorian walled garden to enable mobility impaired students to participate in horticulture and other garden activities</li> <li>• We adapted the annual review proformas and trialled these with Year 8 and then Year 7. Changes made ensure that the reports are accessible to the pupils themselves and ensure a clearer understanding of the information being imparted</li> <li>• Two Ticks Disability</li> <li>• Accessible Buildings Audit July 2015</li> <li>• All dining areas have a height adjustable table for use by mobile impaired pupils</li> </ul>
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An accessible ramp was installed at the entrance to the greenhouse to enable mobility impaired pupils access.</li> <li>• A range of power tools were purchased for use in DT to support pupils who required help with the development of motor skills</li> <li>• Ground floor office converted into a medical room. This provides a private, accessible space for immunisations and medical treatment</li> <li>• Purchased more iPads and reviewed the applications to ensure there is a good range available to support the needs of all pupils, particularly those who are unable to write</li> </ul>
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ramps to mobile classrooms have been restored to ensure good access for mobility impaired pupils</li> </ul>

## Future Developments:

Improve access to the curriculum							
Source	Issue	Possible solution	Approximate Cost	Source of funding	When?	Person responsible	Success criteria
Staff	Food technology room –work surfaces and sinks etc. too high – pupils unable to work as independently as they should	Install one height-adjustable sink  OR Relocate C&N to another classroom	£1,150 to purchase a sink plus installation costs  £10k - £15k	SENCO budget  External funding (grants)	Summer 2017  OR Summer 2018	NC/ OW  OR RL/OW	All students able to fully participate in Food technology lessons
Staff	Walled garden not fully accessible	Purpose build poly-tunnel	£1,500	External grants	2017-2018	JCz	Greenhouse fully accessible to mobility impaired pupils
Staff	Day trips: continue to improve on organisation to take into account physical needs of all pupils	Raising profile through staff training	None	N/A	Ongoing	NC	All trip organisers are fully aware of accessibility considerations when planning trips

### Improve access to the physical environment (including the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment)

Source	Issue	Possible solution	Approximate Cost	Source of funding	When?	Person responsible	Success criteria
Staff	Dining room difficult (but not impossible) to access in wheelchairs; overcrowding in 1 <sup>st</sup> sitting; Wheelchair users therefore eat hot dinners in assembly hall with packed lunches	To be discussed	Tbc	Tbc	Tbc	RL/OW	To be discussed
Staff	School office inaccessible to wheelchairs: mobility impaired students and staff unable to carry out office duties	To be discussed	Tbc	Tbc	Tbc	Tbc	Equal opportunities for all students and staff
Staff	Boarding units inaccessible	Develop purpose built accessible accommodation		Grants and school capital contribution	2019	HT/SBM	All students provided with the chance to board and develop their independent skills
Staff	Orchard Block: limited room for movement and insufficient space for cloakroom storage	????	????	????	????		
Staff	Access to woods inconsistent for mobility-impaired pupils (from Eco-Shelter to fire pit)	Install path suitable for wheelchairs	£5,000 (est.)	Grant or other external funding	2018	JCz/OW	All pupils are able to participate in woodland activities
Staff	Extend trim trail to incorporate sensory equipment and improved access to the site for mobility-impaired pupils	Install a path to access the trim trail and further enhance range of equipment	£6,000	FORS and other fund raising activities	2018-2019	RL	Equal participation

Governor	Staff room inaccessible to mobility-impaired individuals	Consider relocation elsewhere in school if the need arises					
SENCO	12 pupils on roll (Sept 17) who require adult support for self-care, including toileting	Install a Gerberit toilet system in the Physio room	~£5,000	DfE accessibility funding	2018/19	NC/OW	Pupils learn to independently use the toilet with dignity
<b>Improve the delivery of written information</b>							
<b>Source</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Possible solution</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>	<b>Source of funding</b>	<b>When?</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>
NC	Written information not always clear to pupils	Continue to use ICAN Secondary Talk programme and will develop use of symbols and pictures to aide understanding	Low – may have time implications	N/A	By July 2018	NC	

Signed: .....

Date: .....

*(Clerk to Governors)*