



**RYDE SCHOOL
WITH UPPER CHINE**

Accessibility Policy

Policy date:	September 2024	
Date of next review:	Summer Term 2024-25	
Owner(s):	JCH	
Approval body:	Head Master & Governors	
Intended audience:	Pupils, parents and staff	
ISI Regulatory Paragraph No:	Part 3 (0)	
Location (tick as appropriate):	Website	✓
	Parent Portal	✓
	Staff Portal	✓
	Inspection folder	✓

Introduction

Ryde School is committed to affording opportunities to pupils, their parents, employees and visitors who are disabled and to make reasonable adjustments to improve participation of those who are disabled in all aspects of school life.

This policy is designed to ensure compliance with relevant legislation on Special Educational Needs and Disability, including the Equality Act 2010. This policy should be seen alongside the School's SEND policy, Equality of Opportunity Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Equality and Diversity Statement which all deal with specific elements of accessibility.

We take a fully inclusive approach to our staff recruitment and aim to appoint the best person based on their skill set and qualifications regardless of any disability he or she might have.

Ryde School will -

- Maintain and drive a positive culture to ensure inclusion of disabled people in all the activities of the School whether as pupils, staff or visitors.
- Train members of staff to understand the types of disabilities and how to support employees and pupils who are disabled.
- Adopt user-friendly procedures for considering admissions from parents of disabled children, including as boarders, being prepared to make reasonable adjustments in the admissions process where appropriate.
- Implement and review the Accessibility Plan with the aim of increasing the accessibility of the School's curriculum, and to improve the physical environment of the School and to improve access to information for our employees, pupils and prospective pupils. This Plan is reviewed and updated annually by the Senior Leadership Group and every three years by the Governing Body.

Disability

A disability is a *"physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term, adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activity"* (**Disability Discrimination Act 1995, confirmed in the 2010 Equality Act**). In determining whether individual circumstances constitute disability we will usually make reference to definitions in the 2010 Equality Act.

By way of further explanation -

- Physical disability includes medical conditions for which a person may, for example, need to use a wheelchair, for example cerebral palsy or brittle bones.
- A mental disability is a recognised mental illness which has been diagnosed, a severe learning difficulty or a psychiatric illness.
- "Long-term" means a period of 12 months or longer.
- An "adverse effect on day-to-day activity" means having a 'significant and material' effect on the following: Mobility; manual dexterity; physical coordination; continence; ability to lift carry or move everyday objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; and perception of the risk of physical dangers.

Case law indicates that “significant and material” means “more than minor or trivial”.

Other disabilities which may amount to disability include -

- Severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks. (But not tattoos or piercings).
- Progressive conditions which will result in a substantial long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activity.
- A controlled impairment, i.e. a person with a prosthesis, or a person with drug-controlled epilepsy or diabetes.
- A history of impairment, for example a person who used to be disabled and has recovered, for example a person with a previous mental illness.

Disability Discrimination

We will not treat a pupil or employee or a prospective pupil or employee less favourably on the grounds of disability *without justification* -

- In the arrangements for determining **admission, visiting or employment procedures**.
- In the terms on which a place at the School is offered.
- By refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission or employment.
- In the provision of **education and associated services**.
- By **excluding** a person on the grounds of their disability.
- By **victimising** a person with a disability.
- By failing to take steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison with non-disabled persons.

Admission Procedure for Pupils

The School will be open to applications from any prospective pupil with a physical and/or mental impairment. Grounds for admission will be guided on whether or not a pupil will be able to cope with the academic demands and structure of school life at Ryde School. The School must feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her ability and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers. It is only in this way that the pupil will emerge from the school confident and enriched. For entry into the Sixth Form this would usually mean securing at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grade 9-5 (and specific qualification for the courses on offer) and the expectation of that level of achievement will guide us in offering places lower down the School.

The registration or admission form will enable the parents to give details of their child's disability.

Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the pupil's ability and aptitude.

The School will treat every application from a disabled pupil in a fair, open-minded way.

The School will, if appropriate, request from the parents or previous School full details in the form of medical reports, educational psychologist reports and any other report which assesses the child's disability so that the School can make an assessment of the adjustments that would be needed in order to provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs.

The applications will be considered on the basis that all '**reasonable adjustments**' have been or can be made by the School in order to cater for the child's disability and the opportunity to meet and discuss how this might work with the SENCO is part of that application process. (See definition below)

The School will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments were to be made, the School would not be able to provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs.

The School shall inform the parents of their decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments they are going to make or give reasons why the offer of the place is declined.

Reasonable Adjustments for Pupils

The School is legally required to make 'reasonable adjustments' in order to cater for a child's disability. The School is not legally required to make any alterations to the physical features of the School. Consideration will be considered as to auxiliary aids and services that the School can reasonably provide to support the disability. This might, for example, be a wheelchair or adjusted seating, or technology that can assist in reading and writing.

The School's buildings have developed over the past 100 years. They are a mixture of purpose built and adapted accommodation. While every effort is made to adapt and modernise facilities, the nature of some of the buildings can lead to inflexibility in usage (for instance it is not possible to install lifts in the Junior School or Millfield Boarding House). In addition, the School has fixed teaching areas for most subjects, based on the principle that it is invaluable to centralise subject facilities. This requires pupils to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs without lifts.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Pastoral Committee Care meet regularly to review pupils on the Welfare registers and ensure the lists are correct and support ongoing and appropriate. The Deputy Head (Academic) meets regularly with the SENDCO to ensure the same.

It is not hard to conclude that any pupil with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether from access to some or all of the educational facilities the school offers. Nor can these matters be reasonably remedied without making major alterations to physical features of the School at prohibitive cost. Even the fruition of long-term plans can only help to ease, rather than solve the problem.

The School will always seek to make reasonable adjustments and shall inform the pupils and parents of the reasonable adjustments that the School is able to make for that pupil, which may typically include –

- Making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room.
- Allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam or internal exams.

- Providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment.
- Making timetable and room allocation adjustment to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building.
- Arranging a variety of accessible sports and extra-curricular activities.

If parents are willing to pay for auxiliary aids and services that the School does not feel able to commit to, having considered costs and practicalities, then the School will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided. It is the aim of the School to get pupils to a stage where in class support is not necessary after Year 6. For both physical reasons of space, and access to the curriculum, it is not felt possible to cater for pupils needing in class support after Year 6 although Wave 1, 2 and 3 support is provided, 1 and 2 at no additional cost (see SEN policy.)

Disclosure

Parents will be requested to provide the School with copies of the child's latest medical report, educational psychologist's report and any other information regarding the child's disability.

If, following the offer of the place, it is discovered that the School has not received full disclosure of information relating to the child's disability and the School is not able to make reasonable adjustments for those disabilities, then the School may withdraw the offer of a place, or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a pupil.

Review Procedure

Parents may request a review if the School decides it is unable to offer their child a place on the grounds of disability. The request must be made as soon as possible and in any event within five working days of the decision being notified to the parents. The Head will advise as to the procedure under which such a review will be conducted which will usually follow the complaints procedure.

On rare occasions it may be necessary to review the continuation of a pupil in the School because of initially undetected disability that manifests itself as a significant barrier to learning that reasonable adjustment cannot support. This is most likely to occur at transfer from Year 2 to Year 3, Year 6 to Year 7 or year 11 to the 6th form. Where this is potentially the case initial discussions will be had with parents at least six months before the time of transition.

Accessibility Plans

The School has prepared an Accessibility Plan which is available, on request, to all parents and staff and is kept in the school shared area. The Plan is reviewed annually by the SLG and includes consideration of how the School proposes to –

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils which is usually provided in writing to pupils who are not disabled.

The annual review by the SLG will:

1. Review the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils, staff and prospective pupils and other users of the site who are disabled. This review will include the following:
 - a) Admissions and transfer procedures for pupils.
 - b) The curriculum, teaching and learning.
 - c) Physical school environment (including the boarding houses.)
 - d) Extra-curricular and sports activities.
 - e) Staff training.
 - f) Arrangements at break and lunchtime.
 - g) Assessment and examination arrangements.
 - h) School discipline and sanctions.
 - i) Attendance and participation.
 - j) Preparing pupils for the next phase of their education.
 - k) Selection and recruitment of staff.
 - l) Arrangements for visitors to the School.
 - m) Presentation of information to pupils, staff and parents.
 - n) Communication of information about those with disabilities and means of support.
 - o) Ethos and attitudes in the School to people with disabilities.
2. Consider ways of improving the accessibility of its education to pupils and prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future, together with improvements to the physical access to the site for all users.
3. Update the school's Accessibility Plan every year on the basis of points 1 and 2.
4. Take time to consider any individual pupils or members of staff with specific needs (other than those covered by the SENCO) arising from their disability.
5. Ensure awareness and observance of the current provisions on the Accessibility Plan throughout the school.