

Bedales School Disability Policy & Accessibility Plan

INCLUDING EYFS

Implementation date: Autumn Term 2010

Date/term of last review: Autumn Term 2024

Author	Chair of Bedales School's Disability Committee
Review body (individual or group)	Bursar/Disability Committee
Approval Body	Board of Governors
ISI Regulatory Paragraph Number	Part 3 - 0
Next Review Period	Autumn Term 2025

Tick relevant box(es) ✓ how this Policy should appear:

Inspector Folder		✓
Website	Upload	✓
	Signpost	
Internal only		
Parent Portal		
For Students		

Bedales School Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan

Bedales School Disability Policy (updated 2024)

Bedales School complies with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010):

- Not to treat disabled students less favourably
- To make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students are not at a substantial disadvantage
- To draw up plans to show how, over time, Bedales School will increase access to education for disabled students (see Accessibility Plan)
- To comply with the Equality Act
- To prepare, publish, implement and report on an Accessibility Plan.

Admissions

Bedales is a selective school and welcomes all students who can make the most of the opportunities we offer and flourish in the caring environment of the school. Admission to the school depends upon a prospective student meeting the admissions criteria and the school must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective student to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the student's peers. This is so that there is every chance that he/she will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the student's time at the school.

The school's policy is to apply these criteria to all students and potential students regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make "reasonable adjustments" under the Equality Act.

The school asks parents to complete a disability form for prospective students at the time of application. In assessing any student or prospective student the school may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. The school cannot guarantee to make provision for the disability of a student if that disability has not been disclosed on the appropriate form. We advise parents of children with physical disabilities, or hearing or visual impairments, to discuss their child's requirements with Bedales School before he/she sits the entrance examination so that we can make adequate provision. Parents should provide a copy of an appropriate specialist report, such as a medical report, or psychological report to support any request for exam access arrangements.

Physical accessibility

One of the challenges that the school has (in common with many other schools) is its layout, which covers a wide area and consists of many separate and some historic and even listed buildings of several stories and without lifts. Another is the restrictions that can occur by having designated classrooms for each subject, based on the valid grounds of having all the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires students to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts.

The boarding facilities pose similar difficulties and to a greater degree. It is not hard to conclude that any student with impaired mobility may be put at a disadvantage by these challenges, if not prohibited altogether from access to some of the educational and other facilities the school offers. Nor can these matters be

remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to physical features of the school at prohibitive cost. Recently, significant alterations have improved physical access to some of the boarding facilities, and Bedales School is committed to a programme of continuous improvement, but the fruition of long-term plans can only go some way to ameliorate the position. It must also be understood that the acceptance of a place for entry at Pre-prep school, where the majority of facilities are accessible on one floor level, does not necessarily mean that provision can be made at Prep school or at Senior school.

Parents and prospective parents of students with disabilities may wish to obtain copies of Bedales School Accessibility Plan from the website. This shows the ways in which we plan to make our buildings progressively more accessible to disabled children, parents and visitors. Bedales School has an active monitoring policy and will do its best to make reasonable adjustments to take account of an individual student's needs within the constraints imposed by its historic buildings on a scattered site. As our buildings are upgraded, we are introducing facilities for wheelchair users and hearing loops where this is practicable.

The school will take every care in anticipating the needs of an individual by making reasonable adjustments. The school has a Disability Policy Review Committee (DPRC) which is chaired by the Head of Learning Support, Bedales School, and includes the Bursar, Head of Estates and Facilities and Learning/Academic Support representatives from the three schools and may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

The Disability Policy Review Committee meets to:

- Review the school's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect students and prospective students who are disabled;
- Make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of education in its many aspects to students or prospective students with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future;
- Review and update the Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan at least every year.

The Health Centre

Bedales School has a modern, fully staffed Health Centre which is open during school hours so that qualified help can be summoned immediately. At other times each boarding house has a qualified matron on duty. The school doctors hold 2 surgeries a week at Bedales; appointments can be made at other times at the Swan Surgery in Petersfield. The Health Centre team is always happy to discuss any student's health problems, as well as the management of any medical condition, with parents. In addition, the Prep school has matron's facilities and a qualified medical Matron who works alongside the pastoral care team.

Staff Training

Our teaching staff receive training on the learning needs of students with special education needs and disabilities. Teaching and support staff receive training about working with disabled students when appropriate.

Bedales Schools Accessibility Plan

Bedales School complies with the Equality Act 2010 in making every effort to increase accessibility for disabled students. The Accessibility Plan (below) has been written in order to support the school's efforts to fulfil this aim as part of this duty.

Bedales School aims to increase accessibility for all disabled people who use our facilities: Young people and adults, as students, employees, governors, parents, carers and other members of the community who might use school premises for leisure or other activities.

How we do this is recorded in a number of policies including:

- Disability Policy
- Learning Support Policy (Senior) SEN Policy (Bedales Pre-Prep and Prep)
- Bullying Policy
- Medical Policy
- Employment Policy

The first three documents describe Bedales School's policy for promoting equal opportunities for disabled students and students with learning difficulties; the fourth policy includes provision for students with medical needs. The fifth policy relates to staff employed by Bedales.

The Accessibility Plan is a practical tool for implementing the School's policies to give access to disabled students and to students with learning difficulties. It is therefore an important adjunct to this policy and is linked to our provision for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policies, which identify how we support students with disabilities in each school and how they access the curriculum. The accessibility plan identifies the actions Bedales School is taking to promote:

- Increasing access for disabled people to the school curriculum.
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools.
- Improving the delivery of information to disabled people.

As of September 2024, the Senior school has no students with Statements or Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). There are 80 students having individual support for special educational needs and disabilities and approximately 154 others being monitored. The predominant area of need at Bedales is Cognition and Learning, (Dyslexia/Dyspraxia) with other areas of need being Communication and Interaction, Sensory and/or Physical difficulties and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, ASD, ADHD and /or ADD.

The Prep school has 5 students with an EHCP. There are 32 being monitored, and 69 students having Learning Support. The predominant area of need is Cognition and Learning (Dyslexia/Dyspraxia) with other areas of need being Social, Emotional and Communication Difficulties ASD, ADHD, and/or Physical difficulties (2 students with Visual/Hearing Impairment).

The Pre-prep school has no students with EHCPs. There are 13 children being monitored, and 12 children having learning support. The predominant area of need at Pre-prep is Communication and Language (Speech, Language and Communication) with other areas of need being Cognition and Learning, (Dyslexia), Social, Emotional difficulties and Sensory Needs, ASD and/or ADHD.

In April 2021, the Prep school underwent a third-party survey to ascertain whether improvements could be made to the school environment for Visually Impaired Children. This was carried out by local council experts who advised numerous actions including step-edge and handrail marking, both inside and out. All actions were completed to their satisfaction and continue to be maintained.

Outline Accessibility Plan for Bedales School Action Plan 2024-2026

Item	Reason	Responsibility	Priority Status L/M/H	Current Status	Target Date	Comments Oct 2024
Annual Site inspection to review physical access to all existing buildings	To ensure safety and accessibility for all To inform decision re further items to be included in this 3-year plan	Head of Estates and Facilities in collaboration with Health & Safety Manager	High	New item	Easter 2024	In progress (Annual) Annual inspection completed Easter 2024
Improvement of steps at Prep school	To ensure safety and accessibility for all, and in particular for those with a visual impairment	Head of Estates and Facilities in collaboration with Health & Safety Manager	High	Item C/F from previous plan	Easter 2024	Repaint each stair nosing. Completed July 2024
Investigate and provide (where possible) ramp access at Prep school	To ensure safety and accessibility and especially to The Well	Head of Estates and Facilities in collaboration with Health & Safety Manager	High	Item C/F from previous plan	Easter 2024	Refurbish steps next to the girls fire escape to create ramp to The Well. Review with the Fire Risk assessor. Requires further investigation
Review and update maps	To ensure everyone has reference to an up to date, clearly labelled map of the site	Facilities	High	Review	March 2025	Ongoing
Service hearing loops to SLT, Theatre, Main	To provide a quality	Head of Estates and Facilities	Medium	Investigate current legal requirements	Easter 2024	In progress This will be tailored to

Outline Accessibility Plan for Bedales School Action Plan 2024-2026

Item	Reason	Responsibility	Priority Status L/M/H	Current Status	Target Date	Comments Oct 2024
Reception, Pre-prep and Prep Reception and Quad	experience for those with impaired hearing					individual needs
Provide ramp entrance to old Drama Studio	The current ramp is steep owing to the location of the entrance but can be improved to provide a better gradient and a different final location	Head of School, Bursar, Head of Estates and Facilities	Medium	C/F Include proper ramp access in refurbishment of building	2026	When this building is fully refurbished access will be addressed
Bedales – provide a wheelchair access to the Memorial Library	To enable suitable access to the grade one listed Memorial Library	Head of Estates and Facilities	High	Costs sought for step lifts		Cost remains prohibitive and project infeasible without adversely affecting the building