



DISABILITY POLICY	
Reviewed by:	Jan Brook – Head of Learning Support
Review Date:	September 2025
Next Review due:	September 2026

Disability Policy

Ballard School believes it is wrong to discriminate against disabled pupils or prospective pupils. It will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils and disabled prospective pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with those who are not disabled. It will work to improve staff understanding of the requirements of disabled pupils. It will develop and operate an accessibility plan. (This Policy, therefore, needs to be taken alongside the following two policies in particular: 'Reasonable Adjustments Policy for disabled pupils' and SEND 'accessibility plan'.)

Ballard School is located on a dispersed site of 34 acres with buildings spread over a considerable area. Many of the buildings have several storeys and some are without lifts. The system of having departmental areas, common to many schools, allows facilities for a subject to be concentrated in one place but demands the movement of pupils around the site between lessons, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts. It is not hard to conclude that any pupil with impaired mobility is going to be at a disadvantage and possibly prohibited altogether from access to some or all 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 the physical features of the school at a prohibitive cost. Even the fruition of long-term plans can only go some way to ameliorate the position.

The Governors, dependent on the financial viability of the School, provide funding for building maintenance and minor refurbishment. A proportion of money from this budget will be used within the pre-planned maintenance schedule to improve accessibility for pupils with impaired mobility.

ADMISSIONS

Ballard School does not select its pupils for admission on the grounds of ability. As detailed in the School's Admissions Policy, we admit a pupil based on the need and relevance of a Ballard education for a particular child, interview (face-to-face or via MS Teams), a 'taster day' (or days), previous school reports and a reference from the previous school. Formal entry tests are not usually utilised (and see the Reasonable Adjustments Policy).

To support pupils during external examinations, the School works closely with parents/guardians and pupils to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place. This communication may occur via MSP notifications, email, meetings, or telephone conversations. Any special arrangements are discussed and tailored on a subject-by-subject basis.

Parents are informed of the specific adjustments their child is eligible for in each subject, and they are given five working days to appeal any decisions regarding these provisions.

The School will apply to the JCQ, Pearson and/or CIE for approval to provide the following access arrangements, where appropriate:

- Large print exam papers
- Extra time
- Accessible exam rooms for pupils with impaired mobility
- Laptop use
- Readers or screen reader software
- Scribes or voice-to-text software

- Coloured paper
- Rest breaks
- Prompters
- Language modifiers
- Bilingual dictionaries

It will not normally be possible to provide an exam room with a hearing loop, but a teacher from within School resources knowledgeable in British Sign Language may be able to assist and oversee the exam.

CURRICULUM

It is recognised that the curriculum should be accessible for those with disabilities. Pupils who have EHC Plans or who have been diagnosed with a learning disability will be helped according to their needs (see the SEND Policy and Report, Reasonable Adjustments Policy). Pupils who are eligible for extra time, readers and scribes in exams will be given this, or access to equivalent assistive technology, in all internal as well as external exams and/or laptops for exams (for example) will be allowed and provided if recommended.

Buildings and Accessibility

It is the policy of the Governors to improve access to buildings and facilities over a period of time, as finances permit.

Vehicular Access

Disabled parking has been provided outside the main building and Senior School. Access to the Senior School may be gained through the front door with vehicular access available right up to the porch. The lift then provides access to the first floor. The Pre-Prep is accessed via the back entrance and the rear car park or through the double doors to the sports hall corridor.

Paths

Wheelchairs have access via paths to some areas of the School, but specific parts of buildings remain inaccessible. Lifts are in place and ramps have been constructed to make access possible, but routes may be circuitous. Visitors and parents with children who have mobility requirements are encouraged to discuss these with the staff before coming to site so they can be assisted.

Buildings

Many of Ballard School's buildings were erected in the late 19th or early 20th century before consideration was given to disabled access. These buildings include the Main House and the Kefford building (housing the Art department on the top floor). The Senior building has a lift, is accessible by road and has wheelchair access. There is now a stair lift on the reception for anyone to access the ground floor of the main house.

The Main House Reception has a disabled access lift installed outside to facilitate access to the ground floor of the main house.

Lavatories for the Disabled

Lavatories for the disabled are situated in the Senior School, Sports hall, pre prep and the Main House. There is now also a toilet on the first floor for staff and disabled pupils.

Education

As the School operates a policy of departmental areas, access to some subject teaching could be restricted or impossible. Wherever possible, lessons that are not equipment dependent could be moved to ground floor classrooms where access (for example) by wheelchair is possible. Each case would be judged on the circumstances pertaining at the time. (See Reasonable Adjustments Policy)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

All information relating to SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) can be accessed via the SEND Policy and SEND Information Report.

Medical

The School employs a full time School Nurse and the medical regulations are available in the Parental Handbook, published for parents every year. Signed parental consent is required for the School Nurse to administer prescribed medicines for medical disabilities such as asthma and diabetes. The School Nurse is also able to advise on the support required to meet the needs of pupils issued with EHCPs on medical grounds. The Catering Manager operates a policy of food being nut free and will provide meals for those with special dietary requirements.

The majority of classrooms have interactive whiteboards that ease the viewing of subject matter and all pupils from Year 6 to 11 have a laptop which is helpful to those with a visual impairment. Larger print course notes and examination papers are introduced as and when appropriate, along with electronic textbooks accessed through RNIB Bookshare.

The provision of hearing loops has been considered, but the geographical and dispersed nature of the classrooms, together with the grouping of subjects within specific buildings, it is neither practical nor financially viable for the School to install such provision at the current time. Also, more recent technological advancements have deemed this unnecessary for current hearing-impaired pupils. A hearing loop has been installed in the PAC to support with hearing accessibility for performances.

Welfare

All staff are informed of any pupils with disabilities and of the need to be aware of potential difficulties such as:

- Bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Non-integration into forms (see details of the Pastoral system in Parental Handbook)

The centre of the Pastoral system is the form tutor, who is the primary point of contact. The form tutor may then refer the matter to a member of the Pastoral Team.

Activities and Trips

The School encourages all pupils to attend a variety of trips and activities. These may be sporting, cultural or adventurous. At such venues the programme of activities can usually be modified to facilitate participation regardless of disability. The School is a strong advocate of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and is aware that it gives specific guidance to enable disabled pupils to achieve awards. Staffing ratios can be adjusted to provide extra help when necessary.

Occasionally it may be considered that the welfare of the pupil with a particular disability cannot be guaranteed due to the nature of the disability and the specific environment and the terrain. In such circumstances it may not be possible to provide a suitable level of supervision and care to enable the pupil to participate in the activity safely.

Jan Brook
Head of Learning Support
September 2026

Policy Log

Creation Date	Version	Author	Next Review
September 2021	1	Jan Brook	September 2022
September 2022	2	Jan Brook	September 2023
September 2023	3	Jan Brook	September 2024
September 2024	4	Jan Brook	September 2025
September 2025	5	Jan Brook	September 2025