

# Accessibility Policy

## May 2023

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Author (name & role title)			Amy Thain - School Business Manager
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V4	November 2021	Amy Thain	Further adjustments
V5	March 2023	Amy Thain	Amendments due to change of ownership

Heathermount School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. It should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core value of building confidence and preparing students for life.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Heathermount School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.
- A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- Educare (online CPD)

Heathermount School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Heathermount School.

The policy documents of Heathermount School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

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ORIGINAL

## **1. Heathermount's Mission**

- Heathermount will have uncompromising aspirations for every individual. Heathermount is a learning community where everyone will achieve their potential and beyond. Students will be nurtured and supported to achieve their very best and leave Heathermount equipped to face life's journey in the most positive way possible.
- Individual successes are celebrated, building confidence and a sense of worth as students and staff experience positive feedback and understand how to move forward in their learning.
- Heathermount will be outward looking, involving parents, and other stakeholders to broaden the impact of education on the lives of our children.

## **2. Aims and Purpose**

- Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan.
- The purpose of the plan is to increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum.
- The purpose of the plan is to improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities, and services provided.
- The purpose of the plan is to improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students.
- Our school aims to treat all its students fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all students without discrimination of any kind.
- The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.
- Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.
- The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.
- 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.

## **3. 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.
- 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 impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.
- Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

## **4. Learning opportunities**

Wherever possible, across the curriculum Heathermount School will create learning opportunities that:

- Ensure accessibility for all students, to enable them to attain high standards and achieve success, by:
  - varying content, teaching and learning styles,
  - communicating appropriately in a range of written and spoken languages and, where necessary communication systems,

- organising teaching groups appropriately
  - personalising learning appropriate to individual needs, strengths and difficulties and by making reasonable arrangements to overcome any barriers to learning or assessment that may affect individuals or groups
- Include positive images and role models of diverse people and work to counteract stereotyping.
- To ensure that minority voices are amplified and promoted.
- Use opportunities within the curriculum, such as tutor time; Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship education (PHSCE); Life Skills; English; history; geography; drama; and discussions, to explore and learn about equality issues, to encourage learners to value and respect others, and to challenge inappropriate attitudes and behaviours.

ORIGINAL

### 3. Action plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim	Current good practice <i>Include established practice and practice under development</i>	Objectives <i>State short, medium, and long-term objectives</i>	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability	Heathermount is a non-maintained special school that caters for students on the Autism spectrum and other associated disorders. All our students have an EHCP.	Heathermount will continue to review the curriculum to meet the needs of new and current students.	Heathermount will conduct a comprehensive review of the curriculum.	DS, CD, HA & ND	November 2023	Students will be able to have greater access to a wider range of subjects that help the individual progress to their next steps.
	We use resources tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum. Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities. Curriculum progress is tracked for all students. Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students. The curriculum is reviewed and adapted to ensure it meets the needs of all students.	Heathermount will continue to increase the staff's knowledge and understanding of specific disorders.	Heathermount will strengthen the use of CPD by using Twilight Sessions & INSET days.	CD & DS	November 2022. (completed)	Staff will have a greater knowledge and understanding of Autism and supporting students.
	Our school offers a differentiated curriculum and therapeutic interventions that include Speech and Language therapy, and Occupational Therapy and psychology assessments.	Heathermount will continue evaluating the provision of therapeutic interventions.	Heathermount will conduct a comprehensive review of the therapeutic interventions.	PP & DS	July 2024	Students will be able to have greater access to a wider range of subjects that help the individual progress to their next steps.

Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	<p>The new buildings meet the needs of students as required. The main house needs to be assessed for improvements.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ramps</li> <li>• Front door width</li> <li>• Disabled toilets and changing facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>Heathermount and Cavendish Education will continue developing the older buildings to meet the needs of a greater number of the community that it serves.</p>	<p>The headteacher, site manager and school business manager will conduct a review to ascertain any adaptations the school can make and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled toilets in the Main House</li> <li>• Ramp access into Main House</li> <li>• Wheelchair access within the main reception.</li> </ul>	DS, AT, CA	Within 3 years in line with site development plan	Greater access to the main house environment.
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## **5. Monitoring arrangements**

- This document will be reviewed every **2** years but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.
- It will be approved by The Governing Body.

## **6. Links with other policies**

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Risk assessments
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives



**Appendix 1: Accessibility audit for Main Building.****March 2023**

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Actions to be taken</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Date to complete actions by</b>
Ramps to the main house	There is a ramp to the main house for wheelchair users, but it requires further adaptation around the entrance as it still contains steps.	To improve the signage to the main building and make further modifications to the entrance area of the Main House to make it accessible for wheelchair users.	AT, CA, DS	Within 3 years in line with site development plan
Toilets	There are currently no disabled toilets in the Main House.	An adaptation and/or a change of use of the existing toilets on the ground floor of the Main House is needed.	AT, CA, DS	Within 3 years in line with site development plan
Emergency escape routes	Escape routes will need reviewing in lower schools and the modular buildings, the Art room, The Mews, Therapy House, Woodlands & The Sensory House. Fire exit routes should have a level flooring and these buildings' escape route has a step down when coming out of the fire exit.	Emergency escape routes to be reviewed for a greater spectrum of disabled users to ensure fire exit routes should have a level floor	AT, CA, DS	Within 3 years in line with site development plan