



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
Accessibility Policy and Action Plan
(Senior School and Junior School)
2026–2028

1. Introduction

This policy applies to all pupils at Dame Allan's Schools (the "Schools"), including the Junior School and the Senior School. It sets out the Schools' approach to promoting accessibility across the curriculum, the physical environment, and the delivery of information.

The Schools are committed to providing high-quality teaching, pastoral care, and support for all pupils. We aim to ensure that all pupils, regardless of disability, can participate fully in school life and benefit from the educational opportunities we provide.

This policy reflects the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Schedule 10 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the SEND Code of Practice. A copy may be made available in large print or alternative formats on request.

Adjustments for disabled staff are fulfilled through the Schools' HR and Equality policies. These include reasonable adjustments relating to recruitment, support, development and working arrangements. This Accessibility Policy relates specifically to pupil access under Schedule 10 of the Independent School Standards.

This Policy and the associated Accessibility Action Plans operate on a three-year cycle (2025–27) and are reviewed annually in the Michaelmas Term.

2. Aims

Over the period 2026–2028, Dame Allan’s Schools aim, within the constraints of available resources and the practicalities of our estate, to ensure that no pupil or member of staff is treated less favourably because of a disability in respect of:

- Admissions, transition arrangements and access to learning;
- Curriculum access and assessment;
- Physical access to buildings and facilities;
- Participation in co-curricular, pastoral, and wider school activities;
- Access to information.

The Schools seek to ensure that pupils with disabilities can access a broad education with development of the whole person at its core. We aim to meet our duties to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage relative to their peers. Where appropriate, objectives within the Accessibility Action Plans may inform, or be informed by, the broader School Development Plan.

3. Definitions

Disability

A pupil is considered disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Long-term means lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months. Conditions such as ASD, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia may fall within this definition where the impact is substantial.

Certain conditions (e.g. tendencies to violence or theft, substance addiction) are specifically excluded from the legal definition.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A pupil may have SEN without being disabled. Equally, a disabled pupil may not have SEN. These categories overlap but are distinct.

4. Reasonable Adjustments

There is no prescribed list of reasonable adjustments. Each case is judged individually and in context. In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, the Schools consider:

- Whether the adjustment removes or reduces the substantial disadvantage;
- The practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment;
- The costs involved relative to the Schools’ resources;
- The impact on the education, safety and welfare of other pupils;
- The extent to which aids or services are more appropriately provided by health or local authority services;
- The availability of alternative arrangements (e.g. timetabling flexibility);
- Health and safety considerations.

The Schools are not required under the Act to remove or alter physical features but will consider adjustments and workarounds to reduce disadvantage.

Where a disabled pupil is admitted, the Schools will meet with parents to discuss any required adjustments, and will assess what can reasonably be implemented within operational and estate constraints.

Where helpful, the Schools may seek views from pupils, parents or staff where doing so would usefully inform accessibility planning.

5. Admissions and Entry Requirements

All pupils must meet the Schools' entry requirements. These apply equally to all candidates. The Schools must be confident that a prospective pupil can benefit from the education offered and thrive within the environment.

Parents must disclose any known disability, medical condition or learning difficulty as early as possible, supported by relevant reports. This enables the Schools to consider what reasonable adjustments may be required.

Failure to disclose relevant information may prevent the Schools from making adequate provision.

Where appropriate, the Schools will meet with parents to understand the nature of a disability and consider what adjustments, if any, can reasonably be made.

6. Increasing Access to the Curriculum

The Schools seek to ensure that disabled pupils can participate as fully as possible in the curriculum by:

- Using baseline assessments, screening and staff referrals to identify needs;
- Ensuring subject teachers adapt teaching strategies and resources appropriately;
- Providing individual or small-group support where appropriate;
- Making exam access arrangements in accordance with JCQ guidance;
- Adjusting timetabling or rooming where reasonable.

Curriculum and co-curricular adjustments for physical, sensory, cognitive or emotional needs will be considered on an individual basis.

The Schools will ensure dissemination of relevant information to staff through Learning Support documentation, briefings and digital platforms.

Where an adjustment for one pupil would compromise safety or educational provision for others, the Schools will seek alternative reasonable solutions.

7. Improving the Physical Environment

Dame Allan's Schools operate across buildings of varied age and heritage. Some buildings involve upper floors that are not accessible without lifts, and certain areas have physical limitations that cannot be altered without major structural work.

The Schools are committed to considering the needs of disabled pupils in estates planning and refurbishment. As part of the rolling estates strategy, opportunities to improve accessibility will be identified and undertaken where appropriate.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Use of accessible routes and re-rooming of teaching spaces;
- Prioritised access to ground-floor teaching areas;
- Alternative changing arrangements;
- Provision of portable aids or equipment.

Where adjustments would require major capital works or incur disproportionate cost, the Schools will be transparent with parents about limitations and will seek workable alternatives.

8. Improving Access to Information

The Schools will provide information in alternative formats where reasonably required, including large print, digital text, modified paper, or oral delivery.

Staff will consider needs when communicating with parents with disabilities, including visually impaired parents who may require telephone or alternative communication channels.

The Schools will make reasonable adjustments to signage and wayfinding as part of the normal maintenance and refurbishment cycle.

9. Equality Duties, Constraints and Limitations

The Schools will act to minimise disadvantage where reasonable, while balancing the interests of all pupils and the practical constraints of the estate.

Some historic buildings cannot be fully adapted without major structural alterations at prohibitive cost. In such cases, alternative reasonable arrangements (e.g. room changes, adjusted movement routes or alternative access arrangements, altered teaching spaces) will be implemented.

The Schools are a fee-funded charity without endowment. Adjustments must therefore be proportionate to available resources.

10. Governance and Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for accessibility rests with the Principal.

Operational responsibilities are delegated as follows:

- Vice Principal (Academic) – curriculum access and information accessibility
- Head of Learning Support (SENDSCO) – reasonable adjustments, learning support, assessment and dissemination of pupil needs
- Estates & Facilities Manager (EFM) – physical access, signage, building adaptations, maintenance coordination
- Bursar – integration with estates strategy and capital planning

- Head of Junior School (HDAJS) – leadership of Junior School accessibility provision

The Accessibility Committee, comprising the Principal and the operational leads identified above, meets annually to review progress, identify new issues and approve updates.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy and the associated Accessibility Action Plans will be reviewed formally each year at a meeting held during the Michaelmas Term.

This annual review process will be supported by an annual accessibility compliance report commissioned by the Principal. This report will draw on input from all operational leads and will be presented at the meeting to inform discussion of progress, priorities and planning for the year ahead. Where relevant, outcomes of the annual review may be reflected in the Schools' wider development planning.

Revisions may be made earlier if required by changes in law, guidance, site configuration or pupil needs.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- SEND Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policies
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- EAL Policy

The policies above can be found on the [Staff Portal](#).

The policies above can be found on the Schools' [website](#).

APPENDIX A

Senior School Accessibility Action Plan (2026–2028)

Increasing the Extent to Which Disabled Pupils Can Participate in the Curriculum

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Admissions & Transition	Access arrangements in place; SENDCO review of disclosures.	Formalise transition meetings; ensure pre-term dissemination of needs.	SENDCO / DoT&L	Annual	Ongoing
Learning Support	Screening, Alternative Arrangements, teacher guidance, SEN profiles.	Streamline SEN information into concise formats for staff.	SENDCO	Summer 2027	New
Teaching Practice	Differentiation standard; staff aware of key adjustments.	Annual INSET refresh on disability awareness & adjustments.	VP(A)	Annual	Ongoing
Colour blindness	Colour vision testing in place; colour blindness awareness in staff training	Audit current teaching resources and displays for reliance on colour alone	VP(A)	2027	New

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Hearing impairments	Teacher guidance; SEN profiles; seating plans consider hearing needs	Ensure subtitles/captions are used on all videos where necessary with further staff training implemented	SENDCO	2026	New
Autism Spectrum Conditions	Teacher guidance and information on the SEN portal of the staff drive; SEN profiles shared	Identify and reduce sensory triggers in classrooms. Termly reminders to staff.	SENDCO	2026 Termly	New
Sports & Activities	Individual alternatives arranged; liaison with SENDCO.	Develop written protocol for long-term PE non-participation. Cases reviewed individually.	VP (A) in consultation with Director of Sport	2026	New
Examinations	Full JCQ compliance; modified papers provided.	Annual AA process review & staff clarity.	SENDCO / Exams Officer	Annual	Ongoing

Improving the Physical Environment

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Circulation & Wayfinding	Contrasting colour schemes; lifts in key buildings.	Targeted signage audit & priority replacements.	EFM	2027	New
Access to Teaching Spaces	Ground-floor accessible; timetabling adjustments made.	Implement termly accessible timetabling check.	VP(A)	Termly	Ongoing
Lifts & Vertical Access/Escape	Lifts in Queens/Jubilee; structural limits elsewhere. Means of escape for all accessible areas	Confirm servicing regime; publish emergency-use guidance. Evacuation capability for all accessible areas at EVC points, via evacuation chairs, to be installed.	EFM	Linked to estates development plan	New
Sports Facilities	Accessible ground-floor areas; alternatives arranged.	Build accessibility considerations into sports redevelopment. Access pathway to sports hall to be extended for wheelchair users as part of Astro development, with peripheral field, and pavilion access to new accessible w\c	EFM / Director of Sport	Linked to estates development plan	Ongoing
Toilets	Accessible toilets across site.	Standardise signage to accessible toilets.	EFM	Linked to estates development plan	New
School Building Access	2 automated access points (Jubilee, Main building by comms)	Enable non automated access via ramp to and from reception	EFM	Linked to estates development plan	New

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
	Restricted access via steps to main reception.				
External Pathways	Primarily accessible, with some uneven pathways leading into the building.	Replace uneven external slabbed pathways with even lay accessible path - Astro project scope of works.	EFM	Linked to estates development plan	New
External Lighting	High level security floodlights around perimeter of building	In need of an upgrade to LED, low level, path-focused lighting from carpark to entrance point	EFM	Linked to estates development plan	New
Accessible Evacuation	EVC (Emergency voice communication) available and highlighted on Evac plan. No means of physical escape for accessible areas at these points.	Install Evac chairs and implement training for key personnel (fire marshals, SEND/PEEP responsibilities, estates team.	EFM/SEND CO	2026	New

Improving Access to Information

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Parent Communication	Info provided electronically; adjustments provided.	Publish guidance on alternative-format provision.	VP(A)	2027	New

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Pupil Communication	SEN strategies shared via briefings.	SEN students interviewed to see issues with accessibility	SENDCO	Termly	Ongoing

APPENDIX B

Junior School Accessibility Action Plan

Increasing the Extent to Which Disabled Pupils Can Participate in the Curriculum

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Admissions & Identification	Early disclosure; SENDCO input; flexible transition.	Consistent pre-start transition conversations.	HDAJS / SENDCO	Annual	Ongoing
Learning Support	Small-group/1:1 support; clear strategies.	Simplify parent communication; update SEN formats.	SENDCO	2026	New
Teaching Practice	Differentiation; seating/layout adaptations.	Annual practical KS2 disability adjustments training.	HDAJS	Annual	Ongoing
Sports & Activities	RA for pupils; alternative roles.	Align long-term PE adjustments with Senior School protocol.	Head of Sport (JS)	2026	New
Pastoral & Wellbeing	Strong pastoral oversight; flexible routines.	Streamline pastoral recording for adjustments (CPOMS alignment).	HDAJS	2026	New

Colour blindness	Colour vision testing in place; colour blindness awareness in staff training	Audit current teaching resources and displays for reliance on colour alone	HDAJS	2027	New
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Improving the Physical Environment

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Classroom Access	Ground floor widely accessible; lifts available.	Early confirmation of rooming for pupils with mobility needs.	HDAJS / EFM	Annual	Ongoing
Toilets & Hygiene	Accessible toilets available.	Review signage; check ease of door furniture.	EFM	Linked to estates development plan	New
External Areas	Accessible playground routes.	Annual audit of gradients, surfaces, and access risks. Improve access to outdoor learning environments, eg. woodland areas and field.	EFM	Annual	Ongoing
Classroom Furniture & Sensory	Cushions, slopes, sensory items available.	Create inventory + request process for staff.	HDAJS / SENDCO	2027	New

Accessible evacuation	EVC (Emergency voice communication) available and highlighted on Evac plan. No means of physical escape for accessible areas at these points.	Install Evac chairs and implement training for key personnel (fire marshals, SEND/PEEP responsibilities, estates team.	EFM/SENDCO	2027	New
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Improving Access to Information

Area	Current Accessibility (2026)	Proposed Improvement	Lead	Timescale	Status
Parent Communication	Info provided electronically; adjustments provided.	Publish guidance on alternative-format provision.	HDAJS	2027	New
Pupil Communication	SEN strategies shared via briefings.	SEN students interviewed to see issues with accessibility	SENDCO	Termly	Ongoing