

10: ACCESSIBILITY – POLICY STATEMENT

Review by EDI / BA / SMT: Nov 2023 onwards (Annually)

Ratified by Board: December 2023

Next Review date: Summer Term 2025 (as agreed by Trustees in 08/03/24 Board meeting)

The Sheiling Ringwood comprises Sheiling School & Sheiling College as The Sheiling Special Education Trust (SSET).

Vision and Values – Access for All

The Sheiling Ringwood believes...

“Every child and young person, both because of and despite their challenges, has something to give and something to learn in all of their relationships, with others, with staff, teachers, carers, friends and family”.

In the spirit of this declaration, we are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

We have a policy of equality in opportunity, respect and treatment. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability, accessibility and strive to create a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

The Sheiling Ringwood plans, over time, to increase the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors to the campus. Access to the curriculum, to The Sheiling Ringwood’s physical environments and to written information about The Sheiling Ringwood is fundamental to achieving inclusion as well as improving the well-being of our students.

Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan incorporates our Accessibility Plan and contains relevant actions to improve access to all of these elements, covered in more detail below.

1. Improving access to Information

We will continually look at how we provide information to all our students, parents, visitors and stakeholders. Examples might include: website (in line with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines - WCAG), timetables, textbooks, letters, handouts and information about the school, college and events. We will improve delivery of written information by making materials accessible and available in different formats, usually on request, within a reasonable timeframe. We will also provide information across different media platforms.

2. Improving Curriculum access for students

We will continually look to improve curriculum access for students by training our staff, offering a wide range of communication methods and ensuring therapeutic support to enable students to engage in all learning opportunities and activities. This includes teaching and learning (and assessment for learning) and the wider curriculum such as participation in extracurricular learning, leisure and cultural activities and visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and varied, inclusive, accessible resources and equipment which may assist students in accessing the curriculum. This will be monitored primarily by School and College Self-Assessment and Improvement planning quality processes.

3. Improving the Environment

The Sheiling Ringwood campus is set in 45 acres of woodland with uneven ground and many slopes and inclines. We will continually look to improve access to the physical environment of our buildings and campus site areas for students, staff, parents, visitors, professionals, and other stakeholders, as necessary and appropriate. This also covers improvements to the physical environment of the site and physical aids to access education.

Where we can provide improved access by reasonable adjustment, we will endeavour to do so. We will undertake to assess students (particularly those with mobility issues) and endeavour to make reasonable adjustments where possible.

4. Accessibility Plan

The Accessibility Plan will operate as part of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion action plan. If it is not feasible to undertake some of the works indicated during the three-year life of the plan, some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The plans will be reviewed in detail every three years and a new three-year plan produced.

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan will be monitored through the SSET's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Workgroup which meets three times a year with a view to monitor and review current procedures and processes.

We will work in partnership with the local community, parents and other stakeholders in developing this plan through consultation for new projects and representation at EDI workgroup meetings.

The Plan will be made available to any interested parties at reasonable times, as required.

5. Related policies and documents

- Statement of Purpose
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- School & College Admissions Policies
- School & College Curriculum
- Positive Behaviour Support Policies
- School and College Prospectus
- Staff Recruitment and Development Policies

We will strive to recruit and retain staff who can provide a diverse workforce able to empathise with the needs of our students and provide role models. We will constantly look to ensure that our recruitment and employment processes are both robust and sensitive to the needs of potential and existing employees.