



# Chailey School

## Wheelchair Policy

Date Policy Reviewed: November 2021

Date of Governing Body's Approval: December 2021

Chair of Governors

Headteacher

Date Due For Review: November 2023

## **Aims**

The wheelchair policy has the following aims:

- To promote the safe use of wheelchairs by their users and those around them
- To promote as high standard for the maintenance of wheelchairs
- To promote awareness of wheelchair users and their needs

The governors recognise that here are three main categories of wheelchair users who use the school buildings:

1. Students who are on roll at the school, or staff employed by the school, who are disabled and have regular access to a wheelchair:
2. Visiting students and adults who are disabled and have regular use of a wheelchair
3. Students, Staff, or visitors who may have sustained an injury or have an illness requiring temporary use of a wheelchair.

This policy is aimed at those who fall into category 1-effectively those who regularly access the building in their normal daily routine using a wheelchair.

For the purpose of this document, wheelchairs are divided broadly into two types: manual and powered. Users of powered wheelchairs may also have the use of a manual chair.

In each instance, the school requires that the parents/carers of children at the school or adults, who work at the school, provide a chair that is maintained as 'fit for purpose' and managed with the health and safety of all in mind. The school requires students who rely on a powered wheelchair for school purposes to have an alternative manual wheelchair available for when their powered wheelchair may be being serviced. The school also has one manual wheelchair available for emergencies; however, this chair may not be suitable when used for a whole school day.

## **Mechanical**

From whatever source the wheelchair is provided the responsibility for the regular servicing of the wheelchair and ensuring that it is well maintained and 'fit for purpose' remains with the parents/carers or staff members. If the school has concerns about the safety of a wheelchair it reserves the right to ask parents/carers or staff to use a different chair whilst servicing is completed.

## **The school expects:**

- That the wheelchair should be in good working order and regularly serviced by a competent qualified engineer
- Brakes and other working parts should be regularly checked and maintained
- If the wheelchair is a powered wheelchair, the governors requires that it is fitted with a speed limitation built in for safety
- In the case of a mechanical breakdown or another problem which arises with the we wheelchair regularly used by an individual that might make using the

wheelchair unsafe, the school will expect parents/carers to inform the school and to make alternative arrangements

- If the school has concerns about the mechanical; workings of the wheelchair or its safety, then it will inform parents/carers.

## **Safety for students on roll and staff employed at the school**

### **Wheelchair users**

It is the school's expectation that all students who are on roll or staff who are wheelchair users should be trained in the basic use of their wheelchair.

In terms of the powered wheelchair training should cover:

- General health and safety awareness-including putting on brakes when stationary
- Use of controls
- Use of the brakes in emergencies
- Awareness of others when manoeuvring-both in the classrooms and around the school
- Safe parking of the chair when not in use so that it does not block escape routes or present a trip hazard.

### **General Safety**

- Teachers should use the full flexibility of movement time to ensure that disabled students are safe when moving between lessons
- Disabled students should not allow others to play with their chairs, either by playing with their controls or by standing or riding on the chair
- Disabled students in wheelchairs should also be aware that other disabled students who may or may not be in a wheelchair and younger pupils and the elderly who may be in the vicinity when they are manoeuvring, need special consideration and due care and attention should be paid to these individuals.

### **Able bodied students in the school should be made aware of the following:**

- That students in wheelchairs should be given additional space to manoeuvre around the school
- That they should be vigilant when standing or sitting near to those using wheelchairs
- That fire doors fitted with appliances to keep them open for wheelchair access, should be left open and not shut
- That they must not touch the controls of any wheelchair stand on or ride on the back of any wheelchair

Information regarding the awareness of wheelchair safety, should be available to all via the school student planner

### **Liability**

Parents/Carers should be made aware that the school insurance does not cover accidental damage, theft or liability by wheelchair users. Parents/carers of wheelchair user are requested to take out additional insurance (if this is not covered by their household insurance)

This document should be read in conjunction with the school's Accessibility Plan and Disability Discrimination documents.

