
Queen Elizabeth's School ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Introduction

Queen Elizabeth's School is committed to supporting all pupils reach their fullest potential, irrespective of background or disability. We aim to create an environment in which all members of our community can contribute fully to, and derive the maximum benefit and enjoyment from, the life of the School. In order to achieve this, some pupils, staff members, parents and visitors will need additional support to overcome barriers associated with a disability. Through this Accessibility Plan, the School seeks to consider and report on some of the measures that are being undertaken, or could be implemented in the future, to meet these objectives.

Values

The School opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and aims to provide a supportive environment for all pupils, members of staff, visitors and members of the wider Elizabethan community.

To this end, the School acknowledges the following basic principles for all members and prospective members of its community:

- to be treated with respect and dignity;
- to be welcomed and valued;
- to be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices; and
- to receive support and encouragement to reach their full potential.

The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all existing equality legislation (including the Disability Discrimination Act), established in law three over-riding principles which comprise the duties placed upon public bodies. These requirements are to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The School is committed to meeting the needs of pupils with disabilities. The School endeavours to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which specifies due regard should be given to consider the barriers that may exist to a pupil's access to education and how to remove those barriers. All reasonable

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steps will therefore be taken to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at any disadvantage compared to non-disabled pupils. The Equality Act also determines that where significant disadvantage exists, disabled people will be treated more favourably to address the imbalance. This will be taken into account when considering necessary improvements.

In particular, there is a requirement to:

- improve the physical environment of the School to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of the available education and facilities;
- increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities.

The School will also have regard to the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and strategies to support provision for pupils with disabilities in these ways.

Through the School's work to improve accessibility for pupils with disabilities, benefits will also be derived for disabled members of staff, parents and visitors and reasonable adjustments will be made in practices and procedures which affect these groups in order that they are not discriminated against and have equal opportunities to participate in School life.

The School's policies around the recruitment, promotion and performance management of staff make clear that there will be no discrimination on the basis of disability. Likewise the School's admissions process is meritocratic, with all candidates given an equal opportunity gain entry through the entrance examination. This can include extra time and support being provided to candidates with additional needs, as a reasonable adjustment.

Definitions

The term disability applies to a person when:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Equality Act, these words have the following meaning:

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- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. People with progressive conditions can be classed as disabled. However, a person automatically meets the disability definition under the Equality Act 2010 from the day they are diagnosed with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

The School understands that the definition of disability under the Act is different from the eligibility for special educational needs provision. This means that disabled students may or may not have special educational needs. The School recognises that social, educational and behavioural difficulties are part of this definition. There will be some overlap in processes and provision to support pupils with SEN and those defined as having a disability. The School's SEND Policy sets out full details of the relevant arrangements.

Inclusion reports and Education, Health & Care Plans

When a pupil is joining the School with a pre-diagnosed condition (be it a special educational need or a disability), or where internal assessment by the School indicates that additional support is required, an inclusion report is put in place. This involves identifying the challenges the pupil faces, completing a risk assessment, and detailing strategies to be implemented to assist the individual pupil in accessing the curriculum and wider School activities. The inclusion reports are shared with relevant members of staff so that they can take account of the adjustments required and apply these evenly across the School.

Where a pupil's condition is more severe, or where the pupil fails to make the expected progress despite extra support, the School will consider whether the pupil would benefit from an assessment by the Local Authority in order that an Education, Health & Care Plan be put in place should they so qualify.

The content of these inclusion reports and care plans are informed by the pupil, their parents, the School and any other specialist agencies involved and are monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

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Reasonable adjustments

In each case, the School will carefully consider what reasonable adjustments can be made to support participation. This could include adjustments to physical access arrangements, specialist equipment, differentiated learning materials, adapted assessment practices, and alternative information formats. Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate to support members of staff with a disability and those visiting the School site in the course of School activities.

Community accessibility

Parts of the School site are utilised by members of the local community, for example for swimming lessons and choral group rehearsals. There is disabled access onto the School site from Queens Road and via the Industrial Estate, as well as disabled access to the Martin Pool (which has disabled changing, toilet and shower facilities) and to the Main Building, and there is level-ground access to the Shearly Hall (our largest multi-purpose venue). The disabled parking provision is located as close as practicable to the ramp which enables entry to the Main Building. Clubs, societies and contractors operating on the School site must support the School's values with respect to not discriminating against those with disabilities and should consider what reasonable adjustments to their programmes and procedures could further support disabled access to their activities.

Promoting equality and fostering good relations

Every member of the School community should be valued and respected. Through the Personal Development Time programme and the work of the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Ambassadors, respect and understanding for those with disabilities is fostered. The School is a harmonious and positive community, where pupils and staff all work well together. All new pupils go through the same induction process and staff would support other pupils to welcome a new pupil with a disability warmly into the relevant form group and the wider School community. Pastoral staff reinforce expectations around the use of language and any cases of bullying relating to a disability would be treated very seriously under the School's Bullying and Pupil Discipline policies.

The Accessibility Plan

The following table sets out the arrangements for increasing accessibility to the site, the curriculum and to information, and the priorities for future developments to better support those with disabilities. Progress will be regularly reviewed and Governors will approve an updated plan at least once every three years.

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1. Improving the physical environment of the School to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of the available education and facilities			
Issue	Strategies	Actions to date	Time-frame
Accessibility to the Music department restricted due to its design, remote location within the site, and changes of levels in external landscape.	A new Music School is to be constructed at the heart of the campus, providing level entry and access to the additional recital hall. Modern building regulations will ensure that doorways are a suitable width for wheelchair users.	Successful CIF funding bid and site cleared ready for construction in 2019. The majority of construction work completed during 2020-21, with final internal fit-out taking place. Level access achieved, and there are no facilities located upstairs that cannot also be replicated on the ground floor. Wide doors fitted to enable ease of access for wheelchairs.	Project due to be completed by the end of 2021.
Access to the library and Food Technology Room restricted for those unable to use stairs.	Space designed-in and retained to provide capacity for the installation of a platform lift to improve disabled access to the first floor. Funding would be sought.	Space for a platform lift protected from other usage.	Ongoing
Access to the Weights Room and public viewing gallery of the Martin Pool restricted due to out of service lift.	Repairs to take place to the existing lift and a service contract to keep the lift in operation to be put in place, to support disabled access to the gallery (largely for visitors) and to the Weights Room, where strength and conditioning activities could then be offered for pupils with relevant disabilities.	Lift repaired and a maintenance contract put in place. Additional works required after lockdown, during which time the lift had not been used. Regular running as part of maintenance.	Repairs completed 2020 and ongoing maintenance.
Barriers to movement within the Fern Building	The Fern atrium being opened up to enable ground floor movement between the Maths and Technology departments; de-cluttering of furniture from the corridors, following an increase in storage space, to remove obstructions; installation of new fire doors which will be automatically held open until the alarm is triggered, removing barriers to movement and reducing congestion.	Ground floor knocked through and new flooring completed, enabling pupils to move through the atrium. Fire curtains installed to ensure safe compartmentalisation in the event of a fire. Mag lock doors installed. Furniture and equipment removed from first floor corridors. CIF bid successful enabling further internal works. Further de-cluttering, making moving around the building easier.	First phase completed summer 2020, with a further programme of improvements delivered over 2020-21 academic year.

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Access to first floor of Fern Building restricted for those unable to use stairs.	A feasibility study to be conducted into improving access to the first floor, with investigations to include consideration of a platform lift located in the atrium and a stair lift for the existing stairs.	Internal considerations of the scope of the feasibility study to inform the brief. Estate master-planning exercise commissioned to audit the campus and opportunities for future projects.	Ongoing
Access to new robotics suite in the Fern Building	Robotics suite designed to enable disabled access via the service road, supporting access to this teaching space and key extra-curricular enrichment facility. Service road surface to be monitored to ensure safety should the use of this entrance be required.	Completion of new facility in summer 2019, with assessment by staff informing considerations of risk. Facility in full usage.	Facility completed August 2019; monitoring ongoing.
All specialist teaching spaces for Science in the Fern Building are on the first floor.	Within the next Estates Strategy, create a vision for reconfiguring the ground floor of the Fern Building which places accessibility and equality of opportunity at its heart.	Interim improvements to access to and movement within the Fern Building as described elsewhere, pending the development of a further Estates Strategy in due course. Work on a campus master plan, to inform the next Estate Strategy, underway.	Longer term
Ensuring functioning of moveable pool floor to enable use of shallow end	Review and renewal of the arrangements for servicing the moveable floor components of the Martin Pool, following rare instances where the floor has become stuck at one depth. Being able to adjust the water depth supports the use of the pool for those with disabilities and would enable hydrotherapy activities (provided suitably qualified instruction/staff support was in place).	Investment in the mechanism for operating the moveable floor following a fault, improving reliability and supporting accessibility for those with additional needs, for whom a shallow end is essential. Work completed in 2021. New maintenance provider secured to allow for more responsive servicing.	2021, then ongoing
The sufficiency and efficiency of lighting	An ongoing review and renewal programme for lighting across the site to improve the amount and quality of light, assisting those with visual impairments and increasing safety in the event of an evacuation.	Replacement lighting installed in the Fern Building and in new Main Building offices. Rolling programme underway, assessing internal and external lighting. Work conducted on improving lighting in Main Hall for events. Lighting designed into new Music School.	Ongoing

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Stair safety for those with visual impairment	Yellow visibility strips to be added to new and existing staircases to make it easier to see the bottom step.	Designed into new Music School; implemented on existing staircases across the site, following assessment.	Completed spring 2020
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2. Increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum			
Issue	Strategies	Actions to date	Time-frame
Additional needs meaning that some methods of curriculum delivery are unsuitable	Personal plans are put in place for pupils with additional needs, informed by risk assessments of specific areas of study. This is coordinated by the SENCo and adjustments are agreed with the pupil and his family. For some pupils this will take the form of an EHCP, whilst for others it may be a less formal inclusion report.	Plans in place for multiple pupils within the School which take account of their individual requirements and the adaptations required are communicated to the relevant staff for implementation. Risk assessments for those with additional needs to understand any necessary support strategies for remote learning during lockdown.	Ongoing
Requirement for extra academic support	Needs assessments to consider the extent to which additional academic intervention is needed from staff and peers to compensate for any existing barriers to learning.	Close assessment of SEND pupil progress through data monitoring and pastoral reviews, with targeted interventions where required. Particular focus on how these students managed with remote learning during Covid-19 school closures.	Ongoing
Visual impairment	Larger text materials provided in lessons and assessment; with pupils positioned at the front of the classroom to make accessing resources on the electronic whiteboards easier. Personal plans in place for this and for colour-blindness, where teachers will talk through with pupils what they can see and can assist with indicating colour changes in lessons and assessments.	Inclusion reports in place for pupils with visual impairment, identifying the steps needed to support them to have equal access to the curriculum. Information and strategies reviewed and updated regularly. Adaptation to alphabetical seating plans (which had been required for Covid-19 management) to support classroom learning. Adaptations for	Ongoing

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		those who are colour blind, including in assessments/exams.	
Hearing impairment	Use of inclusion reports to put in place measures targeted to the needs to individuals. Support includes consideration of hearing in setting seating plans; staff facing the impaired pupil to enable lip-reading; the use of amplifiers, with staff wearing microphones so that their voice is channelled into the pupils inner ear.	Inclusion reports in place for pupils with hearing impairment, identifying the steps needed to support them to have equal access to the curriculum. Information and strategies reviewed and updated regularly. Adaptation to alphabetical seating plans (which had been required for Covid-19 management) to support classroom learning.	Ongoing
Pupils with injuries or medical conditions not being able to temporarily access some departments	Temporary adjustments to room timetables to move lessons to the most accessible locations for pupils whilst they recover, maximising their access to the normal curriculum.	Rooming revisions implemented to enable access.	As required
Accessible transport for trips and out of School activities	Delivery and maintenance of new fully accessible minibuses to enable pupils with disabilities to travel off-site for educational and enrichment activities. Risk assessment for all trips involving pupils with impairments to consider the most appropriate course of action – enabling them to participate as fully as practicable.	Two minibuses purchased and operating procedures established. Maintenance routines implemented.	Ongoing
Reflecting disability in the curriculum	Increasing understanding of those with disabilities and the engagement of those affected pupils with the curriculum through the Personal Development Time programme and special assemblies; building resilience, confidence and good relations with respect to all pupils. Promoting equality through role models, with attempts to source speakers on autism for example.	Strong focus on equality within PDT curriculum review. Guest speakers, such as OE ultra-marathon runner, and a Paralympic athlete, talking about high achievement in the context of dealing with disability and discrimination. OE talks dealing with SEN conditions such as ADHD. Wider curriculum review underway with a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion.	Ongoing

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3. Improving the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities			
Issue	Strategies	Actions to date	Time-frame
Maintaining diversity in information formats	Recognising that different people have different limitations with regards to accessing information, work to retain the ability to provide critical learning, operational and administrative information in multiple formats, so that the most appropriate format can be made available to the individual. Through IT systems continue to facilitate electronic, hard copy and oral communications.	Information gathering with regards to the disabilities of pupil, staff and parents so that information can be provided in an accessible format.	Ongoing
Visual impairment	Larger text materials provided in lessons and assessment; with pupils positioned at the front of the classroom to make accessing resources on the electronic whiteboards easier. Personal plans in place for this and for colour-blindness, where teachers will talk through with pupils what they can see and can assist with indicating colour changes in lessons and assessments. Support for devices which can read text to those with visual impairment and investigation of whether publicly available materials, such as the School's website, are compatible.	Inclusion reports in place for pupils with visual impairment, identifying the steps needed to support them to have equal access to the curriculum. Information and strategies reviewed and updated regularly. Adaptation to alphabetical seating plans (which had been required for Covid-19 management) to support classroom learning. Key health and safety messaging displayed on large banners.	Ongoing
Hearing impairment	Use of inclusion reports to put in place measures targeted to the needs to individuals. Support includes consideration of hearing in setting seating plans; staff facing the impaired pupil to enable lip-reading; the use of amplifiers, with staff wearing microphones so that their voice is channelled into the pupil's inner ear. Provision of British Sign Language interpreters at meetings/events for parents or visitors, where this is important to effective home-School communication and therefore the progress of the pupil	Inclusion reports in place for pupils with hearing impairment, identifying the steps needed to support them to have equal access to the curriculum. Information and strategies reviewed and updated regularly. BSL interpreters booked for parents' evenings to support deaf parents. Adaptation to seating plans, as required.	Ongoing
Supporting dyslexic pupils	Written information supplied on different colour paper/ with different colour backgrounds, where this supports easier understanding.	Use of differentiated paper stock and resources to support comprehension.	Ongoing

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Review:

This report on accessibility at Queen Elizabeth's School was originally prepared in October 2019, but was reviewed and updated in October 2021, in line with a requirement for annual reporting.

*LINKED
POLICIES*

- The School's Strategic Development Plan
 - Admissions Policy
 - Bullying Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Governors' Statement of Education
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Information and Communication Technology Policy
 - Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy
 - Pupil Discipline Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
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Originally approved by the Governing Body on 31 October 2019

Signed

B.R. Martin, Chairman of the Governing Body