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# Queen Elizabeth's School

## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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### 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. There is level-ground access to the Shearly Hall (our largest multi-purpose venue) and The Friends' Recital Hall. 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 prefects, 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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<b>1. Improving the physical environment of the School to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of the available education and facilities</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Actions to date</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
Accessibility to some specialist teaching spaces restricted due to location on the school site e.g. science labs located on the first floor.	A new Estates Strategy to be developed to consider the next round of enhancements to the campus. To be underpinned by an analysis of all current assets and site layout. To look at reconfiguring the Fern building to deliver ground floor science labs.	HGH Consultants appointed to lead the master-planning work. NVB appointed as architects. Analysis undertaken across the site re room utilisation, BB103, flow, accessibility; as well as workshops with senior staff and governance leaders. Master plan created and approved, includes for the remodelling of Fern for ground floor science labs.	Master plan agreed, for long-term delivery.
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
Limitations to easy movement within the Main Building, caused by congestion in corridors and only a single disabled access point.	Delivery of an additional disabled access point under plans to reconfigure the old computer rooms into The Robert Dudley Studio and to add a new ramped entrance/exit point for the building. This will support pupils, staff and visitors to access the new specialist facility and will reduce pressure and congestion at existing entrance/exit points. Will enhance fire evacuation safety.	Architectural designs completed. Tender process undertaken and construction of the RDS completed. Additional issues discovered required some descoping in the current phase. Level access delivered from within the Main Building.	2023-24
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.	Master-planning exercise looking closely at accessibility. Example plans to re-work layout of building, specialist facilities to ground level.	Ongoing
Ensuring functioning of moveable pool floor to enable use of shallow end	Regular monitoring and maintenance to try to prevent further faults in the moveable floor mechanism, which then affects the ability to set the water depth.	New parts previously installed, and a new UK-based servicing contractor appointed. Operating well.	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.	Significant progress under the 2019-2022 plan. Most of the site has now had its lighting updated.	Ongoing

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Path to Marriott Road gate uneven and poorly lit.	Re-surfacing or improvements to quality of the path leading to the Marriott Road gate from the East End of the Main Building. Enhancements to lighting along the path. Together would aid those with mobility issues.	Initial assessment of current condition undertaken. Neighbouring property has removed the dividing hedge perimeter. Works to improve path will have to take account of replacing screening. Quotes sourced for resurfacing works in context of anticipated gas works.	Summer 2025
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<b>2. Increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Actions to date</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
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. The rollout of 1:1 pupil IT devices (e.g. tablets/notebooks) will provide increased options to utilise supportive technology within the classroom, aiding differentiation where needed.	Plans in place for multiple pupils within the School that take account of their individual requirements and the adaptations required are communicated to the relevant staff for implementation. Strategy for 1:1 pupil devices completed and roll-out begun with Year 7 in September 2023. Head of Digital Teaching and Learning appointed. Devices for all Years 7-10 as of 2024-25.	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.	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. Adaptations for those who are colour blind, including in assessments/exams.	Ongoing

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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 radio amplifiers, with staff wearing microphones so that their voice is channelled into the pupil's inner ear. Turn subtitles on for video content.	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.	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
Reflecting disability in the curriculum and in pedagogical methods.	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. Raising awareness and knowledge of neurodiversity and potential support measures among staff to help them make activities more inclusive. A curriculum review process looking at different equality matters to improve the offer, both to those with disabilities and to foster understanding and supportiveness among others.	Strong focus on equality within PDT curriculum review. Disabilities and neurodiversity identified as priority areas in the 2022-23 academic year, building upon workshops, assemblies and PDT lessons in previous years. A wider curriculum review under way, seeking to ensure diversity and inclusivity.	Ongoing

### 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

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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 seating plans as required.	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 radio 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

### Improvements delivered over 2019-2022 plan:

Good progress was made over the period of the previous three-year plan. Alongside ongoing measures, highlights included:

- Delivery of The Friends' Recital Hall and Music Rooms, with level-access to the new classrooms and performance venue. Specification (e.g. wide doorframes) enables wheelchair access.
- Reinstatement of the lift in the Martin Pool building, with regular maintenance facilitating access to the gallery and weights room.
- Investment in a new mechanism for the pool's moveable floor, alongside the appointment of a new maintenance contractor – improving reliability and responsiveness of servicing. Enables control of the depth of the pool to support those for whom a shallow end is needed.



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- Creation of the Fern Atrium to provide another flexible and accessible space and to allow for easier movement within the building, reducing congestion and preventing users from needing to go up and down stairs (or outside) to move between the Maths and Technology departments.
- De-cluttering projects to make movement within corridors easier, alongside installation of mag-lock doors within the Fern building.
- Completion of the Robotics suite (T5), with level-access from the back service road).
- Significant progress with a programme to replace and improve lighting across the site to aid those with visual impairment.
- Completion of a programme to add visibility strips to staircases.
- Provision of key Covid-19 messaging in different formats and adaptations to routines to support those with additional needs.
- Increasing the visibility of those with disabilities within the curriculum, especially Personal Development Time, e.g. assemblies and workshops addressing, and positively representing, those with physical disabilities, SEN conditions such as ASD and ADHD, and neurodiversity.
- Introduction of British Sign Language interpretation where needed by individual parents to access key information at parents' evenings and briefing meetings.

### Review:

This report on accessibility at Queen Elizabeth's School was prepared in October 2024, building upon the three-year plan set in October 2022. Annual updates on progress will be reported to the full Governing Body.

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#### *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 2 November 2023

Signed .....

A.N. Gaskell, Chairman of the Governing Body