

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

1. Introduction

The Accessibility Plan (*see Appendices*) is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty stated in Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with the School's aims and ethos, and Equal Opportunities, SEND and Disability Policies. This plan will be reviewed annually and a new one drawn up every 3 years. This policy is a Whole School and Early Years policy.

New Hall School is committed to planning for the provision of an accessible environment, within the context of a selective Catholic independent boarding and day school, which values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their physical, sensory, social and emotional needs.

New Hall School challenges negative attitudes about accessibility and disability, and endeavours to develop awareness, tolerance, respect and inclusion across the school in relation to these.

2. Aims

- To ensure that 'reasonable steps' are taken to avoid putting disabled students at a disadvantage in matters of education and admission
- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and the school's community for students and prospective students with a disability
- To seek to enable every student with learning difficulties or disabilities including special educational needs to realise their potential
- To ensure disabled students are not treated less favourably
- To ensure a planned increase in accessibility of provision for all students, staff, parents and visitors
- To increase awareness in matters of disability discrimination

3. Definition of "Disabled"

Disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as:

- i. a physical or mental impairment, and
- ii. the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

4. Improving the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School (*See Appendix A for 3-year plan*)

The School is situated within a 70-acre Grade I listed site with a range of buildings. Teaching facilities are in both single and multi-floor buildings. There are accessible toilets in all School buildings. A Physical Access Audit has been carried out by an external consultant and the resultant action plan formed the basis of the annual reviews and 3 Year Plans. The next review will be carried out in the Michaelmas Term 2023, or upon any changes to current or relevant legislation.

1.1 Overview

The School has invested heavily in new facilities over the last 10 years. All these recent developments are fully accessible, including provision of lifts, refuge points, toilets and workstations. The new developments include:

- Priory Court
 - Rugby, Tennis and Fitness Suite Changing Blocks
 - Fitness Suite
 - New accessible toilets to the Farm, Senior Staff Room, Radcliffe, Health & Wellbeing Centre
 - Nursery Building
 - PE classroom block
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- There are parking facilities for the disabled in the Senior Division, Preparatory Divisions, Priory Court and Sports Facility car parks
 - When students are unable to access a first or second floor at present, the lesson would be relocated to a more accessible room
 - There are two lifts within the Senior Division main School building to gain access to the first, second and fourth floors. There is also one in the Preparatory Divisions building, one in Priory Court and one in the Changing Block/Fitness Suite; these are all accessible to wheelchair users
 - Evac+Chairs are located by the top floor of each lift to provide safe egress in the case of a fire alarm. Staff are trained to use these
 - All buildings apart from Walkfares Performing Arts Centre have wheelchair access.

1.2 Accessibility

1.2.1 Single Storey/Ground Floor

The following buildings/teaching areas are single storey or on the ground floor:

- Radcliffe - History/Geography/Psychology
- Main School - Science/English
- Thomas More Sixth Form Centre - Business/Economics/Politics
- Cookery
- Sports Hall
- Eaton Theatre
- Jubilee Hall
- Swimming Pool
- Refectory
- Chapel
- Changing Rooms
- Library
- Reception, Year 1 and a number of other classrooms at the Preparatory Divisions building
- Nursery
- Health & Wellbeing Centre consulting rooms and counselling

1.2.2 Lift or Chairlift Access

The following buildings/areas have wheelchair (lift or chairlift) access:

- Senior Division - Art

- Priory Court – Classics/ICT/Mathematics/Modern Languages/Theology
- Preparatory Divisions

1.2.3 Toilet Access

There are accessible toilets on the ground floor in the following buildings/areas:

- Senior Division Main building
- Radcliffe
- Walkfares Performing Arts Centre
- Priory Court
- Fitness Suite, Rugby & Tennis Changing Rooms
- Swimming Pool
- Preparatory Division Building
- Nursery
- Farm
- Health & Wellbeing Centre

1.2.4 Workstations

There are accessible workstations in:

- Cookery

1.2.5 Boarding Houses

The following boarding houses have access via lift/chairlifts:

- Champion House (Years 11-13 boys)
- Petre House Earle Wing (Years 7-9 boys)

1.2.6 Induction Loops

There is an Induction Loop fitted in the Chapel and Preparatory Divisions reception; more would be fitted as required. Mobile induction loops are located in Main, Prep and Nursery Receptions.

5. Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the School curriculum (See Appendix A for 3-Year Plan)

- Lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve.
- Lessons are responsive to student diversity.
- Lessons involve students working individually, in pairs, groups and with the whole class.
- All students are encouraged to take part in music, drama, physical activities, co-curricular activities, trips and visits. School performances and sports are made accessible to all students irrespective of attainment or impairment, wherever possible.
- Staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by students with learning difficulties/physical disabilities, in line with their established Access Arrangements, which are overseen by the Head of Learning Development, SENDCo (Preparatory Divisions) and Nursery Manager.
- Staff provide alternative ways for students to record information.
- The School provides access to computer technology; all students in Years 3 to 13 are provided with an iPad equipped with appropriate software to meet their needs. Suitable technology would be provided for younger children as appropriate.

- The School provides extra sets of text books for students with a disability (long or short term) ensuring they do not need to carry heavy weights.
- The School provides transmitter devices to teachers of students with hearing impairments who require hearing aids (Phonak ROGER compatible devices)
- School visits are made accessible to all students irrespective of attainment or impairment, wherever possible.
- Staff have high expectations of all students irrespective of special educational needs, sensory impairment or disability.
- Staff seek to remove all barriers to achievement by differentiation, to enable participation in lessons by all.
- Staff provide lesson outcomes in differentiated form to suit the learning styles of individual students.
- Students may do a reduced curriculum and personalised timetables, as appropriate.
- The GCSE Admissions requirement for Sixth Form is the same for all students, since Access Arrangements in public examinations are designed to assist with any specific learning difference/disability, in order to enable these students to achieve the relevant grade boundary for their ability.
- Students are set according to their ability and not their specific learning difference/ disability.
- Targeted students across New Hall are supported in lessons by Learning Support staff.
- Students with an Education, Health & Care plan, and those on SEND Support, have individual, paired or small group lessons within the Learning Development Department.
- Staff have had training in how best to deal with the specific disabilities.
- Learning Support information is on the K:drive for Senior Divisions and P:drive for Preparatory Divisions and updated as new data is available. All students who receive learning support are flagged on the school's management information system.
- Students with Access Arrangements are supported by Learning Support staff, as appropriate i.e. reader or scribe in public examinations/controlled assessments.
- Students whose Access Arrangement requires the use of a laptop are supported by the IT Department in both public examinations and controlled assessments.
- Students who are entitled to specialist examination conditions are provided with these, for example, a small separate room.
- All of the computers have reader software installed and voice activated software is installed as required.
- Additional software is made readily available to meet the needs of the student, including larger fonts and other accessible formats.

6. Improving the delivery of information to disabled students (See Appendix A for 3-Year Plan)

The School is committed to improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is readily available to students who are not disabled. The delivery of such information will be made in a reasonable time and after taking into account the disabled students' disabilities and preferences expressed by them and their parents. The following information delivery options are in place:

- Parents can make appointments to come in and speak with staff at any time.
- Students who have Irlen Syndrome have access to coloured overlays for use in class.
- Modified language scripts published by Examination Boards are made available in public examinations for students who have a low reading comprehension.

- Information and resources are made available in differing font sizes and other accessible formats, as required.

7. References

Equality Act 2010 (Schedule 10)

DfES 'Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students'

Three Year Accessibility Plan: Michaelmas Term 2020 – Michaelmas Term 2023

1. Accessibility to the School Site

Note: Car Parking has been removed because adequate spaces for the disabled have been created, such as the new Finance Department and Sports Centre spaces; evacuation chairs have been purchased and appropriate training carried out for staff.

TARGET	COMMENT	STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	OUTCOME
To provide unassisted wheelchair access to the upper floors in Main School – specifically the Health Centre	Current lift is too small to comfortably accommodate a wheelchair user	SHA to consult with planners and contractors If unable to improve current lift, SHA to explore other access points to the Health Centre	Consultation and action plan by August 2022 This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body	Health & Wellbeing Centre relocated to Ormond House Summer 2022. Accessible ramp, toilet and doors installed.
To repair/upgrade Earle Wing lift to provide unassisted wheelchair access to Earle Wing	Lift is currently out of use due to water damage and is too small to comfortably accommodate a wheelchair user	SHA to consult with planners and contractors If unable to improve current lift, SHA to explore other access points to Earle Wing	Consultation and action plan by August 2022 This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body	New lift installed Spring 2022
To ensure all disabled toilets are suitable for unassisted use by wheelchair users	Some of the older disabled facilities are not configured correctly for a wheelchair user	SHA to conduct audit of disabled toilet facilities and to plan works accordingly	Audit completed by Jan 2020 Work/upgrades by August 2022	Programme of upgrades underway to ensure disabled toilet facilities are upgraded and compliant.

				New accessible toilets added to the Farm, H&WC, Staff Room, PE Classrooms and Radcliffe
To ensure handrails are available for all steps/slopes greater than 5% gradient across the site	The slope outside Petre House does not have handrails and is very steep	Handrail to be installed on slope by Petre House SHA to conduct audit of other steps and slopes and to plan works to install suitable handrails	Work/installation by Sept 2024 Audit Jan 2020	Work request referred to Estates Committee
To ensure step-free access to Radcliffe is possible	The Radcliffe building is currently only accessible by small steps. The only ramp is to a fire escape	Arrange works to provide step free access to one point in Radcliffe	August 2024	Work request referred to Estates Committee
To ensure step-free access to Walkfares is possible	The Walkfares building is currently only accessible by steps. The only ramp is to the TMC and then through a number of fire doors	Arrange works to provide step free access to one point in Walkfares	August 2024	Work request referred to Estates Committee
To ensure there is sufficient, appropriate signage to identify accessible routes around the site	Accessible routes are not clearly signed	SHA to liaise with Signguard to produce and install suitable signage to direct visitors to reception. Suitable signage also to be installed to direct visitors to accessible routes around site	August 2022 January 2023	New signage installed Summer 2022

		Accessible route guides/dyslexia friendly maps to be prepared and made available at reception		
To provide either ground floor accommodation or suitable wheelchair access to rooms in all boarding houses	Currently, only Hawley has suitable ground floor accommodation.	See Main School Lift above – access to Campion See Earle Wing Lift below – access to Earle Wing Conduct review of possible works to convert ground floor spaces in Petre/Dennett	Review by August 2021 This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body	Work request referred to Estates Committee
To repair/upgrade Earle Wing lift to provide unassisted wheelchair access to Earle Wing	Lift is currently out of use due to water damage and is too small to comfortably accommodate a wheelchair user	SHA to consult with planners and contractors If unable to improve current lift, SHA to explore other access points to Earle Wing	Consultation and action plan by August 2022 This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body	New lift installed Spring 2022
To provide unassisted wheelchair accessible bedrooms and bathroom facilities in all boarding houses	Current bedrooms and bathroom facilities in all boarding houses are not suitable for wheelchair users	Hawley, Petre, Dennett, Campion – Plans to be prepared as bedrooms and bathrooms are not yet accessible by wheelchair users	August 2024 This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body	Work request referred to Estates Committee

To provide accessible changing facilities to the Swimming Pool	Current changing facilities are inadequate and inaccessible	SHA to review and plan works	Review and plan by September 2022	New facilities have been designed. Build dates TBC
To create a safe refuge in the Fitness Suite	Access to Fitness Suite is by lift/stairs only. A safe refuge is required in case of fire	Estates to arrange for safe refuge to be installed	December 2023	Work request referred to Estates Committee

2. Accessibility to the school curriculum

TARGET	COMMENT	STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	OUTCOME
To provide wheelchair accessible workspaces in Science	There are no facilities in the Science Laboratories suitable for wheelchair users	EMC to review accessible laboratory desks and to integrate into rolling programme of refurbishment (Lab 6)	Consultation and action plan by August 2022	Labs 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10 are accessible Proposals for Radcliffe to be converted into Chemistry, with accessible access. With SLMT for approval
To provide wheelchair accessible access to workspaces in Art	Main Art facilities are all currently upstairs in Main School	SHA to liaise with GHU to refurbish PD1/PD2 to allow it to be used as an accessible Art facility	Plan and works by Sept 2023	Art relocated to the Main Building, with lift access
To provide step free access to Dance, Music and Drama facilities	Currently Dance, Drama and Music are based in Walkfares and there is no step-free access	See Access to Walkfares above SHA/KBA to liaise with AWI to allow other venues to be used effectively for Drama lessons SMO to liaise with SHA to ensure other suitable areas are available for Dance	August 2024	Work requests added to Estates
To ensure hearing loops or other equipment to aid those with hearing	Not all locations currently used have induction loops installed.	SHA to audit the induction loops currently installed and to liaise with KBA to ensure systems are in place (or can be moved to) all venues currently in use.	Sept 2022	Loops in place at Main Reception, Prep Reception and Nursery Reception. Devices are portable

difficulties is available throughout School		LGR/BRO to audit the microphone/receivers available and to ensure these are available to all teachers/staff as required	January 2023	
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3. Accessibility of Information about the School

TARGET	COMMENT	STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	OUTCOME
To review the accessibility of the School website	To assess the accessibility of the website, a detailed review is required	To identify an accessibility specialist who is able to review the accessibility of the website	Michaelmas 2023	

Historical improvements to improve Accessibility

AREA	TARGET	COMMENT	PLAN
ACCESS	Pathways	New pathway to Nursey completed and allows step free access from Car Park	Works to be carried out in accordance with stock condition survey
ACCESS	Tarmac Areas	Tarmac areas in certain parts of the site need to be resurfaced	Survey to be carried out at least annually and programme of works to be drawn up
ACCESS	Cycle path	Cycle path requires constant maintenance to ensure safety for users	Survey to be carried out at least annually and programme of works to be drawn up
WHOLE SITE	Signage	Corporate school signage required - consistent sign system throughout and appropriate use of upper and lower case	Standardise signage Colour and font
WHOLE SITE	Means of Escape	Currently wheelchair refuge points in Priory Court only	Consider creation of more refuge points, as required and in all future builds on multiple floors.
WHOLE SITE	Means of Escape	Individual Personal Evacuation Plans to be written for all disabled students	To be written by Health Centre
WHOLE SITE	Notice boards Door closers Doors	Notice boards not always at consistent heights; lack of vision panels on some doors; suitable door closer systems needed throughout	Levelling of boards as replaced; vision panels to be put in wherever possible within listed building; door closers to be checked as part of ongoing maintenance programme

AREA	TARGET	COMMENT	PLAN	TIMEFRAME
WHOLE SITE	Toilets	Planned expansion of accessible toilets within teaching and learning areas across the site completed. All areas now contain an accessible toilet.	Consider installation of accessible WCs in more boarding houses, if required Toilet seat risers for height adjustment provided	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing.
WHOLE SITE	Toilets	Tonal and colour contrast has been incorporated into refurbishments as planned. All refurbishment and new toilet facilities to incorporate individual, enclosed cubicles.	Where possible adapt/refurbish existing toilets in buildings and ensure all new facilities have enclosed cubicles	Ongoing refurbishment schedule and ensure all new facilities are reviewed.
ACCESS	Stairs/Ramps /lifts	Access for the disabled possible to every building	Consider improved solution for Campion Boarding House Install a ramp for the Performing Arts Centre - Drama/Music in Walkfares. Install a ramp at front of Radcliffe.	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing.
WHOLE SITE	Colour schemes	Appropriate colours have been chosen that are helpful for visually impaired students/staff or visitors in accordance with the plan	Continue refurbishment plans using suitable colours	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled
COMMUNICATION	Induction Loops	Induction Loop fitted in Chapel and all reception areas. Portable systems installed that can be relocated	Suitable equipment to also be installed in the Eaton Theatre/Jubilee/Denford Hall.	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled

		as required. Suitable microphone/transmitters purchased for use with individuals in lessons/activities on site.		
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WHOLE SITE	Workstations	Accessible workstation available in the Food Technology room. Consider extension of provision to enable disabled students to participate in lessons and onsite activities, as required	Provide further workstations across the site, as required	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing
WHOLE SITE	Appropriate seating, footrests	Provision of seating and footrests in classrooms and laboratories for very short/tall students or disabled students	Provide appropriate seating in classrooms, as required	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing
STAFF ACCOMMODATION		Ground floor accommodation is available	Keep under review	As and when required or when planning for admission of a staff member or when a staff member becomes disabled
To provide staff with up to date INSET on disability as appropriate		Sufficient resources provided for staff INSET Head of Learning Development or appropriate other to attend external INSET on disability when needed and to cascade to School staff as required	All teachers are aware of support required by current disabled students	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing
To provide extra support in class across all abilities of students		Maintain staffing capacity within Learning Development Department	Students supported, both SEND and EAL, thus facilitating better access to the curriculum	Review of provision on-going

To provide dedicated examination rooms for students who need separate accommodation in their examinations	Research cost. Hire individual pods for the period of May and June. Review effectiveness of this arrangement at the end of the examination period	Every student requiring separate accommodation in examinations to be allocated to a pod	On-going
Co-ordinated Access Arrangements	Learning Development Administrator has been appointed	All laptops used for examinations and controlled assessments personalised to the needs of the student and loaded with the appropriate software.	On-going
More diagnostic assessment tools	Research available diagnostic tools where necessary.	To identify specific weaknesses in a student's learning profile as early as possible.	On-going
To provide coloured overlays/reading rulers	Coloured overlays/reading rulers available for students with reading difficulties	Targeted students able to show their reading ability through use of overlays/reading rulers.	On-going

To provide digital voice recorders and note taking software in class	Digital voice recorders and audio note taker (software) available to students with note taking difficulties	Targeted students able to take notes in class through use of a digital voice recorders and audio note taker (software). Targeted students able to proofread through use of a digital voice recorders	On-going
To provide practical resources to enhance written communication	Writing slopes, pen/pencil grips and adapted pens (weighted)	Targeted students able to produce clear, legible handwriting	On-going

	made available to students with writing difficulties		
To provide Mental Health and Wellbeing awareness training	Outsourced and in-house training	Staff awareness and response	On-going
All photocopying on dyslexia friendly paper.	Coloured paper available for all photocopying	Targeted students able to read texts without visual stress	On-going

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME
To improve accessibility of the school prospectus via the web	Online videos and resources available via website to include detail that is in the prospectus.	Website updated regularly with accessible content	As necessary
Make available written school material in alternative formats	The School will provide materials in required formats (e.g. large print, accessible fonts, coloured paper etc.)	The School will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes	As necessary
Review documentation with a view to ensuring accessibility for students with visual impairment	Request support from Learning Development Department	Specific students with visual impairment will have better access to written material	As necessary