

## **Accessibility Policy – Whole School**

The Accessibility Policy and associated Plan have been developed with regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and has been developed and reviewed in light of the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2014, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the DfE Transition Guidance 2015 and GDST SEN Fundamental Principles, Policy and Guidance. The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for reviewing the School's policies, procedures and facilities, as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled and to make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities. It may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

### **Admission to the School**

- Admission to the School depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to maintain and, if possible, to improve the educational and general standards for all its pupils commensurate with the School's ethos.
- The School must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by her peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at School.
- The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils, and potential pupils, regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments to not put any disabled pupil, or potential pupil, at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disabled. A disability is defined as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".
- The School asks parents to complete a registration form with details of the pupil's disability at the time of application. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

### **Physical Access**

- The new Senior School buildings have been specified with highly accessible teaching and learning spaces, with lift access to all floors on the main site. The second floor in the Music School does not have lift access but otherwise, all areas of the Senior School should be accessible for most pupils with limited mobility. The Junior School located at Chapman House has a passenger lift installed serving the main teaching block. An additional restriction, common to many Schools, is that of having fixed classrooms for each subject, based on the valid principle of having most of the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires pupils to move from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts.

- The Accessibility Plan to meet the legal planning duties will seek to improve physical access within the constraints of local planning permission and the budgetary impact outlined above.
- Every effort will be made to make timetable changes to make the curriculum accessible to pupils with impaired mobility, although this may not always be possible. Sometimes timetable and rooming changes will be made on an ad hoc basis according to need – whether for those with long-term or life-long difficulties or those with temporary access difficulties, such as injury.

### **Education**

- Staff will continue to be made aware of students with Disability or Special Educational Needs by the SENCO (Please see SEND Policy).
- Staff will continue to be made aware of strategies to make “reasonable adjustments” within the classroom so as not to place disabled students at a substantial disadvantage in accessing the curriculum. SENCO will discuss such strategies as appropriate with Heads of Department or other staff.
- Staff will need to adapt their teaching to the learning patterns of all the students according to their abilities and needs. Such differentiation should be reflected in Lesson Plans and Schemes of Work.
- The implementation of reasonable adjustments to classroom management, teaching and expectations, should not prejudice the progress of other students, nor their Health and Safety (e.g. labs, workshops, sports equipment).
- The School, as an independent school, is not required under legislation to provide auxiliary support such as a classroom assistant, or auxiliary aids e.g. laptops or hearing loops.
- That said, the school is committed to developing appropriate strategies and supports, including ongoing development of ICT infrastructure and access to appropriate assistive technologies and applications where possible.

### **Sporting & Recreational Activities**

- The School will continue to provide equal access to all school activities for disabled students, within the constraints of the physical nature of the site, the budgetary costs, the Health and Safety implications and difficulties of supervision.
- Individual Risk Assessment and management strategies will be provided for disabled students engaged in school trips or visits.
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### **Welfare Awareness**

- Staff and students are to be made aware of student disabilities and understand their effects and will support disabled students as part of School life in all its facets
- Appropriate staff Inset will be provided on a regular basis to enhance understanding of disability, the need for making reasonable adjustments in compliance with our legal duties and to improve our educational provision
- The School’s Equal Opportunities Policy, Bullying Policy, Codes of Behaviour, student and staff handbooks, will be updated to reflect inclusiveness and the difficulties faced by disabled students, thereby improve understanding and integration
- The School will agree with parents appropriate regular means of communication with regard to the student’s progress, behavioural issues and the effects of any medication

Reviewed September 2018  
Next Review Date September 2019