

Accessibility Plan

[Next update – September 2018]

PRIORY SCHOOL AT WHIPPINGHAM ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Equality Act 2010 - a school's duties:

3(1) The responsible body of a school in England and Wales must prepare—

(a) an accessibility plan;

(b) further such plans at such times as may be prescribed.

(2) An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period—

(a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum

(b) improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school

(c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled

This Accessibility Plan has been drawn up with information supplied by the Local Authority, the previous owners, and in conjunction with pupils, parents, and staff. The Accessibility Plan is reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes, and originally provided a projected plan from 2012 for the three year period ahead of the next review date in 2015. Substantial implementation has taken place and is noted below.

2. The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's ethos and compliance with the Equality Act 2010, which ranges far wider than just Schedule 10 of the Act, and is published on the school's website alongside the school's other, linked, policies. It is closely linked to the Admissions Policy which directly references both the Equalities Act and the Disability Discrimination Act, and specifically to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The School fully complies with the statutory requirements of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (Independent Schools) (England) requirements 2010.

It is understood that it is the responsibility of the school to monitor school activities under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and to review periodically, and at least every year, compliance therein.

3. It is important to stress that the school's overall commitment to its pupils, staff and parents is, as the Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying policies make clear, in conjunction with which this plan should be read, based on a clear Christian ethic, supplying as it does a broad framework, fully consonant with the development over the past 70 years of human rights legislation, within which all issues of equality, respect and non-discrimination are seen to operate.

The plan fully acknowledges the “protected characteristics” outlined in the Act, categories themselves the outcome of societal and legal developments in the past 70 years; moreover, it stresses the underpinning value of each person in the above light; and from that derives its unwavering commitment to treat all pupils, staff and parents as human beings of intrinsic and absolute worth. The plan and its compliance with the Act are to be seen in this light, enshrining in particular the welfare of each individual pupil entrusted to its care.

4. In terms of accessibility, the Whippingham site is on level ground, with only 2 wings, i.e. 4 rooms altogether, those of the old Victorian building designed by Prince Albert and built by Queen Victoria after his death in 1861, being above ground floor. Apart from these 4 rooms, all other rooms are on the ground floor with multiple door access. This enables access to all teaching areas. The entrance of the school, and to the auxiliary classrooms based in the old nursery of the previous primary school, are fully ramped to enable disabled access.

Further partitioning of rooms required to put Priory School into the previously primary school site were originally carried out in full compliance with requirements for wheelchair access, and no further partitioning of rooms took place; as development of the school proceeded with increased student numbers, these partitions were removed and all ground floor rooms had direct wheelchair access.

In 2014 an additional unit to house KS1 was added to the old nursery units which had been turned into science labs and an art department, and this new unit was comprehensively ramped for both forward and rear entrance and fire escape to remain fully compliant with accessibility requirements. Also in 2014 with the completion of a 6th Form suite, further doors were fitted with glass panels to ensure visibility throughout the building. In 2015 a modern, comprehensive fire alarm system throughout the building was installed, with control panel identifying separate rooms.

Sports teaching is on the school grounds which also are fully accessible and internal PE is in the large hall, itself on the ground floor.

5. Accessibility is not just physical, however: it includes relevant and timely actions to: increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils; this has already been successfully carried out for pupils with disabilities where the PE/Sports curriculum has been varied to ensure their full participation. This also applies to the wider curriculum of the school including such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. There is a weekly staff e-mail as well as “special issues” where pupil information in particular as to medical, disability and learning support needs are fully communicated. The SEND department has a SENCO, two TAs/LSAs and also three specialist Learning Support Tutors qualified and experienced in their specialist fields.

This allows full assessment of any **extra times** required for **public examinations**, which has been provided for appropriately eligible students.

It also covers the provision of specialist or **auxiliary aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe.

There is furthermore the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities - for example, handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; this information is available in various preferred formats on request.

In line with the original plan for 2012-2015, there also has been fresh provision of chairs, tables, storage trays for all students, individual storage space for bags, PE kit, overalls and Art portfolios. In 2015 a major programme over the summer gave further provision of smart-boards, projectors and PCs in most classrooms, enhancing accessibility to the curriculum and to teaching.

6. Improved accessibility to the curriculum extends to the training of staff, in particular in First Aid, PE/Sports, and Safeguarding, and to the provision of critical medical and other information relating to any disability, within the broad framing of that term under the Act. Training will recognise the need to raise awareness for staff on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010 and to the relevant school ethos.

7. The Accessibility Plan will be subject to review and current aspects include:

- - trip & visit planning, to bear in mind in particular provision for access
- - Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying policies, with which this Accessibility Plan should be read, to note these provisions

8. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school at the end of each summer term order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the next academic year. Weight will be given to the experience of pupils with any disability as defined by the Act, individually and through the prefectorial and School Council structures, to enable a fully responsive and need-equivalent plan to be developed.

9. The School Prospectus will make reference to this Accessibility Plan.

10. The School's complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

11. The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

12. The Accessibility Plan will be monitored by the Principal & staff in consultation with the Parents' Association and pupil structures aforesaid.

Authorised by the Principal, Mr E J Matyjaszek

October 2017