

Accessibility Policy

This policy sets out the approach of Giggleswick School ('the School') to increasing access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 and the Equality Act 2010:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Giggleswick School's aim is to ensure that any prospective pupil, who fulfils our admissions requirements, is able to come to the School irrespective of personal disability or special educational need.

The School also has an Equal Opportunities Policy and separate, but complementary, Special Educational Needs Policies for the senior and junior schools that outline the School's policies and procedures for pupils with disabilities. The School's curriculum policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan; and our behaviour and anti-bullying policies and procedures follow duties under the Equality Act 2010, including issues related to pupils with special educational needs/ disabilities, which explain how reasonable adjustments are made for these pupils.

1. Admissions

Giggleswick School will consider applications from any child, regardless of disability, colour, creed or race so long as other entrance criteria are met.

Giggleswick School is a full-boarding and day, co-educational independent school and it has a selective admissions policy. Pupils with specific learning difficulties may be accepted provided that the School is able to offer the level of specialist and general assistance required. Parents should be aware that there may be a charge for additional individual learning support.

Where an admission enquiry is made by the parents of a pupil with a specific learning difficulty or disability, then the Learning Support Coordinator in the Senior School or in the Junior School, is involved at an early stage. Where possible they meet prospective pupils and their parents at the initial visit to discuss and assess needs and to consider any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made. Where appropriate, pupils' needs are assessed with the support and advice of external agencies, such as an occupational therapist or Educational Psychologist, as part of the admission process.

2. Provision of education

2.1 Curriculum

The School's approach to curriculum is that it should take account of the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties. In support of this, training continues to be provided regarding the adaptation of teaching to meet the requirements of all pupils.

The School offers a broad curriculum and within this curriculum there is in-built flexibility to create pupil programmes that meet the needs and interests of each individual.

The majority of subjects are taught in mixed ability groups; however, in the Senior School, pupils are set according to ability in Mathematics, Science, English (to some extent), French (in some year groups). This enables pupils to work at a pace and level that is appropriate to their needs and abilities. In general, any lower ability groups are smaller in size. Sets are reviewed at regular intervals and pupils are moved between the groups. There is flexibility to reduce the amount of teaching in modern languages for pupils with specific learning difficulties in Year 7,8, and 9 where provision is made for specialised support for literacy skills in lieu of some language lessons.

2.2 Staffing support and training

There is an overall staff to pupil ratio of 1:8. Average class sizes range from 12 to 22, depending on the subject and age range.

The Learning Support team is comprised of a part-time Learning Support Coordinator in the Senior School who is a full-time member of staff. In the Junior School the Learning Support Coordinator is a class teacher who is qualified to screen for dyslexia. In the Senior School the Learning Support Coordinator is supported by part-time Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) who provide in-class support particularly at Key Stage 3. In the Junior School the support is provided by a teaching assistant. There is also a team of peripatetic learning support teachers who provide supplementary one-to-one support. These additional individual one-to-one support lessons are charged to parents. Much of the department's time focuses on communicating and working with teaching staff to ensure that the individual needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties are being met effectively in the classroom and curriculum.

Staff training at Faculty and whole school level takes into account dyslexia and multi-sensory teaching and learning. Teachers are also encouraged to attend courses to help develop their understanding and awareness of specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Meetings with the Learning Support Coordinator to discuss specific learning difficulties and with the Director of Studies to review baseline data form a part of the induction programme for all newly appointed teachers.

2.3 Existing pupils

The School has pupils who have a specific learning difficulty or disability. The difficulties these pupils have included: dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ADHD, ADD, Asperger's syndrome, specific language impairment, mild hearing loss, colour blindness, severe asthma, diabetes, petit mal and Cerebral Palsy. All of these pupils have access to the School's existing curriculum, sporting and leisure programme and premises. Those requiring regular medication are supported by the care and guidance offered by the Medical Centre.

2.4 Individual Learning and Management Profiles (LaMPs)

All pupils on the School's special educational needs register have a LaMP that has clearly stated and agreed targets that are reviewed periodically. These profiles are designed to be easy for staff and parents to understand and use.

2.5 Involving parents and pupils

As part of the reviewing process, Learning Support staff will discuss an appropriate curriculum for a pupil with a disability with both the parents and pupils. For example, a pupil with moderate specific learning difficulties may reduce the number of curriculum subjects. In the Junior School annual review meetings are held with parents whose children have LaMPs to discuss progress and targets if required, as well as drafting new LaMPs. Any changes to the timetable are discussed fully with the Head of the Junior School or the Director of Studies.

There is a transition programme to assist SEND pupils in moving from Year 6 at the Junior School to Year 7 at the Senior School.

2.6 Assessment

Baseline testing data is scrutinised to further identify pupils with potential learning issues. Learning Support staff will brief and advise teaching and boarding house staff and where appropriate, complete further diagnostic tests. Permission is sought from parents prior to this diagnostic assessment and scores are discussed with parents and where appropriate with pupils.

2.7 Subjects and departments

Heads of Faculty and the Head of the Junior School play a key role in ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible to all pupils. SEND is discussed in Faculty meetings and School INSET

Each departmental handbook will contain a document outlining strategies for teaching pupils with Special Educational Needs and its approaches to differentiation.

The needs of individual pupils (particularly those with specific learning difficulties) are regularly discussed at Staff, Departmental and Tutorial Meetings. The Learning Support Coordinator and support teachers are available to discuss and advise all individual subject teachers about meeting the needs of pupils. Where appropriate, they visit departments and observe lessons.

2.8 Examinations

The School makes adjustments for disabled pupils taking examinations. They may be given additional time, be allowed to use a word processor, have an amanuensis, a reader, rest breaks or alternative rooming..

Examination papers can be printed on to different coloured paper if appropriate. It is possible to order Braille or large print versions from the Examination Boards. The School can print large text versions of its own internal examination papers. If appropriate alternative, smaller examination venues can be arranged for those whose specific needs or medical conditions require this.

3. Physical environment

Giggleswick School is committed to improving accessibility to our buildings where ever it can.

The historic nature of the Giggleswick campus, along with its physical location, poses many challenges to adaptation and accessibility. Our core facilities, including the dining hall, library, student accommodation, sports hall, assembly hall, and classrooms, are spread over many acres of a steeply sloping campus. Access to these day-to-day facilities is achieved by long, steep flights of steps cut into the hillside, or alternatively by steeply sloping roads.

Despite these challenges, the School has a policy to continue to make alterations to the physical environment with the aim of adapting and making accessible as many areas as possible across the campus.

All new buildings are fully compliant with the latest Building Regulations. Where we are completely refurbishing existing buildings, every effort is made to make the building as compliant as possible. In addition to major project work the School is committed to adapting buildings where practicable.

Improving the accessibility of the public buildings has been and remains a primary concern.

The following provides an assessment of the accessibility of key buildings:

3.1 Boarding and private study facilities

At present, boarding facilities have limited scope to accommodate physically disabled pupils. One girls' house does have sleeping accommodation on the ground floor, but none of the

boys' houses have any ground floor sleeping accommodation. At Catteral house (Years 5 to 8), there is no ground floor sleeping accommodation.

All day pupils in Years 9 and above enjoy private or shared study accommodation in their houses. A physically disabled day pupil would be able to enjoy a normal academic experience at the School but would not be able to access private or shared study accommodation in boys' houses and would therefore have to use the Sharpe Library (see 3.10 below), which provides an excellent working environment on the ground floor of the Attermire Building for private study.

3.2 Chapel

The Chapel is a grade 2* listed building. It was comprehensively restored between 1994 and 2001. It is open to the public, without charge. Access from the main school campus on foot would be particularly difficult for the severely disabled. However, the approach from the car park to the side entrance where access into the building via a portable ramp is available. There is one lavatory in the basement of the building which has not been designed with the needs of disabled people in mind.

3.3 Dining Hall

The Dining Hall was opened in 1999. There is a parking bay and access without using steps from Mill Hill Lane. The building contains toilet provision for the disabled. Access throughout the building is on one level. A permanent ramp is in place at the main entrance to the building, obviating the need for temporary ramps to be deployed

The height of the serving counters is not suitable for disabled people using a wheelchair, and in such circumstances, it is assumed that a pupil or other user of the facility would receive assistance from suitably trained staff.

Signs indicating the choice of food can be displayed at a suitable height and location.

3.4 Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre

The swimming pool is not well adapted for use by the disabled, although access would be possible by wheelchair to the entrance. A ramp would be required. Changing and lavatory facilities are not designed with disabled people in mind. All swimming sessions during term time are supervised by staff. A reasonable adjustment to enhance the availability of the swimming pool for pupils is more likely to involve ensuring appropriate training for PE staff to teach swimming. Adjustments to the services in the building could be undertaken if demand justified this. However, a staff changing/showering area within the building is available which could be used by a disabled person; however, the lavatories have not been designed for use by a disabled person.

The Fitness Centre is adjacent to the Sports Hall and was opened in 2018. This facility is fully accessible for disabled individuals.

3.5 Eshtons pavilion

This building was extended in 2001 and designed to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

3.6 Cricket pavilion

Access for a disabled person is difficult because of the steps leading up from the grounds. The building was refurbished in 2004 and new changing and showering facilities which comply with the requirements of the DDA were installed.

3.7 Sports Hall

The building was completed in 2007 and is designed to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. This building incorporates the Squash and Fives Courts which are of older design, but provide for generally acceptable access.

3.8 Catteral Pavilion

This building was rebuilt in 2004 and was designed to comply with all relevant regulations.

3.9 Playing fields and tennis courts

Various difficulties regarding access have been identified. In general terms, access is restricted and a disabled person would, most likely, need to be brought by car to the playing fields and tennis courts. The tennis courts and the grass courts are accessible without the need to negotiate the steps.

3.10 The Sharpe Library

Disabled access to this part of the School is available from the 'Back Quad'. There is no significant change in levels throughout the centre.

3.11 The Science Department in Senior School

These teaching areas have been refurbished and modernised, and incorporate all necessary modifications and physical access improvements required by the DDA and SENDA legislation.

3.12 The Dutton Centre (Giggleswick Students' Union)

Access is restricted due to steps at the entrance. It is proposed to monitor the overall requirements of the pupils and, if necessary adapt the steps to allow wheel chair access.

3.13 The Partridge Building

This building was completed in 2002, and complied with DDA legislation at the time of construction.

3.14 Memorial Library and Bursary

When the Memorial Library was refurbished installation of a lift was not considered to be a reasonable adjustment as the use of the building is not primarily for educational purposes. The Bursary office has steps to it, but the Brayshaw Library is at the same level as the corridor and external entrance and is considered to be accessible.

3.15 The Languages Building in the Back Quad

Access is not possible for severely disabled people. The upper part of the building is mainly used by the Languages department and can be accessed from the path below 'Hostel rocks', although steps would need to be removed and replaced.

3.16 The Medical Centre and the Art Department

The old Medical Centre building was refurbished for the Art Department, and Huntsman's now houses the new Medical Centre. Both refurbishments took into account the requirements of the DDA/SENDA legislation.

3.17 Lavatories

Lavatories for disabled users are located in the following areas: the Dining Hall, the reception area at Senior School, the Richard Whiteley Theatre, Eshtons Pavilion, the Sports Hall, the Art department, the Catteral Pavilion and the Partridge Building.

3.18 The Richard Whiteley Theatre

This theatre was created in 2011 through a conversion of the old Sports and Assembly Hall and is fully compliant with relevant legislation and includes a disabled toilet.

3.19 Other areas at the Junior School

The facilities used by Art and Music, as well as the Science Block, are in older buildings which cannot be easily adapted or modified and which have a number of changes in levels. The science teaching facilities are less problematical.

3.20 The external environment

Much of the School's topography is difficult for disabled people. Simple changes and additions to the environment are, however, necessary and achievable and constitute reasonable adjustments that would improve access for the disabled.

Speed ramps are installed as traffic calming measures throughout the campus. These cause difficulties for wheelchair users which have been ameliorated by the removal of sections to allow easier movement.

Handrails on sloping paths have been installed in a variety of locations.

The School is also able to provide additional external seating for rest places in areas where the ground slopes steeply.

It is recognised that some steps are uneven and need to be replaced, such as the front step at the main reception.

External lighting has been extensively upgraded for security reasons in recent years. The School will continue to investigate ways of improving visibility after daylight hours.

Signage has also been improved in recent years, although directional signage is low key.

The School has compiled a document 'Traffic Management on site and pupil movement on roads' which forms part of the Health & Safety policy.

Reviewed by:	MZ Hodge - Bursar, JR Mundell - Head of Giggleswick Junior School, AL Wood - Assistant Head (Academic) Jonathan Curry Learning Support Coordinator
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