



# MALVERN ST JAMES

## Girls' School

### 3 Year Accessibility Plan 2021 - 2024

This policy is the responsibility of the Director of Teaching and Learning, together with the Director of Operations and Compliance and Head of Learning Support to review and update annually. The School's governors are responsible for ensuring the implementation of the accessibility plan during the period to which it relates. A new plan will be drawn up every three years.

#### **Ethos and Aims**

The School is committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We aim to ensure that each and every pupil can participate fully in the life of the school and we are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

#### **Scope**

**Definition of disability:** A child or young person is disabled if they have 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities' (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

This has some overlap with the **definition of 'special educational needs'** in the Children and Families Act 2014 (which includes pupils with significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age, or a disability which means that a pupil cannot make full use of the general educational facilities provided for pupils of their age), but not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa.

Malvern St James plans, over time, to increase the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the School. The objectives of the Accessibility Plan are to:

- Improve access to the **physical environment** of the School, for disabled pupils to enable them to take full advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can **participate in the School's curriculum**. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the School such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or School visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum, including use of ICT such as Microsoft Teams, Class Notebook and DocsPlus
- Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of **written information** which is readily available to non-disabled pupils. This includes planning how to make written information accessible to disabled pupils within a reasonable time frame, for example, handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events, including use of ICT such as MS Teams, Class Notebook and DocsPlus

We acknowledge that there is a need for ongoing awareness raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter.

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies.

- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Discrimination and Disability Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Race Equality Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

The School, its buildings and approaches are regularly reviewed by the Head of Estates to ensure that, wherever possible, access to the School for disabled pupils, staff and visitors is assessed and if required improved and the costs are prioritised within the maintenance budget. The School will endeavour to ensure that accessibility issues do not become a barrier to pupils attending the School, with associated risk assessments conducted to identify immediate measures to be addressed.

The Policy will be monitored through the Governance and Legal Committee and Education and Pastoral Committee of the Governors.

The School takes advice from professional advisors (architects) and contractors as to the best, and most cost-efficient way, to implement the accessibility plan for new buildings and refurbishment, in accordance with Building Regulations.

### **How the plan is constructed**

The School's Disability Policy Review Committee consists of the Director of Teaching and Learning, the Director of Operations and Compliance, the Director of Pastoral Care and the Head of Learning Support and may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance. The committee's terms of reference are:

1. to review the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled;
2. to make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future;
3. to prepare the School's SEN and Disability Policy;
4. to prepare the School's accessibility plan
5. to review such plans and policies as necessary and at least on an annual basis.

The School's disability policy review committee will consider the following when developing and reviewing the plan:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Education
- Extra-curricular activities
- Governing body representation
- Physical school environment
- Selection and recruitment of staff
- Sporting education and activities
- Staff training
- Welfare

We obtain the views of parents of pupils with disabilities and these are taken into account in the formation of the Accessibility plan. The School conducts audits of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the views of teaching, business support staff, pupils and parents are obtained via means of a questionnaire and by talking to relevant pupils and parents/guardians directly. The results are used to inform the school accessibility plan.

Admissions of new pupils will be in line with the School's Admissions Policy. Staff with responsibility for the induction arrangements for new pupils will be consulted in plenty of time to ensure that the particular needs of disabled pupils are recognised in advance, that suitable staff training is provided and that any modifications to the curriculum or premises are fed into the plan before the arrival of the new pupils.

## **How the plan is reviewed and monitored**

The School's disability policy review committee will meet biannually and make recommendations for inclusion in the plan, which are then shared with the Senior Leadership Team and the governing body. At this time, progress will be reported, including measures that have been achieved and where delays in implementation may be foreseen.

The plan is then updated with adjusted time-frames where necessary..

## **Background information - Education Facilities**

### **Main Building**

There are education facilities located on the ground, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of this 6 storey Victorian building. Wheelchair access into the Main Building is via either the 'Porte-Cochere doors' or the ramp from the 'Quad'; both give direct access to York Hall and the ground floor corridor. An internal ramp has been created giving access from York Hall onto the ground floor corridor. The lift located in the reception hall gives access to most of the classrooms on the upper floors, the Sixth Form Centre and the Lower Ground Floor Dining room.

Dedicated appropriate toilet facilities are provided on the ground floor.

The lift serving the building is not rated as an evacuation lift and so an evacuation chair has been installed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor corridor. A policy has been written to cover its use and the staff required to use the equipment have been trained in its use. Please see the procedures for the Evacuation of Non-Ambulant Pupils in the Health and Safety Policy.

### **Science and Mathematics Building**

This is a modern purpose built 3 storey building. Access to the ground floor is via a ramped external entrance from the car park or via the side entrance of the building which has a ramped access and has had installed a more suitable width doorway which is closer to the lift. The classrooms on the upper floors are accessed via the lift. Dedicated accessible toilet facilities are provided on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of this building. A fire evacuation chair has been installed on the top floor.

### **Art and Technology Block**

This is a split level, modified, 3 storey Victorian building. Access to the ground floor is via a ramped external entrance from the 'Quad'. From the ground floor a further internal ramp gives access to the Food Technology, Art Textile and DT teaching rooms. The building does not lend itself to reasonable modification to increase the access to either the lower ground or the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Drama Centre**

This is a modified 2 storey building with ground floor access to both the performing space and the subject classroom. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Avenue Music Centre**

The Music Department is based in a 2 storey modified Victorian Villa. The ground floor classrooms and rehearsal spaces are accessed via internal ramps leading from an external door. The building does not lend itself to reasonable modification to increase the access to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Library**

Due to the structure of the building and that the school is not a purpose built building, the Library, and Learning Support area do not have wheelchair accessibility. If wheelchair access is needed for Learning Support, alternative rooms will be allocated.

### **Dome**

The Dome is used for sports and also for running external examinations. The main arena of the building is accessible from the front doors but the building does not lend itself to reasonable modification to increase the access to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor viewing gallery or the lower ground floor squash courts. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Sports Centre**

The Sports Centre is a modern purpose built 2 storey facility. The building is accessible on both the ground and lower ground floors and also has a lift. The building has been fitted out with 2 accessible toilets, one on each floor and the lower ground floor has a 'wet room' style changing/shower room. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Swimming pool**

The pool hall and changing rooms are located in a split level single storey Victorian building and are currently not accessible.

## **Background information - Residential Facilities**

### **Batsford House – Prep and Lower School**

Batsford House was opened in September 2010 as the Junior Boarding House. The building does not lend itself to reasonable modification to increase the access to boarding facilities. (To have dedicated the space required for an accessible bathroom would have had a detrimental effect on the ratio of showers/baths to pupils and so further limited the capacity of this house without any immediate prospect of user need.) There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Hatfield House – Middle School**

Hatfield House is a purpose built 1960's 4 storey building.

The ground floor is accessible via external ramps leading to the front door. This gives access to the common rooms and dining facilities in the House. The dormitories are on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors but are only accessible via a pair of spiral staircases which do not lend themselves to reasonable modification to increase the access. This house is being refurbished in 2021/2. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Mount House – Middle School**

Mount House comprises two connected and modified Victorian houses. Accessible areas in this building are limited and risk assessed. The building does not lend itself to reasonable modification to increase the access to dormitories. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Greenslade House – Year 13**

Greenslade House is a purpose built 1980's 3 storey building. Due to the split-level design of each floor in this house only very limited access is achievable from any single ground floor entrance. The dormitories are on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors and are served by multiple stairs which would not lend themselves to reasonable alteration to improve vertical access. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Poulton House – Year 12**

Poulton House occupies most of the third and all of the fourth floors in the main building. Although the area is accessible via a lift, it is not rated as an evacuation lift and so cannot be used in the event of a fire evacuation. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

### **Benhams House – Flexible boarding house**

This boarding house has been refurbished to include a ground floor disabled shower room and ablutions with accessible bedrooms adjacent. The House kitchen and common rooms are also on the ground floor. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building. The Headmistress lives in the attached Rectory.

## **Background Information - Teaching and Learning**

Please refer to the SEND Policy for detailed information on provision for SEN and disabled pupils. The aims with regards to teaching and learning provision are as follows:

- The School will draw up a Pupil Profile and/or Care Plan as necessary to support the disabled learner. This will be drawn up in co-operation with parents/carers.
- Staff will continue to be made aware of students with Disability or Special Educational Needs (SEN) by the Head of Learning Support (covered further in the School SEND Policy) and appropriate training put in place.
- The Head of Learning Support and the Health Centre working with other teaching staff will be responsible for ensuring any additional support is in place and for monitoring that learner.
- 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 e.g. providing text in bigger font, sitting a child near the front etc. The Head of Learning Support will discuss such strategies as appropriate with

Heads of Department or other staff. Such differentiation should be reflected in Departmental SEND Guidelines 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 will ensure that there is adequate training of teaching staff so everyone is able to accommodate the needs of a disabled learner.
- The school's broad and balanced curriculum is delivered in such a way that it meets the needs of all learners at MSJ.
- The School, as an independent school, is not required under current legislation to provide auxiliary support such as a classroom assistant, or auxiliary aids e.g. laptops or hearing loops, although it does try to facilitate the use of auxiliary aids such as laptops where this has been formally recommended by an Educational Psychologist.
- The School is actively developing and promoting digital E-learning as detailed in the School Development Plan, which will aid all pupils, but specifically those pupils with special educational needs or disabilities. E-learning has been accelerated in response to Covid-19, where the School has run very successful remote and blended learning programme, using Microsoft Teams, Class Notebook and DocsPlus plus the equipment required to deliver this in both the long-term as well as short-term. In addition to this, training has been provided to staff to support pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.

### Improving access to the physical environment - EDUCATION FACILITIES

	Target	Strategies	Outcome
<b>Short term</b> (2021-2022)	Review and ensure any existing building plans incorporate accessibility provision (Autumn term, 2021)	Director of Operations and Compliance to Undertake review	Ensure that provision for SEN or disabled pupils are considered.
	Investigate the use of an installations of portable hearing loops in large rooms e.g. The Dome, Abbey Room and York Hall (Autumn term, 2021)	Conduct a survey to identify needs. Obtain estimate and conduct feasibility survey.	To determine whether this is a reasonable adaptation to make and install if possible
	Purchase a portable ramp to improve access around education facilities (Autumn term, 2021)	Source and purchase ramp which best suits requirements of different areas of the buildings	To improve access where currently a fixed ramp is not in place

	<p>Improve quality of light in teaching spaces and staff offices (ongoing as a rolling plan)</p> <p>Investigate the expansion of fire evacuation chairs across the school estate (Spring Term 2022)</p>	<p>Rolling programme to replace old lighting with LED daylight lights</p> <p>Director of Operations and Compliance to undertake review</p>	<p>Better working environment and improved wellbeing</p> <p>To determine whether this is a reasonable adaptation to make and install if possible</p>
<p><b>Medium term</b> (2022 – 2023)</p>	<p>Improve access to ground floor of Avenue House when required (Summer term, 2023)</p> <p>Consider improving the acoustics and lighting of large rooms e.g. The Dome, Abbey Room and York Hall, ensuring all pupils can see well and hear information delivered (Summer 2023)</p> <p>Consider Increased provision of accessible toilets in main building in light of any extension of disable access (2023)</p>	<p>Provide firm-surfaced path across gravel drive to door</p> <p>Ensure staff are aware of hearing difficulties and ensure best seating plan</p> <p>Identify an existing facility and upgrade</p>	<p>Wheelchairs will no longer sink into gravel</p> <p>All pupils will hear information and be able to participate in activities</p> <p>Accessible toilet above ground floor closer to classrooms</p>
<p><b>Long term</b> (2023 – 2024)</p>	<p>Consider disabled access to Library</p> <p>Improve access and evacuation of the</p>	<p>As part of the planned Library refurbishment improve the access from either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> floor</p>	<p>Disabled pupils will be able to make use of the Library</p> <p>Unrestricted use of the main building in</p>

	<p>upper floors of the main building</p> <p>Swimming pool accessibility</p> <p>Review and ensure any new building plans incorporate accessibility provision</p>	<p>Investigate and cost the required upgrade of the lift</p> <p>Review future refurbishment to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changing facilities</li> <li>• poolside lifts</li> </ul> <p>Director of Operations and Compliance to undertake review</p>	<p>addition to the ground floor</p> <p>Use of the School pool by disabled pupils</p> <p>To ensure that SEN and disabled pupils provision is considered</p>
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#### Improving access to the physical environment - RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

	Target	Strategies	Outcome
<b>Short term</b> (2021-2022)	<p>Purchase a portable ramp to improve access around education facilities (Autumn term 2021)</p> <p>Ensure any existing building plans incorporate accessibility provision (Autumn term 2021)</p> <p>Following recent success of Greenslade which addressed highlighted lighting issues, review acoustics and lighting in and outside the remaining boarding</p>	<p>Source and purchase ramp which best suits requirements of different areas of the buildings</p> <p>Review plans – D of Ops</p> <p>Undertake acoustic and lighting surveys in house meetings (with pupils and staff)</p> <p>Director of Operations and</p>	<p>To improve access where currently a fixed ramp is not in place.</p> <p>To ensure SEND needs are considered</p> <p>Appropriate facilities for living and study. Safe access to every boarding house. Appropriate privacy for girls.</p> <p>To determine whether this is a reasonable adaptation to make and install if possible</p>

	houses (Autumn term 2021/22)  Investigate the expansion of fire evacuation chairs across the school estate (Spring Term 2022)	Compliance to undertake review	
<b>Medium term</b> (2022 – 2023)	Improve ground floor access to Batsford House (Autumn 2022)  Improve access to Mount House ground floor (Summer 2023)  Improve quality of desk lighting in boarding (Autumn term 2022)	Identify adaptable entrances and routes and upgrade if reasonable to do so  Identify adaptable entrances and routes and upgrade if reasonable to do so  Rolling programme of desk lamp replacement	Disabled pupils would be able to take part in House activities i.e. film nights  Pupils who are wheelchair users would be able to take part in House activities i.e. film nights  Good lighting for studying, less strain on eyesight; supports those who have compromised eyesight/learning disabilities
<b>Long term</b> (2023 – 2024)	Provide accessible Sixth Form day girl study, common room and washroom facilities in the Sixth Form Centre  Ensure any new building plans incorporate accessibility provision	Include a 1st floor accessible toilet  Ensure this is considered at earliest stage as possible	Unrestricted use of Sixth Form Day Girl facilities  to ensure SEND needs considered

## Increasing access to the curriculum

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Goals achieved
<b>Short term (2021-2022)</b>	<p>Continue to enable staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of needs of SEN and disabled pupils, registered with the School (Autumn 2021)</p> <p>Continue to raise the profile and importance of access to the curriculum for SEND/EAL pupils through School Development Plan (Autumn 2021)</p> <p>Continue to improve use of technology/Apps to increase access to the curriculum e.g. DocsPlus (Autumn 2021)</p>	<p>Continue training of staff by Head of Learning Support/SENCO and ensure staff work in line to the SEND Policy. Access to support from professional staff and external agencies where required.</p> <p>Keep this on the Teaching and Learning Development Plan and therefore forms part of each department's development plan.</p> <p>Audit of technology and available software/Apps/hardware and prioritise spending in LS budget to improve facilities and provision</p>	<p>Staff understanding and confidence in providing appropriate teaching and support for SEND and disabled pupils</p> <p>All departments in school are actively considering improved provision and access to curriculum for all pupils</p> <p>Best technologies supporting pupils and removal of barriers to learning</p>	<p>Flexible approach to disabled pupils</p> <p>Success of disabled pupils in examinations</p>

<p><b>Medium term (2022 – 2023)</b></p>	<p>Sustain level of Learning Support for all pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in MSJ graduated Wave approach (see SEND Policy)</p> <p>Aim to work in line with being a 'dyslexia friendly' school (Summer 2023)</p> <p>Continue to develop E-learning in school and promote digital learning and increased use of technology in teaching and learning, including widespread use of laptops and devices in lessons where pupils choose to use them (Summer 2023)</p> <p>Develop a curriculum audit to ensure School does not inadvertently discriminate</p>	<p>Maintain necessary levels of training for specialised staff</p> <p>Aim is on the Teaching and Learning Development Plan. LS department leading on this, reviewing targets for improvement against criteria and providing staff training and prioritising spending on key areas.</p> <p>Aim is on the Teaching and Learning Development Plan and is also being discussed in Academic Development Committee and IT Committee. New MIS, software, devices for staff and pupils and staff training needed.</p>	<p>Flexibility within the department to support demand from parents and needs of pupils for additional Learning Support</p> <p>Improved access to curriculum for SEN pupils</p> <p>Improved access to curriculum for all pupils, but especially for SEN pupils</p> <p>To ensure that no pupil is inadvertently discriminated against</p>	<p>Improved access for pupils in public examinations</p>
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	against pupils with a disability or SEN (Spring 2023)	Carry out curriculum audit with arising actions.		
<b>Long term</b> (Beyond 2023)	Library access (see Education facilities section)	Improve access to independent learning resources and learning and studying space	Able to visit the library as part of a lesson or working group Private study enhanced	Enabled usage of the library space Enabled access to library collections Greater public examination success

## Improving access to information

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome	Goals achieved
<b>Short term</b> (2021 – 2022)	Continue ensuring availability of written material in alternative formats i.e. consider how information such as handouts, timetables and information about school events can be disseminated in alternative formats such as large print, audio using ICT or providing information orally (Autumn 2021)	To communicate to all staff for their consideration and in line with other relevant policies e.g. SEND Policy. Use of different range of communication tools, such as MS Teams for setting Prep, sharing resources and enrichment opportunities. Use of DocsPlus to allow for text to be read back to pupil and for definitions etc. LS department to train staff and to share pupil profiles with teachers to ensure each individual pupils needs are recognised and met. Key information is also on ISAMs against each pupil to help teachers.	Wider support for pupils with specific learning difficulties/EAL requirements	Higher achievement for pupils with SpLD/EAL needs
<b>Medium &amp; Long-term</b> (2023 – beyond 2024)	Monitor and adapt where appropriate new technologies and encourage staff to recognise and adapt for different learning styles e.g. use of mindmaps, video clips, groupwork and reading aloud, as well as resources using software such as DocsPlus.	Select new software etc. and organise staff training	School remains flexible and competitive in this field	All pupils are enabled to achieve their potential

<p>These improvements will be done on a rolling programme and therefore are envisaged to progress beyond 2024)</p>	<p>As part of SMART classroom roll out improve software and hardware in classrooms across the school, including interactive projectors, improved wifi access and availability of devices and digital learning materials</p>			
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<b>Authorised by</b>	Resolution of the School Council
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	1 October 2021

<b>Effective date of the Policy</b>	1 October 2021
<b>Review date</b>	August 2022
<b>Circulation</b>	Members of School Council / teaching staff / all staff / parents / pupils [on request]