



MALVERN ST JAMES
Girls' School

3 Year Accessibility Plan 2021 - 2024

This policy is the responsibility of the Deputy Head Academic, 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. This policy addresses accessibility for our pupils and aims to ensure that each and every pupil can participate fully in the life of the School. 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 their educational opportunities, 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 pupils with disabilities 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, DocsPlus, and Read and Write software.

Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils with disabilities which is readily available to pupils without disabilities. This includes planning how to make written information accessible to pupils with disabilities 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, DocsPlus Read and Write software.

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 and Plan
- Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health & Safety Policy and Manual

The School, its buildings and approaches are regularly reviewed by the Estates and H&S Manager 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 Deputy Head Academic, the Director of Operations and Compliance, the Deputy Head Pastoral 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 with disabilities;
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 and operations 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 reasonable 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 timeframes where necessary.

Queries and complaints

Any queries in relation to the Accessibility Plan should be directed to Deputy Head Academic. The School's Complaints Procedure covers the Accessibility Plan and will apply where concerns cannot be resolved informally.

Background information - Education Facilities

Main Building

There are education facilities located on the ground, first, second and third floors of this six 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 the classrooms on the first and third 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 third floor corridor.

Science and Mathematics Building

This is a modern purpose built three 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 first floor of this building. A fire evacuation chair has been installed on the third floor.

Art and Technology Block

This is a split level, modified, three 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 first floor. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

Drama Centre

This is a modified two 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 two 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 first floor. Part of the first-floor accommodation has been converted into residential accommodation for graduate teachers. 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, Abbey Room and Learning Support areas 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 area of the building is accessible from the front doors, the building does not lend itself to reasonable modification to increase the access to the first 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 two 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 two 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

Hatfield House is not currently in use for boarding accommodation, it is a purpose built 1960's four 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 first and second floors but are only accessible via a pair of spiral staircases which do not lend themselves to reasonable modification to increase the access. There are no fire evacuation chairs installed in this building.

Mount House

Mount House is not currently in use as boarding accommodation. It 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.

Austen House – Middle School

Austen House occupies the side of the third and 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 is a fire evacuation chair installed on the third floor of this building.

Greenslade House – Year 13

Greenslade House is a purpose built 1980's three 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 first and second 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 the front of the third and 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 is a fire evacuation chair installed on the third floor of this building.

Benhams House – Year 11

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 Head has accommodation 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 will be 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 to meet the needs of the learner and to monitor its efficacy.
- 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.

- 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 to accommodate the needs of a disabled learner to the best of their ability.
- 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 has developed and promoted 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. Most Senior School pupils bring their own devices to school and are able to use them in lessons. .

Improving access to the physical environment - EDUCATION FACILITIES

	Target	Strategies	Desired Outcome
Short term (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 installation 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

	<p>Purchase a portable ramp to improve access around education facilities (Autumn term, 2021)</p> <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>Source and purchase ramp which best suits requirements of different areas of the buildings</p> <p>Rolling programme to replace old lighting with LED daylight lights</p> <p>Director of Operations and Compliance to undertake review</p>	<p>To improve access where currently a fixed ramp is not in place</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>Medium term (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</p> <p>Consider Increased provision of accessible toilets in main building in light of any</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>Wheelchairs will no longer sink into gravel</p> <p>All pupils will hear information and be able to participate in activities</p>

	extension of disabled access (2023)	Identify an existing facility and upgrade	Accessible toilet above ground floor closer to classrooms
Long term (2023 – 2024)	<p>Consider disabled access to Library</p> <p>Improve access and evacuation of the 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>As part of the planned Library refurbishment improve the access from either the first or second floor</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"> • changing facilities • poolside lifts <p>Director of Operations and Compliance to undertake review</p>	<p>Disabled pupils will be able to make use of the Library</p> <p>Unrestricted use of the main building in 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>

Improving access to the physical environment - RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

	Target	Strategies	Desired Outcome
Short term (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 houses (Autumn term 2021/22)</p> <p>Investigate the expansion of fire evacuation chairs across the school estate (Spring Term 2022)</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 Compliance to undertake review</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>
Medium term (2022 – 2023)	<p>Improve ground floor access to Batsford House (Autumn 2022)</p>	<p>Identify adaptable entrances and routes and upgrade if reasonable to do so</p>	<p>Disabled pupils would be able to take part in House activities i.e. film nights</p>

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

Increasing access to the curriculum

	Targets	Strategies	Desired Outcome
Short term (2021-2022)	Continue to enable staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of needs of SEN and disabled pupils, registered with the School (Autumn 2021)	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.	Staff understanding and confidence in providing appropriate teaching and support for SEND and disabled pupils
	Continue to raise the profile and importance of access to the curriculum for SEND/EAL pupils through School Development Plan (Autumn 2021)	Regular item on the Teaching and Learning Development Plan and therefore standard item for every department's development plan.	All departments in school are actively considering improved provision and access to curriculum for all pupils
	Continue to improve use of technology/Apps to increase access to the curriculum e.g. DocsPlus (Autumn 2021)	Audit of technology and available software/Apps/hardware and prioritise spending in LS budget to improve facilities and provision	Best technologies supporting pupils and removal of barriers to learning


<p>Medium term (2022 – 2023)</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>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>
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	Develop a curriculum audit to ensure School does not inadvertently discriminate against pupils with a disability or SEN (Spring 2023)	Carry out curriculum audit with arising actions.	
Long term (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

Improving access to information

	Targets	Strategies	Outcome
Short term (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
Medium & Long-term (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

<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 Wi-Fi access and availability of devices and digital learning materials</p>		
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Authorised by	Governors of Malvern St James
Signature	
Date	28 November 2023

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Review date	Summer Term 2024
Circulation	Governors / staff / parents / pupils [on request]