Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2019

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This policy takes into account the ‘Special Educational Needs & Disability Act’ 2001 (SENDA), which was further amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Children and Families Act 2014 provides the definition of “special educational needs” in its fullest sense. The policy further recognises the Department of Education and Department of Health code of practice that was published in January 2015 for implementation from April 2015.

The aim is not to treat disabled pupils or prospective pupils less favourably and to take reasonable steps to avoid any possible disadvantage to disabled pupils by making reasonable adjustments and providing auxiliary aids.

Admission Criteria
The School has limited facilities for the disabled but will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 to accommodate the needs of any applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately. The School must be made aware of any known disability or special educational need which may impact upon the child’s ability to take full advantage of the education provided by the School. Parents of a child who has a disability or special educational need should provide the School with full details in writing at the time of registration. Thus the School can assess the needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to cater adequately for the child’s needs both during the admissions process and time at School. If special educational needs or a disability become apparent after registration, the School will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow the child to continue at the School.

Equal Opportunity
The School operates an equal opportunities policy, whereby pupils are not inappropriately discriminated against on the grounds of gender, age, physical or learning disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, cultural or linguistic background. This accords with the Equality Act 2010. Parents who decide to send their children to the School must accept the historical background of the School, its unique character and broadly Christian ethos, as set out in the prospectus. Parents should not seek admission for their children unless they are prepared to support the traditions and routines of the School.
The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and prospective pupils in respect of any disability of which it is aware. The School will endeavour to meet its obligations to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or prospective pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his or her disability. These adjustments may include:

- A list identifying pupils with particular needs
- Possible changes to the curriculum in the area of languages or physical education
- Appropriate amendments in classrooms, such as changed seating arrangements or enlarged copies of notes or the provision of a laptop computer
- Appropriate risk assessments for hazardous or off-site activities, including the possibility of staff or peer assistance in practical subjects
- Appropriate staff training from specialist advisors

Special Needs
The School endeavours to make it possible for those pupils with physical disabilities, who are capable of benefiting from what the School can provide, to do so. Parents are asked to identify any disability or special needs in respect of a prospective pupil at the time of application. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the School may take such advice and require such assessments as is necessary. The School is always sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. In School there are already pupils who have learning or physical disabilities. The special needs of these children are considered in consultation with the Head of Learning Support, Mrs Sheila Butler. The School will co-operate with specialist advisory teachers and allow them access to classrooms in company with the pupil. The main forms of need relate to dyslexic tendencies, short-term memory problems and organisational difficulties. However children with hearing, sight, motor and speech impairments are also successfully integrated and accommodated. Written information will be made accessible in a range of different ways (e.g. colour, font size, the use of audio versions of texts, projectors in most classrooms, e-beams, whiteboards) for disabled pupils, where it is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled. The School will be flexible over the provision of co-curricular sport and activities, as well as the curriculum itself, in order to accommodate individual pupil's needs.

School buildings
An immediate difficulty is presented by the lay-out and age of the School buildings, which cover a wide area. The buildings were not provided with lifts when they were completed between 1867 and 1991. Some departments remain inaccessible to disabled pupils, but teachers will always move to an accessible room when the need arises. Major alterations to the buildings would incur prohibitive cost. In any further development to the site, every effort will be made to ensure that the buildings are accessible to anyone with a disability. When new buildings are constructed, full regard is given to the requirements of the appropriate legislation.

Disability Audit
An annual review of access to all classroom areas is undertaken and modifications will occur as resources allow. The most recent audit took place at the SMT meeting on 27th April 2017. The next review is scheduled for an SMT meeting in April 2018 in the light of the known needs of pupils and
staff for the following academic year. Any proposals from the review will be put to the Health and Safety Committee in the Summer Term 2018 for consideration.

**Accessibility Plan**
The current provision at April 2017 may be summarised below:

**Department Access**
- Art - no wheelchair access
- Business Studies/Economics - no wheelchair access
- Careers – no wheelchair access
- Classics – no wheelchair access
- D&T Resistant Materials - ramped access
- English and Drama - ramped access
- Food Technology – no wheelchair access
- Geography - no wheelchair access
- History - no wheelchair access
- ICT - access
- Learning Support – access: no access from September 2017
- Mathematics – no wheelchair access
- Modern Languages – no wheelchair access
- Music – limited access
- PE and Games area – limited access
- RE - no wheelchair access
- Science School – no wheelchair access

**Facilities Access**
- Administration Offices – access to ground floor only to the offices of The Headmaster, Senior Deputy Headmaster, The School Office and Reception
- Admissions and Marketing - access
- All Weather Sports Area - access
- Bridewell Room – access
- Bunker Art Gallery - access
- Chapel – access
- Chaplain’s Office – no access: access from September 2017
- Charter Hall – access
- Dance Studio – ramped access
- Dining Hall – access
- Development – no access
- Disabled toilet facility - access
- Exhibition Hall – ramped access
- Laundry - access
- Lecture Theatre – no wheelchair access
- Library - access
Main sports hall – access
Medical Centre - access
Netball/tennis courts – access
Piccadilly Cafe - access
Recital Room – ramped access
Selborne Room – access
Sixth Form Centre – limited wheelchair access
Sports fields - access
Staff Common Room – access
Uniform Shop - access

**House Access**
There is limited wheelchair access to at least part of all boarding houses.

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**Curriculum provision**
1. Access to the curriculum will be reviewed in the light of known need for each academic year. For some, a slightly amended curriculum is required and can be provided, for example in the area of languages and physical education. This review will next be undertaken in April 2018.

2. Access to all trips of both a curricular and co-curricular nature is always reviewed at the planning stage to ensure that, as far as possible, such activities are available to all and to investigate what reasonable adjustments may be possible.

3. Access arrangements for public examinations are reviewed annually and enacted whenever a need arises suddenly to ensure that no examination candidate is prevented from having their needs met to enable them to complete the papers effectively.

**Accessibility of information**
1. Changes to the website have ensured that it is accessible to those with sight impairment. Regular reviews have happened since the last major upgrade in December 2015.

2. The audio visual system was improved in Chapel for use at the start of the Autumn Term 2014. A more effective, clear projection system was deployed so that visibility levels were enhanced in all parts of the Chapel.

3. A review of signage around the School was initially undertaken in the Summer Term 2011. More recent changes and developments (in 2016-2017) have ensured that the new signs meet with recommended standards for those with sight impairment. Professional advice was taken initially. This is an ongoing project, which has now been substantially completed.
4. A Health & Safety consultant was retained by the School in September 2012 so that the School could be sure of the latest advice and good practice in respect of accessibility amongst other things.

5. New TV screens were installed in April 2014 in the Piccadilly Café, the Dining Hall and the waiting room in the main front corridor. Further screens were added in the boarding houses during the academic year 2014/2015. The screens are 37” in size to enable those with visual impairment to see them more effectively.

6. Major upgrades of the projectors in classrooms has commenced. The ones in the Science School have already been done, and others will be done throughout the period of this policy.

Physical access

1. Ramps are provided and are portable to a variety of locations for Parents Conferences and other school events and are used to allow access. Parents and visitors are encouraged to contact us in advance so that an appropriate venue can be used for an event, convenient car parking can be provided and ramped access put in place well in time. This will be emphasised further in the letters which invite parents to Parents Conferences.

2. A review of the car parking arrangements around the campus recommended permanent reserved spaces for the disabled. These spaces were provided at the front of the School and on the main Tarmac area in March 2013. The places for the disabled on the resurfaced Tarmac were enlarged and highlighted even more obviously in April 2015. A place for disabled parking was designated in the area of Queen Mary House in April 2017.

3. After a major curriculum review for implementation in September 2012, an ongoing review was undertaken in the Autumn Term 2013 to identify key classrooms where access needs to be modified. The new and revised curriculum model has generated less movement of pupils around the campus. The ground floor classroom on the North Side corridor has been developed with door sizes, spacing, desk height and lighting to make it suitable for pupils and staff with a variety of needs, long and short term. The room will be available from September 2017.

4. Music concerts have been moved from the Lecture Theatre to the Recital Room in the Music School and The Selborne Room. This has allowed greater access to the music curriculum and at musical events. The lighting has been improved in the Recital Room and a suitable hard floor has made the venue more suitable for purpose for those with sight, hearing and mobility limitations from the Spring Term 2017.

5. Meetings before Parents Conferences have been moved to the Dance Studio and appointments with teachers follow in The Selborne Room to ensure good access. This change was made in November 2014 and reconfirmed for the academic year 2017 – 2018.
6. Any refurbishment of the boarding houses (subject to funding) during 2017 – 2018 will pay due regard to requirements for SENDA conformity. Better access and a disabled visitor’s toilet was included in the refurbishment of Queen Mary House and completed by September 2015.

7. The door threshold height has been reduced as part of The Selborne Room refurbishment to make access easier from the start of the Spring Term 2015.

8. The Light Reflective Value (LRV) of paints and carpets influences the quality of visible and usable light reflected by the surface in all directions and at all wavelengths when illuminated by a light source. LRV was part of the process used on the refurbishment of St Bridget’s and influenced staircase choices to enhance safety for anyone with visual impairment. This project was completed in March 2015, and the process will be used in future refurbishment projects.

9. The Master Plan project commenced with an initial review in March 2015. There will be ongoing phases throughout the duration of this policy, as funding permits. With all projects full consideration will be given to the requirements of the appropriate legislation.

10. In the redevelopment of North Side, attention will be given to the sound proofing and acoustics within the classrooms to make them more friendly environments for the hard of hearing. This is a phased project from 2017 – 2018.

11. The Development Office has ensured that all invitations to School events contain a section where visitors can easily request separate access arrangements. The provision was made ready for September 2015.

12. An enhancement to CCTV was undertaken in September 2016 and allows any abuse of the designated parking for the disabled to be monitored more effectively. An upgrade of the system was added in March 2017.

13. The sounder units in the fire alarms have been replaced to ensure that the units operate more effectively at a decibel level above the minimum that is required.

14. The Uniform Shop, due to open in June 2017, has been designed with a door width to enable easy access for all. The counter has been placed at a lower level to aid wheelchair users.

This may be summarised thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Intended completion</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car parking</td>
<td>Specified, enlarged spaces for the disabled</td>
<td>Addition of a designated space for the disabled in the area of Queen Mary House</td>
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Classrooms | Review of access to all departments | Autumn Term 2017 review
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Curriculum changes | Modifications in languages and physical education, according to need | January – March 2018 during admissions period; completion by April 2018
Boarding Houses | Refurbishment; inclusion of a disabled visitors toilet in the refurbished QMH | On-going during academic year 2017 – 2018
Refurbishment projects | LRV used in St Bridget’s for the first time and will be used in future projects | First use in March 2015 and ongoing
TV screens in public areas | Large size screens | Completed in April 2015
Visitors' access | Requests to accompany invitations to School events | For use from September 2015
Replacement of screens in classrooms | Started in Science and on-going | Completion by September 2017

**Awareness of the policy**
The School ensures awareness and observance of the policy through:

- Education in PSHE, RS and other lessons
- Health & Safety Committee meetings
- Staff INSET
- Whole-school assemblies
- SMT meetings, staff meetings and house meetings, when appropriate
- Guidance in the Staff Handbook and from the Learning Support Department or Medical Centre

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this policy to ensure that there are no issues of a safeguarding nature and no concerns relating to gender, disability and ethnicity that need to be addressed.