



## ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

### Introduction

Whitgift School is non-discriminatory towards boys with a physical disability and those with Special Educational Needs. The School is committed to providing access to the curriculum for all. This is in line with the aims of the School which include the following:

- To strive for excellence in all aspects of school life, promoting a culture of achievement and the celebration of achievement.
- To offer a broad, balanced and innovative curriculum which challenges all pupils at an appropriate level.
- To inculcate positive values of mutual respect, tolerance and self-esteem, fostering an informed and critical awareness of the mores prevalent in society.
- To apply a supportive pastoral framework, which both establishes a strong corporate identity and also allows the individual to flourish.
- To offer a rich and broad co-curricular programme which enables both the highest levels of achievement and wide accessibility.

All reasonable steps are taken to accommodate the needs of prospective pupils and current pupils to ensure the very best opportunities and provision for all. Whitgift School is particularly proud of its Learning Support Department and its record of supporting boys with a variety of different learning difficulties. The School undertakes every year to:

- 1 review this accessibility policy and its action plan
- 2 make further recommendations for the action plan with a view to improving the accessibility of the School's education to prospective and current pupils by means of reasonable adjustments

Discussion of individual needs may involve the SEN Coordinator, EAL Coordinator, Deputy Head (Academic), Head of Admissions, Facilities Manager, Building Services Manager or the Estates Manager as appropriate and detailed plans will be drawn up as the need arises on a case by case basis. Whitgift School complies with, and goes beyond, the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Disability Act in its various versions.

## **Admission to the School**

- Whitgift School adopts an inclusive policy and students with Special Educational Needs or physical disabilities are offered the opportunity to join the School if they satisfy the School's selection procedures
- all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that our Entrance Examination is accessible to all candidates
- papers with increased font size are provided for candidates whose eyesight is impaired
- extra time may be provided for the written exams where suitable evidence is provided that this is necessary; the decision on this matter is the responsibility of the SENCo at Whitgift School
- Whitgift School requires parents to inform the School in respect of the disability or special requirements of a prospective pupil when they apply to the School

## **Access around the site**

- access will continue to be improved in line with the action plan
- most parts of the site are already accessible by lifts and/or ramps
- at major events staff are available to assist if necessary
- rooming of the timetable may be adjusted on a temporary or permanent basis to take account of the needs of an individual with a specific disability
- needs will be assessed on a case by case basis and all reasonable steps taken to improve access
- the School regularly adapts to individual cases, for example, access requirements for a pupil with a leg injury

## **Learning Support**

The Learning Support Department consists of 5 full-time and one part-time member of staff. The SENCo is Kirstie Richardson. The full SEN-Learning Support Policy is available on the School website. Key points include:

- screening of all new pupils to identify learning difficulties
- through appropriate support, both in-class and out of class, all boys are able to participate in the whole curriculum
- concessions are sometimes made with respect to numbers of subject options taken, to free up time for additional support in key areas
- teaching materials are adapted if necessary to make them accessible
- teaching staff are trained in strategies for dealing with pupils with additional needs
- learning support is provided inclusive in the fee and so is not restricted by parents' financial means

## **EAL**

The EAL Coordinator is Dr Marianne Ofner. The full EAL Policy is available on the School website. Key points include:

- all international students whose first language is not English are screened on entry to Whitgift to determine their level of competence in English
- an EAL register is drawn up and made available to all staff so colleagues are well informed about the requirements of boys in their classes
- provision and intervention for EAL students takes a number of forms. The aim in all cases is to increase the extent to which EAL students can participate in the School's curriculum
- EAL students are monitored and assessed on a regular basis and their provision adapted as a result of this process

## **Provision of information**

We provide written information to pupils with disabilities in ways that are user-friendly and fully support the pupils in their learning experience.

## **Welfare awareness**

- staff and pupils are made aware of disability and SEN issues and accept and support such boys as part of school life
- the School's policies will be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the School's policy of inclusiveness

Appendix 1 –Accessibility Action Plan

Appendix 2 – Buildings survey

Reviewed by The Second Master, The Estates Manager and The Assistant Head (Academic):  
August 2015

Next review: August 2016

Appendix 1 to  
Accessibility Policy



### ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLAN 2015-2018

Part of standard	Area of focus	i/c	Detail	Evidence of success	Time scale
(a)	SEN provision	KIR	Roll out use of Read Write software, embed ready for examinations 2016/17	Students will have increased independent access to materials using the most up to date IT resources.	Soft launch Michaelmas 2015
(a)	SEN provision	KIR	Increase access to SEN support for staff	Staff will have access to: Wednesday 'drop ins', more information via SIMS with more student information sheets, Firefly shared resources, attendance of SEN staff at departmental meetings and in class observations and feedback.	Academic year 2015/2016
(a)	SEN provision	KIR	Provide more specific/tailored support for students	Increase rooms available; employ another member of SEN team. Provide training for all new SEN staff.	November 2015
(a)	SEN provision	KIR	Update colleagues on new requirements and best practice in SEN provision	Boys with a variety of SEN needs have improved access to the curriculum	September 2015, 2016, 2017
(a)	EAL provision	MRO	Speed up integration of IMC winners into	IMC winners attend mainstream classes	Michaelmas Term 2015

			normal classes	more quickly	
(a)	EAL provision	MRO	Give more support in-class to boys with EAL needs including discussion with class teacher and consideration of technical vocabulary	EAL boys make better progress in mainstream lessons	Academic year 2015-6
(a)	EAL provision	MRO	Improve tracking and record-keeping of EAL provision	Check Individual Learning Records for EAL boys; learn from good practice in Learning Support	Academic year 2015-6
(a)	SEN/EAL information to staff	DWM	Enhance the class breakdown report in SIMS to give colleagues better information	Teachers have better understanding of the needs of boys they are teaching	September 2015
(b)	Provision of information	BNP	Enhance accessibility of key information	All boys and parents, whatever their needs, are better able to access key information	January 2016
(c)	Physical environment	JS	General accessibility improvements to the Performing Arts Centre in conjunction with overall development of the building	Improved access as the building develops	November 2016

Appendix 2 to  
Accessibility Policy



## **BUILDINGS SURVEY**

### **Main School**

The main school, dating from 1931, precedes formalised building requirements for accessibility. Fortuitously, however, the bulk of the ground floor is accessible via two entrances at the northern end of the main corridor and through the dining hall, where ramps have been installed.

An extension to the main school, completed in 1990, has level access to all ground floor areas. A lift gives access to all upper floor areas. In 2006 a stair lift was added to the link corridor from the extension to the original school. This gives access to the upper floor of the latter.

The following areas remain inaccessible:

- Ground floor of Cedar Block (2 x language labs)
- CCF area and a small part of Art Department (2 x studios)
- Geography Department (less one room)
- Founder's Room

### **Arts Complex**

The Arts Complex, incorporating the former swimming pool and squash courts, was built in the 1960s. Access is possible to the whole of the ground floor with only the upper floor of the Music School inaccessible.

The following area remains inaccessible:

- Upper floor of Music School

### **Medical Centre**

Situated in a 1960s' bungalow the Medical Centre is fully accessible.

## Junior School

The Junior School, added in the 1970s, is fully accessible on the ground floor, but remains inaccessible on the upper floor.

The following area remains inaccessible:

Upper floor of Junior School

## Sports & Conference Centre

Completed in 2005, the Sports & Conference Centre is fully accessible. The swimming pool includes a pool lift under an annual service and inspection contract. This facility was fully utilized by the Whitgift Special Needs Activity Project (SNAP) for two weeks in the summer holidays up to 2013. SNAP also utilised large parts of the main school ground floor and the Concert Hall.

## Boarding House

The Boarding House, completed in 2013, incorporates the full requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document M. All areas are fully accessible and suitable mobility accommodation is provided.

## Grounds

Although access around a parkland site and over sports pitches is never easy, the School site is fully accessible. Access to South Field remains the most challenging, but can be accessed by vehicle. Other areas could be improved to ease mobility and these are highlighted below for action.

## Pathways

Pathways are regularly checked and improved by the Grounds staff. Whenever a further development is planned, pathways in that area are reviewed and improved where possible. For example, the kitchen extension resulted in the widening and extension of the pathway past this area.

## Comments and completed actions:

Serial	Location	Item	Due Date/Outcome
1	Cedar Block Ground Floor	Install stair lift should requirement exist. Not to proceed otherwise due to implications for general mobility on a relatively narrow corridor.	Pending requirement.
2	Art Department – JS playground side	Install stair lifts (x 2) should requirement exist.	Pending requirement.
3	Geography Department – CC8 side	Investigate stair lift.	Not feasible due to width of stairs. G1 – 4 inaccessible.

4	Main entrance to CCF	Install stair lift should requirement exist.	Pending requirement.
5	Founder's Room	Draft plans for extension to incorporate a waiting room at ground floor and lift to upper floor. To be progressed through Development Plan.	Complete – awaiting budget allocation.
6	Music School - Upper Floor	Investigate lift access.	Not feasible, unless external lift with loss of a teaching room.
7	Junior School – Upper Floor	Investigate lift access.	Not feasible, unless external lift.
8	Concert Hall Entrance – Pavement to north side steps	Create dropped kerb to road level.	Complete
9	Concert Hall Entrance – pavement to south side steps	Improve level access from zebra crossing and along path – remove lip by Porters' kiosk.	Complete
10	Zebra Crossing by Porters' Kiosk	Raise to kerb/pavement level.	Complete
11	CBB 1/TC 1	Create ramp to path level.	Complete
12	CBB 2/TC 2	Create ramp to path level.	Complete
13	Music School	Create ramp to path level.	Complete
14	Old Squash Courts	Create ramp to path level.	01/11/16
15	Access to Medical Centre	Create zebra crossings (x 2) and path from existing path around kitchen to Medical Centre.	Complete
16	Access from Little Side to Big Side	Improve existing slope.	Complete
17	Gallery Car Park	Create dropped kerb to road level.	Complete
18	Junior School	Improve ramp to east entrance.	Complete
19	South Field	Improve existing slope (south end).	On-going
20	Main School	Review of flow routes/Investigate stair lifts by A15, Tuck Shop and Admissions Office/Route to Junior School.	Pending requirement. Not to proceed otherwise due to implications for general mobility on relatively narrow corridors.
21	Grounds	Review all pathways to ensure wheelchair access	On-going