

Accessibility Policy

This Accessibility Policy and Plan are drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”.

This is a whole school policy which applies to Upper School, Lower School and our EYFS setting.

Definition of Disability

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

Special Education Needs (SEN)

For the purpose of the Equalities Act, we are required to consider the needs of pupils in relation to physical adaptations, curriculum access and auxiliary aids and services. These areas also fall within the scope of the SEN framework. St George's School will continue to consider pupils needs, particularly in relation to auxiliary aids and services, within the SEN code of practice context (See SEN policy for greater details)

Physical Accessibility

St George's School will take account of the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with physical and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment, colour schemes and more accessible facilities and fittings.

The schools layout and facilities

Areas of the school are Grade 11 listed and the campus sits within a Conservation area. Any planned structural alterations would require council / conservation planning consents together with landlord consent.

Upper School

Comprises a Georgian house, and a 1930's extension spread over three floors. No lifts or ramps are in place, and students are regularly required to use steps and stairs to move between classrooms. Classrooms for English, History, RE, Business Studies, Geography are all located on the first floor. Classrooms for French, Spanish, Food Technology, Design & Technology, Music, some Sixth Form teaching and the Upper School Library are all located on the ground floor. Maths and Science classrooms are taught in ground and first floor classrooms. Art, Photography, PSHE and Drama are all located on the lower ground floor. A moveable ramp allows disabled access through the main senior school entrance. Please make the school aware in advance if a ramp is required for access any part of the building.

Gym/Outdoor PE Provision

Located on the lower floor of the Upper School and can be accessed by wheelchair users. The Sports Field, tennis and basketball courts are approximately 200 metres away from the main building, and are accessed by wheelchair users via a sloping path and along a steep downward gradient.

Lower School

Compromises a two story structure built in the 1960's, with no lifts and external steps to the main entrance. A moveable ramp allows disabled access through the main Lower School entrance. Please let the school know in advance if you should require this.

The Early Years Department is located on the lower ground floor of the building, and is accessed via a wheelchair/buggy friendly ramp at the side of the school – please note that for safeguarding purposes this entrance is by key code only, which can be obtained through Lower School Reception. The department has widened of doors and provision of ramps to aid in the entering and exiting of the Early Years department. Access to Year 1 can also be found through this entrance. Our library, ICT suite and Aftercare facilities are also located in a separate building on the lower ground floor.

Years 2 - 6, the hall, the school Receptionists and Head of Lower School are located on the ground floor of the building, and access is through the main doors at the front of the building. Please make the school aware in advance if a ramp is required for access to this part of the building.

Internal access between the two floors is via stairs.

Pupils are required to access the Upper School for a number of lessons (such as PE), and in order to eat lunch in the Dining Hall.

Gym/Outdoor PE Provision

Lower School also uses the gym which is located on the lower floor of the Upper School. Lower School access to the gym is internal, and can be accessed by wheelchair users. The Sports Field, tennis and basketball courts are approximately 200 metres away from the main building, and are accessed by wheelchair users via a sloping path and along a shallow downward gradient.

Under the Equalities Act we have a duty to make reasonable adjustments only for disabled people. The act however does acknowledge that some adjustments, and in St George's School's case major building works to accommodate physical disabilities to upper floors and within the campus itself, cannot be deemed reasonable as cost will inevitably play a major part in what is reasonable.

However, notwithstanding the above, St George's School will, where practicable, place the pupil in a classroom/tutor group that is most convenient for physical access, and prioritise in the writing of the timetable with regard to accessible rooms.

St George's School are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

1. We are 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 are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

2. St George's School plans, over time, to ensure the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school.

3. An Accessibility Plan will be drawn up to cover a three year period. The plan will be updated annually.

4. The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

- Improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding and making reasonable adjustments to the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. 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.
- Improve and make reasonable adjustments to the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

5. The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which is undertaken regularly. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this first Accessibility Plan (if at all), and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The audit will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

6. As curriculum policies are reviewed, a section relating to access will be added to that on Equality and Diversity. The terms of reference for all Trustees' committees will contain an item on "having regard to matters relating to Access".

7. The School Brochure will make reference to this Accessibility Plan.

8. The School's complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

9. Information about our Accessibility Plan will be published in the Trustees' Annual Report to Parents (statutory).

10. The Plan will be monitored through the Curriculum and the Premises Trustees.

11. The Plan will be monitored by ISI as part of their inspection cycle.

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

Accessibility Plan:

See Appendix 1

Linked Policies:

This policy will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies/documents, e.g.

- SEN Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Accessibility Plan

Policy reviewed September 2015

Next review – November 2016