

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

1 Introduction

The Accessibility Plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty stated in Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with the School's aims and ethos, and Equal Opportunities, SEND and Disability Policies. This plan will be reviewed annually and a new one drawn up every three years. This policy is a Whole School and Early Years policy.

New Hall School is committed to planning for the provision of an accessible environment, within the context of a selective Catholic independent boarding and day school, which values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their physical, sensory, social and emotional needs.

New Hall School challenges negative attitudes about accessibility and disability, and endeavours to develop awareness, tolerance, respect and inclusion across the School in relation to these.

2 Aims

- to ensure that 'reasonable steps' are taken to avoid putting disabled students at a disadvantage in matters of education and admission
- to reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and the school's community for students and prospective students with a disability
- to seek to enable every student with learning difficulties or disabilities including special educational needs to realise their potential
- to ensure disabled students are not treated less favourably
- to ensure a planned increase in accessibility of provision for all students, staff, parents and visitors
- to increase awareness in matters of disability discrimination

3 Definition of "Disabled"

Disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as:

- a physical or mental impairment, and
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

The School is committed to making changes or improvements to its buildings and grounds so that disabled students can access education and the extra opportunities the School offers just as easily as other students.

The School is situated within a 70-acre Grade I listed site with a range of buildings. Teaching facilities are in both single and multi-floor buildings. There are accessible toilets in all School buildings. A Physical Access Audit has been carried out by an external consultant and the resultant action plan formed the basis of the annual reviews and 3-Year Plans. The next review will be undertaken in Lent Term 2027, or upon changes to current or relevant legislation.

Overview:

- The School has invested heavily in new facilities over the last 10 years. All these recent developments are fully accessible, including the provision of lifts, refuge points, toilets and workstations. The new developments include:
 - Priory Court
 - Rugby, Tennis and Fitness Suite Changing Blocks
 - Fitness Suite
 - New accessible toilets to the Farm, Senior Staff Room, Radcliffe, Health & Wellbeing Centre
 - Nursery Building
 - PE classroom block
 - Basketball court
 - Business and Languages Centre
 - Learn to Ride Centre
- There are parking facilities for the disabled in the Senior Divisions, Preparatory Divisions, Priory Court and Sports Facility car parks. When students are unable to access lessons on the first or second floor, the lesson will be relocated to a more accessible room.
- There are two lifts within the Senior Divisions main School building to gain access to the first, second and fourth floors, also one in the Preparatory Divisions building, one in Priory Court and one in the Changing Block/Fitness Suite; these are all accessible to wheelchair users.
- Evac+Chairs are located by the top floor of each lift to provide safe egress in the case of a fire alarm. Staff are trained to use these.
- All buildings apart from Walkfares Performing Arts Centre have step-free wheelchair access.
- The following buildings/teaching areas are on the ground floor:
 - Radcliffe – History/Geography/Psychology
 - Main School – Science/English
 - Thomas More Sixth Form Centre – Business/Economics/Politics
 - Business and Languages Centre
 - Cookery 1 & 2
 - Sports Hall
 - Eaton Theatre
 - Jubilee Hall
 - Swimming Pool
 - Refectory
 - Chapel
 - Changing Rooms
 - Library
 - Reception, Year 1 and a number of other classrooms at the Preparatory Divisions building
 - Nursery
 - Health & Wellbeing Centre consulting rooms and counselling
- The following buildings/areas have wheelchair (lift or chairlift) access:
 - Senior Divisions – Art
 - Priory Court – Classics/ICT/Mathematics/Modern Languages/Theology
 - Preparatory Divisions
- There are accessible toilets on the ground floor in the following buildings/areas:
 - Senior Divisions Main building

- Radcliffe
- Walkfares Performing Arts Centre
- Priory Court
- Fitness Suite, Rugby & Tennis Changing Rooms
- Swimming Pool
- Preparatory Divisions Building
- Nursery
- Farm
- Health & Wellbeing Centre
- Cloisters
- There are accessible workstations in:
 - Cookery
- The following Boarding Houses have access via lift/chairlifts:
 - Champion House (Years 11-13 boys)
 - Petre House - Earle Wing (Years 7-9 boys)
- There is an Induction Loop fitted in the Chapel and Preparatory Divisions reception; more would be fitted as required. Mobile induction loops are in Main, Prep and Nursery Receptions.
- Walkfares Drama has a constructed accessible point to the rear of the building.

4	Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the School curriculum
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- Lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve.
- Lessons are responsive to student diversity.
- Lessons involve students working individually, in pairs, groups and with the whole class.
- All students are encouraged to take part in music, drama, physical activities, co-curricular activities, trips and visits. School performances and sports are made accessible to all students, irrespective of attainment or impairment, wherever possible.
- Staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by students with learning difficulties/physical disabilities, in line with their established Access Arrangements, which are overseen by the Head of Learning Development, SENDCo (Preparatory Divisions) and Nursery Manager.
- Staff provide alternative ways for students to record information.
- The School provides access to computer technology; all students in Years 5 to 13 are provided with an iPad equipped with appropriate software to meet their needs. Suitable technology would be provided for younger children as appropriate.
- The School provides extra sets of textbooks for students with a disability (long or short term) ensuring they do not need to carry heavy weights.
- The School provides transmitter devices to teachers of students with hearing impairments who require hearing aids (Phonak ROGER compatible devices)
- School visits are made accessible to all students irrespective of attainment or impairment, wherever possible. Staff have high expectations of all students irrespective of special educational needs, sensory impairment or disability.
- Staff seek to remove all barriers to achievement by differentiation, to enable participation in lessons by all.

- Staff provide lesson outcomes in alternative forms to suit the learning styles of individual students.
- Students may be provided with a reduced curriculum and personalised timetables, as appropriate.
- The GCSE Admissions requirement for Sixth Form is the same for all students, since Access Arrangements in public examinations are designed to assist with any specific learning difference/disability, to enable these students to achieve the relevant grade boundary for their ability.
- Students are set according to their ability and not their specific learning difference/disability.
- Targeted students across New Hall are supported in lessons by Learning Support staff.
- Students with an Education, Health & Care plan, and those on SEND Support, have individual, paired or small group lessons within the Learning Development Department.
- Staff have had training in how best to deal with specific disabilities.
- Learning Support information is on the K:drive for Senior Divisions and P:drive for Preparatory Divisions and updated as new data is available. All students who receive learning support are flagged on the School's management information system.
- Students with Access Arrangements are supported by Learning Support staff, as appropriate e.g. reader or scribe in public examinations/controlled assessments.
- Students whose Access Arrangement requires a laptop are provided with equipment by IT Support in both public examinations and controlled assessments.
- Students entitled to specialist examination conditions are given these, for example, a small separate room.
- All computers have reader software installed. Voice activated software is installed as required.
- Additional software is available to meet the student's needs, including larger fonts and other accessible formats.

Planned focus areas for improvement 2024-2027:

- to deliver INSET to teaching staff on effective strategies for students with ADHD and Autism
- to increase the use of computer readers/immersive readers by students to support their learning
- to review systems for academic monitoring to allow easier tracking of students with different SEND
- Parents can make appointments to come in and speak with staff at any time.
- Students who have Irlen Syndrome have access to coloured overlays for use in class.
- Modified language scripts published by Examination Boards are made available in public examinations for students who have a low reading comprehension.
- Information and resources are made available in differing font sizes and other accessible formats, as required.
- To increase the use of accessible fonts and background/paper colours

5 References

Equality Act 2010 (Schedule 10)

DfES “Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students.”

Building Access Audit and Accessibility Plan Lent Term 2024 – Lent Term 2027

Campion House				
Campion House is in the main school building on the first floor and on the first and second floors of the Griffin Wing, west of the main building. It is accessed via the main stairs from the Ambulacrum and via a lift from the same place. All accommodation is on the first and second floors.				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	No unassisted wheelchair accessible bedrooms and bathroom facilities.	Current bedrooms and bathroom facilities are not suitable for wheelchair users	Plans to be prepared as bedrooms and bathrooms are not yet accessible by wheelchair users. This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body.	Work request referred to Estates Committee. August 2024
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Cookery 1 & Cookery 2				
Cookery 1 and Cookery 2 are located to the east of the main building. They are both on the ground floor, in separate buildings. Both rooms have step-free access. An accessible toilet is outside, between the two buildings.				

Dennett House				
Dennett House is situated to the northwest of the main building. It consists of boarding accommodation over three floors, accessed by a main staircase from the common area.				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	Lack of ground floor accommodation or suitable wheelchair access to rooms	There are no ground floor rooms in Dennett House	Conduct review of possible works to convert ground floor spaces	

	No unassisted wheelchair accessible bedrooms and bathroom facilities	Current bedrooms and bathroom facilities are not suitable for wheelchair users	Plans to be prepared as bedrooms and bathrooms are not yet accessible by wheelchair users. This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body	Work request referred to Estates Committee. August 2024
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Fitness Suite and Changing Rooms

The Fitness Suite is located on the west of the site, overlooking the running track. It is on the first floor, with changing rooms and toilets on the ground floor, below. Access is via a single staircase with disabled access via a lift. Accessible toilets are available on the ground floor.

	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	No safe refuge in Fitness Suite	Access to the Fitness Suite is by lift/stairs only. A safe refuge is required in case of fire.	Estates to arrange for safe refuge to be installed.	Work request referred to Estates Committee.
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Griffin Wing

The Griffin wing is to the west of the main building. It is accessed via steps to the main entrance, although step-free access is also available at a secondary entrance to the building's rear. All classrooms are accessible.

	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Plans/Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	Workstations	Accessible workstations are required	At present, suitable furniture would be brought into the lab for wheelchair users. Wheelchair accessible workstations should be installed	

			in labs.	
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Hawley House				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	No unassisted wheelchair accessible bedrooms and bathroom facilities.	Current bedrooms and bathroom facilities are not suitable for wheelchair users	Plans to be prepared as bedrooms and bathrooms are not yet accessible by wheelchair users. This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body.	Work request referred to Estates Committee. August 2024
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Health & Wellbeing Centre				
The Health and Wellbeing Centre is in a recently renovated building. Access to the building is step-free.				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required				
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Laundry/School Student Laundry
The Laundry and Student Laundry are in a new building west of the site, adjacent to the swimming pool car park. They are fully accessible.

Main School Building				
The main school building in home to several departments including Art, Science, English, Learning Development, The Chapel, Main Reception, Admissions, the Staff Room, the Library, Campion House and the Earle Wing of Petre House. Mainly over two floors, in some areas the building extends to three floors. Step-free access is available to the south, west and north of the building.				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	Accessible workstations in Science	There are no facilities in the Science Laboratories suitable for wheelchair users. Labs 4, 5, 6 & 7 have step-free access however there are no accessible workstations here.	Review accessible laboratory desks and integrate into rolling programme of refurbishment. Proposals to convert Radcliffe into Chemistry labs currently with SLMT for approval.	
	Chemistry labs inaccessible	Labs 1, 2 & 3 are not accessible by a wheelchair user.	Alternative classrooms will need to be used for Chemistry lessons with a disabled student of staff member. Timetable adjustments will need to be made.	Ongoing
Completed	Disabled toilets that are suitable for unassisted use by wheelchair users	Some of the older disabled facilities not configured correctly for a wheelchair user	New accessible toilets were added to the Staff Room and on the ground floor in September 2023	
	Access to boarding accommodation	Lift to Earle Wing was out of use due to water damage and was too small to comfortably accommodate a wheelchair user	New lift installed Spring 2022	
Not required/not possible				

Nursery				
The Nursery is in a single storey building to the west of the site. The building is fully accessible.				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required				
Completed	Access from car park	No step-free access from car park.	New pathway to Nursery completed and allows step free access from Car Park.	
Not required/not possible				

PE Classrooms				
The PE classrooms are in a new building west of the site, adjacent to the swimming pool car park. They are fully accessible. There is an accessible toilet between the two classrooms.				

Petre House				
Petre House is on the east side of the main school building. The main access is through a door at the east end of the building. The building consists of accommodation over three floors. Wheelchair access to the reception area is possible through the neighbouring classroom.				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	No handrails on sloping access paths which are of a gradient greater than 5%	The slope outside Petre House does not have handrails and is very steep	Handrail to be installed on slope by Petre House. Works requests referred to the Estates Committee	August 2025
	Lack of ground floor accommodation or suitable wheelchair access to rooms	There are no accessible rooms in Petre House	Conduct review of possible works to convert ground floor spaces	
	No unassisted wheelchair accessible bedrooms and bathroom facilities	Current bedrooms and bathroom facilities are not suitable for wheelchair users	Plans to be prepared as bedrooms and bathrooms are not yet accessible by wheelchair	Work request referred to Estates Committee. August 2025

			users. This will be accelerated if a wheelchair user joins the student/staff body	
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Priory Court

Priory Court is located to the east of the site. It consists of classroom accommodation over three floors. It is fully accessible with accessible toilets on the ground floor.

Radcliffe

The Radcliffe Building is located to the east of the main School building. It is a single storey building with classroom and a science lab.

	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	No step-free access	The Radcliffe building is currently only accessible by small steps. The only ramp is to a fire escape	Provide step free access to main door of building. Works request referred to the Estates Committee.	August 2025
Completed	To ensure all disabled toilets are suitable for unassisted use by wheelchair users	Some of the older disabled facilities not configured correctly for a wheelchair user	New accessible toilets added in September 2023.	
Not required/not possible				

Sports Hall

The Sports Hall is a single storey building to the west of the site. It is fully accessible.

Swimming Pool

	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	No accessible changing facilities to the Swimming Pool	Current changing facilities are inadequate and inaccessible	New facilities have been designed.	Build dates tbc.
Completed				
Not required/not possible				

Thomas More Centre

The Thomas More Centre is located at the south end of the Walkfares building to the north of the site and is home to the Sixth Form. The common room, study area and two classrooms are accessible. There is no lift access to the upper floor.

Walkfares

The Walkfares building is located to the north of the site and is home to the Dance, Drama and Music Departments, as well as the Sixth Form Centre (Thomas More Centre). There are two entrances to the east and one to the west. None has step-free access.

	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	Self-closing fire doors	With the addition of step-free access to the Walkfares building via the Drama area, several fire doors along the corridors between Drama, Dance and Music now need self-closers.	Work request referred to Estates Committee	August 2025
Completed	Step- free access	The northern section of the Walkfares building is currently only accessible by steps. The only ramp is into the TMC and through several fire doors.	Work completed Advent 2024	

	Handrails	Handrails required at the entrances to the building	Handrails installed	
	Accessible parking spaces	Designated parking space required within reach of the building	Installed September 2023	
Not required/not possible	Access to first floor	The first-floor classrooms and offices are not accessible	Feasibility study carried out to install a chair lift for access to the first floor. Findings on cost and operational impact resulted in the project not being taken forward. Lessons and related equipment moved to a downstairs classroom for staff members unable to access the upper floor. Timetable adjustments made.	

Whole site, including grounds.				
	Possible limitations on Access	Summary of Audit	Reasonable Adjustments	Timescale/due date
Work Required	Tarmac areas	Certain areas of Tarmac need to be resurfaced	Survey to be carried out and a programme of works to be drawn up	Annually
	Cycle paths	Cycle path requires continual maintenance to ensure safety for users	Survey to be carried out and a programme of works to be drawn up	Annually
	Signage	Corporate School signage required – consistent sign system throughout and appropriate use of upper and lower case	Standardize signage, colour and font	Many of the signs around site have been updated with review ongoing.

	Means of escape	Currently wheelchair refuge points in Priory Court only	Consider creation of more refuge points, as required and in all future builds on multiple floors	Ongoing
	Noticeboards	Noticeboards not all at a consistent height	Boards to be levelled as they are replaced	Ongoing
	Lack of vision panels.	Some of the doors do not have vision panels.	Install vision panels wherever possible in a listed building	Ongoing. 90% complete.
	Door closers	Suitable door closers are required throughout the buildings	Door closers to be checked and replaced as part of the maintenance programme	Ongoing. 75% complete.
	Accessible toilets	Planned expansion of accessible toilets within teaching and learning areas across the site completed. All areas now contain an accessible toilet	Consider installation of accessible WCs in more boarding houses. Toilet seat risers for height adjustment provided	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing.
	Toilet design	Tonal and colour contrast has been incorporated into refurbishments as planned. All refurbishment and new toilet facilities to incorporate individual, enclosed cubicles.	Where possible adapt/refurbish existing toilets in buildings and ensure all new facilities have enclosed cubicles	Ongoing refurbishment schedule and ensure all new facilities are reviewed
	Colour schemes	Appropriate colours have been chosen that are helpful for visually impaired students/staff or visitors in accordance with the plan	Continue refurbishment plans using suitable colours	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled
	Hearing assistance	An induction loop fitted in Chapel and all reception areas. Portable systems installed can be relocated as required.	Suitable equipment to also be installed in the Eaton Theatre/Jubilee Hall/Denford Hall.	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student with hearing difficulties

		Suitable microphone/transmitters purchased for use with individuals in lessons/activities on site.		or when a student develops hearing difficulties.
	Workstations	Accessible workstation available in the Cookery rooms. Consider extension of provision to enable disabled students to participate in lessons and onsite activities, as required. No accessible workstations in Science labs.	Provide further workstations across the site, as required	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing
	Appropriate seating, footrests	Provision of seating and footrests in classrooms and laboratories for very short/tall students or disabled students	Provide appropriate seating in classrooms, as required	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing
	Staff accommodation	Ground floor accommodation is required	Keep under review	As and when required or when planning for the employment of a disabled member of staff or when a staff member becomes disabled
Completed	Means of Escape	Personal Evacuation Plans required for disabled students.	Individual Personal Evacuation Plans to be written by the Health and Wellbeing Centre staff for all disabled students.	Ongoing.
	Toilets – emergency calls	Accessible toilets needed emergency pull cords	All accessible toilets have been fitted with emergency pull cords	Completed December 2023
Not required/not possible				

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME
To provide staff with up to date INSET on disability as appropriate	Sufficient resources provided for staff INSET. Head of Learning Development or appropriate other to attend external INSET on disability when needed and to cascade to School staff as required	All teachers are aware of support required by current disabled students	As and when required or when planning for admission of a student or when a student becomes disabled. Ongoing
To provide extra support in class across all abilities of students	Maintain staffing capacity within Learning Development Department	Students supported, both SEND and EAL, thus facilitating better access to the curriculum	Review of provision on-going
To provide dedicated examination rooms for students who need separate accommodation in their examinations	Research cost. Hire individual pods for the period of May and June. Review effectiveness of this arrangement at the end of the examination period	Every student requiring separate accommodation in examinations to be allocated to a pod	Ongoing
Co-ordinated Access Arrangements	Learning Development Administrator has been appointed	All laptops used for examinations and controlled assessments personalised to the needs of the student and loaded with the appropriate software.	Ongoing
More diagnostic assessment tools	Research available diagnostic tools where necessary.	To identify specific weaknesses in a student's learning profile as early as possible.	Ongoing
To provide coloured overlays/reading rulers	Coloured overlays/reading rulers available for students with reading difficulties	Targeted students able to show their reading ability through use of overlays/reading rulers.	Ongoing
To provide digital voice recorders and note taking software in class	Digital voice recorders and audio note taker (software)	Targeted students able to take notes in class through use of a digital voice recorders and audio note taker	Ongoing

	available to students with note taking difficulties	(software). Targeted students able to proofread through use of a digital voice recorders	
To provide practical resources to enhance written communication	Writing slopes, pen/pencil grips and adapted pens (weighted) made available to students with writing difficulties	Targeted students able to produce clear, legible handwriting	Ongoing
To provide Mental Health and Wellbeing awareness training	Outsourced and in-house training	Staff awareness and response	Ongoing
All photocopying on dyslexia friendly paper.	Coloured paper available for all photocopying	Targeted students able to read texts without visual stress	Ongoing

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME
To improve accessibility of the School prospectus via the web	Online videos and resources available via website to include detail that is in the prospectus.	Website updated regularly with accessible content	As necessary
Make available written School material in alternative formats	The School will provide materials in required formats (e.g. large print, accessible fonts, coloured paper etc.)	The School will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes	As necessary
Review documentation with a view to ensuring accessibility for students with visual impairment	Request support from Learning Development Department	Specific students with visual impairment will have better access to written material	As necessary

TARGET	COMMENT	STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME
To review the accessibility of the School website	To assess the accessibility of the website, a detailed review is required	To identify an accessibility specialist who can review the accessibility of the website.	August 2024