

CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

SENDA AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The Accessibility Plan was approved by Governors in February 2011, in September 2014 it was amended, as the SENDA and Accessibility Plan, for approval by the Governors in October 2014. It will be reviewed annually and sent for approval to the Board of Governors every three years.

1. This policy has been written with government policy and legislation in mind. Relevant legislation and guidance taken into consideration include:
 - The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
 - The Education Act 1996
 - Code of Practice (September 2014)
 - Accessible Schools: Summary Guidance DFES/0462/2002
 - The Disability Rights Commission's Code of Practice for Schools 2002
 - The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended (S12003/1910)
 - The Equality Act 2010

This plan has been drawn up by a group consisting of the Deputy Head, Director of Studies, Bursar, Premises Manager and SEN Coordinators (SENCO). Both SENCOS are responsible for arranging an annual review meeting in the autumn term of each year. The group is able to consult the Head of Access, Community & Children's Services Department of the City of London Corporation (CLC) for advice. The plan covers a 3 year timescale and will be reviewed and re-submitted to the Board of Governors in October 2014.

2. RELATED POLICIES AND PLANS

2.1 Related policies and plans include the school's SEN Policy, Mental Health Policy, Disability Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Educational Visits Policy, Management of Health & Safety in Schools Policy, the School Nurse's Guidelines and City of London Corporation policies relating to Equal Opportunities and employment.

3. DEFINITIONS OF DISABILITY

- 3.1 The school will treat each case in which a student or adult considers that they have a disability individually and with sensitivity.
- 3.2 As a guide you're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a:

"physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities".

- 3.3 The definition of a disability covers a broad spectrum of impairments. An up to date list of impairments covered by legislation and further information on the definition of 'disability' may be found on the Disability Rights Commission's website: www.drc-gb.org

4. ADMISSIONS, DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- 4.1 City of London School for Girls is an independent fee paying and academically selective school and all students are admitted following competitive entrance examinations. The school will endeavour to educate and develop the prospective student to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the student's peers, so that there is every chance that the student will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the student's time at the school.
- 4.2 The school's policy is to apply these criteria to all students and potential students regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled student or potential student at a substantial disadvantage because of her disability. The school asks parents to make a declaration regarding disabilities and learning difficulties in respect of a prospective student when registering for entry (Registration Form) and when accepting the offer of a place (Acceptance Form). In assessing any student or prospective student the school may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. **If a girl, who has a history of a learning disability, is successful in being offered a place, parents should be aware that although SENCO advice is given to all teachers, one-to-one support with a qualified specialist teacher are limited to approximately 30 minutes each week, per individual student.**
- 4.3 The school's policy is also to ensure that no member of staff, visitor or parent is put at a substantial disadvantage because of a disability and to ensure that their needs are met, in accordance with its obligation to make reasonable adjustments.

5. ON ENTRY

- 5.1 The group has reviewed the school's admissions literature, policies, examinations and procedures (including access to scholarships and bursaries) and is satisfied that the Acceptance Form and entrance procedures give the school adequate details of the nature and effect of any disability so as to enable it to do its best to make any adjustments.

6. PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

- 6.1 At present, our physical facilities for the disabled are subject to limitations set out below, but we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the school's culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to children who have

disabilities. We will fulfil our legal and moral responsibilities in order to accommodate the needs of applicants, students and members of the staff who have disabilities which, after reasonable adjustments, we can cater for adequately.

7. SCHOOL SITE

7.1 The school occupies a compact English Heritage listed site in a residential area. It consists of three separate but connected buildings with up to five levels, a platform lift from G floor to the Preparatory department, one passenger lift and one goods lift which may be used for passengers if necessary. In general there are fixed classrooms for each subject to allow as far as possible for all the facilities for one subject to be in one place. This requires students and staff to go from classroom to classroom, often up or down internal and external steps or stairs. However a student with impaired mobility is now able to access all areas of the school other than the swimming pool and the all-weather playing surface.

8. PROBLEMS AND FUTURE PLANS

8.1 The group has considered the following areas:

- There is no access for wheelchair users to the swimming pool due to costing restrictions however it is possible that this issue may be addressed in the future if there was adequate need. There is no access to the all-weather playing surface without mounting or descending internal and external steps. This is due to the practical difficulty in installing a ramp onto the all-weather playing surface because of the position of the stairs.
- The new gym extension will provide a fire exit at the rear south side with a refuge point for wheelchair users.

9. OTHER ADJUSTMENTS

9.1 Car parking: the school has permission to allow parents of students, staff or visitors with impaired physical difficulty to bring cars to the reception entrance on St Giles Terrace for the purposes of dropping-off and collection.

9.2 Lifts: most powered wheelchairs can fit in the passenger lift from G floor to D floor of the main building but we can use the goods lift if necessary. Powered wheelchairs can fit in the ramp lift between the ground floor and the Preparatory Department.

9.3 Fire Precautions: there is an audible fire alarm in all areas of the school. There is a refuge area for wheelchair users on each level of the main building. All Evacuation Chairs are regularly checked. The areas are marked with appropriate signage. The lifts should not be used in an emergency unless instructed to do so by the Fire Brigade. Members of staff will supervise the evacuation of the building. Individual evacuation plans will be drawn up as required for both staff and students.

9.4 Special chairs and desks can be provided at short notice in all such rooms for students and staff. Under new guidelines the school can be expected to

make the reasonable adjustments necessary to accommodate needs of any individual affected by a disability.

- 9.5 Wheelchair users can access all rooms, subject to the access restrictions described and subject to the physical limits of the building. Staff will move furniture to improve access where possible.
- 9.6 We are able to accommodate students who need to use laptop computers in lessons and examinations. All students who require extra time for either external or internal exams are supported in a separate examination room.
- 9.7 If students with visual impairment are admitted to the school, facilities would be made available to provide appropriate materials i.e. large print documents or Braille material. The school maintenance plan will take into consideration the need for a suitable colour scheme for installing window blinds to benefit students and staff with visual impairment.
- 9.8 Arrangements can be made for assistance dogs in school.
- 9.9 A hearing loop is installed in the Main Hall and there is adequate signage. If a student required a portable hearing device such a system would be provided.
- 9.10 Individual care plans would be made for all students in the school who have a sensory impairment and their needs would be addressed on a case by case basis. Similarly individual plans and reasonable adjustments would be made for any member of staff with impairment to ensure they are appropriately supported.
- 9.11 Advice would be obtained from the COL to make sure that all adjustments are in accordance with current standards of good practice.
- 9.12 We will endeavour to arrange for the production of relevant leaflets or brochures to be made available in large print. Many of our publication are also available on our website.

10. EDUCATION

- 10.1 The group regularly reviews access to the curriculum and to co-curricular and recreational activities and is committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever necessary.

11. WELFARE

- 11.1 We review and agree suitable arrangements in consultation with relevant professional advisers, parents and the student herself. The school's anti-bullying policy is regularly reviewed and includes reference to the acceptance of difference.

12. AWARENESS OF THE PLAN AND STAFF TRAINING

- 12.1 The plan will be included in the Internal Staff Handbook and reference to it will be made in the Parents Handbook. Copies of the plan will be made available to any interested party on request.

All members of teaching and support staff will receive appropriate training on working with disabled people when required.