

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (PHYSICAL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT)

1. Background

1.1 St Christopher School is committed to providing access to the School, its curriculum and facilities to as many people as possible. To ensure that pupils, current, prospective and potential, can access the physical environment of the School, an accessibility review is undertaken periodically and an accessibility plan produced. The aim of the audit is to ensure compliance with developing best practice. The aim of the accessibility plan is to continue to improve access to the school site and facilities.

1.2 As part of this commitment, all new building planning and any reorganisation of the School's premises include a review of provision for disabled access. The regular improvement of the School's site means that many areas have been upgraded and access included in the design specifications. Where door furniture, stair nosings and other fittings are designed or replaced, care is taken to ensure that the needs of visually impaired members of the community are incorporated into the design.

2. Plan of the School

2.1 The measured survey plans held on the school's shared area show disabled access and facilities. The majority of the School is based at ground level. Where levels change within and between sites, ramping and dropped curbs are provided to improve accessibility.

3. Wheelchair accessible areas

3.1 The following areas of the School are accessible to wheelchair users:

- 3.1.1 Junior School (excluding the first floor rooms which are not currently in use)
- 3.1.2 Early Years Centre at Arunwood (excluding the first floor music room)
- 3.1.3 Theatre (except technician's box)
- 3.1.4 Drama Studio (Except lighting booth)
- 3.1.5 Sports Hall
- 3.1.6 Music School (using alternative entrance to avoid stairs)
- 3.1.7 Swimming Pool
- 3.1.8 Multi-gym
- 3.1.9 Dining Hall ("I.G.")
- 3.1.10 Common Rooms
- 3.1.11 Head's office
- 3.1.12 School office
- 3.1.13 Pastoral offices ("Room 12")
- 3.1.14 Library
- 3.1.15 Staff Room
- 3.1.16 All senior school classrooms are directly accessible (for LB1 and LB2, lift access can be gained through another classroom)
- 3.1.17 All science laboratories
- 3.1.18 Art
- 3.1.19 CDT
- 3.1.20 Photography
- 3.1.21 VI form centre (for the first floor VI form rooms, lift access can be gained through another classroom)
- 3.1.22 PE
- 3.1.23 Games fields
- 3.1.24 MUGA
- 3.1.25 Arunfield
- 3.1.26 Conference room

4. Areas not accessible by wheelchair

- 4.1 The following areas are not accessible by wheelchair:
- 4.1.1 Individual Needs Department
 - 4.1.2 Surgery
 - 4.1.3 Some boarding areas

5. Adjustment for areas without accessibility

5.1 Alternative provision is provided for the rooms listed above as follows:

5.1.1 Individual Needs Department: small study spaces are available elsewhere in the School for individual tuition – particularly seminar room E4, the History seminar room and the working staff room meeting room. Provision has been made for an Individual Needs Assessment office on the ground floor of Arunfield.

5.1.2 Surgery: There is no specific ground floor space provided for medical treatment or examination. The disabled lavatory facilities in the main school courtyard and in the PE block are of an appropriate size and design to allow for this use. The main courtyard disabled facility is located underneath the School nurses surgery. This can be temporarily or permanently equipped for the needs of any mobility impaired users.

5.1.3 Boarding: Access to Arundale is provided by a stair-lift. This is currently used by a boarder with restricted mobility. There is provision for one room in Arunside on the ground floor. This is not currently fitted out for use but could be adapted in a short period of time if required.

6. Sight impairment

6.1 The School has clear access routes and circulation areas. The site has a number of obstacles, some fixed and some temporary (such as temporary art installations), which may constitute a potential hazard.

6.2 While the lifts are all equipped with tactile buttons, signage around the School is limited. Where signage has been introduced, the lettering is large size, printed in white sans serif type on a mid-green ground to assist community members with visual impairment.

6.3 Lighting around circulation areas and within the classrooms themselves is good.

6.4 A number of minor improvements to step highlighting have been introduced with advice from occupational health and with the assistance of a pupil with a visual impairment. With their help and the help of staff who work with them we keep the site under regular review.

7. Hearing impairment

7.1 The School site is located in a quiet area, separated from roads and general external noise. The level of background noise is low. Classroom provision can be made for pupils with hearing disabilities to sit near the front of the class. While the theatre does not have an induction loop, seating near the front can be provided. Hearing impaired pupils who benefit from amplification use individual transmitter/receiver devices to allow them to make best use of all the facilities around the School rather than limiting them to particular adapted areas.

7.2 The fire alarm system relies on a sounder to alert people in case of evacuation. Visual alarms are being installed in areas where a hearing impaired user might be unaccompanied, such as lavatories. In boarding, all supervising staff are made aware of the individual needs of particular boarders and this is taken into account during fire evacuation planning and practices.

8. Other disabilities

8.1 The School actively supports pupils and staff who may have disabilities. Particular needs can be discussed as necessary with the Registrar, the Deputy Head, the Head of Individual Needs or the School Nurse. There is a culture at St Christopher of inclusion, with staff and pupils willingly looking to make adjustments as necessary.

9. Plan for improvement

	Area	Action	Timescale
9.1	Junior school upper floor access	Expansion of the Junior school facilities will require the repositioning of individual needs provision and music to the first floor. Access arrangements are included in the plans	Ready for use by December 2019
9.2	Boarding provision for mobility impaired pupils	Provision is currently adequate for the needs and volume of pupils in Arundale. Minor changes are planned to the VI Form boarding house, Arunside, in 2020 when the allocated room will need to be prepared for an existing mobility impaired pupil moving up from Arundale. This plan can be brought forward should there be need for another pupil.	Room alterations 2020 – review of lessons learned in Arundale and any changes to adaptations – Summer 2020.
9.3	Surgery provision for mobility impaired	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve facilities available in courtyard disabled WC and sign appropriately. 2. Ensure review of Estates Strategy includes consideration of provision of this facility and potential relocation or alternative access arrangements 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Relocation of pastoral hub and social space in the new 5 year plan will include consideration of alternative position for Surgery.</p>
9.4	Fire alarm sounders	Ensure replacement appropriate for people with hearing impairment.	Rolling replacement programme. Substantial redesign included in the new installation specifications for the alarm upgrade due for completion 2018/19.
9.5	Signage	Review and expand signage around School	Three years
9.6	Whole school	Repeat audit and update plan	Summer 2021

William Hawkes
Bursar

October 2018