Three-Year Accessibility Plan 2024 - 2027

St. Francis' College

February 2024

Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School, which includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5)

Background

The Equality Act 2010 places duties on schools in relation to, inter alia, current and prospective pupils with disabilities. The Act consolidates previous anti-discrimination laws, for example, the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Schools have a duty to prepare an accessibility strategy with the overall objective of increasing the accessibility of schools for pupils with a disability.

The St Francis' College accessibility strategy is a three-year plan set out by the Senior Leadership Team for:

- increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the College curriculum;

- improving the physical environment of the College to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can take advantage of an education;

- improving the delivery to pupils with disabilities of written information, which is provided to pupils who are not disabled. This will be done within a reasonable period and in formats, which take account of views expressed, by the pupils and parents about their preferred means of communication.

- Identify any hazards associated with a particular work environment, facility or activity, which have the potential to cause harm.

- Identify reasonable adjustments within the workplace to reduce any health and safety risk related to a persons' disability

The Plan focuses on the needs of pupils with disabilities even though the school may not have any on roll – in this, the College fulfils an anticipatory duty. It links to the College's policies on Disability and Individual Needs.

Under the legislation, discrimination is defined as:

Unjustifiably treating someone less favourably for a reason related to his or her disability. Failing to make reasonable adjustments where any arrangement of physical feature places a person with a disability at a substantial disadvantage.

Disability is broadly defined as follows:

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a

substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

An impairment is seen to affect normal day-to-day activities if it affects one or more of the following:

Mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing, eyesight, memory, ability to concentrate, learn or understand and perception of physical danger.

Access to Buildings

NB – Improvements to the Building are subject to Letchworth Heritage Foundation approval

Area	Provision	Future Work
Disabled car parking	Demarcated parking space available in front car park. Parking spots for people with disabilities who are attending social functions in the theatre can be reserved.	Maintain visibility of markings on an annual basis. Development plans to improve the College entrance and parking areas. Improved parking spaces at main front car park.
Access into buildings	Ramp for main entrance to Broadway Building kept in cupboard just inside. Foldaway ramp for longer flights kept in maintenance stores. Permanent ramp constructed into the Prep Building c/w DDA compliant handrails. Portable ramps available for giving access to ground floor classrooms on loggia in middle school.	Continue to review access into and around Middle School, including to the 1st floor.
Area	**Provision**	**Future Work**

Access up stairs	DDA compliant handrails fitted to stairs to Middle School 1st Floor (ICT room).	All handrails are routinely maintained and form part of the College's Site Inspection Check.
	Other handrails provided throughout Middle School on ground and first floors.	
	Handrails provided in side entrance corridor to 6th Form Common Rooms and to all staircases in Broadway Building.	
	Handrails provided on Prep Building stairs.	
	Ramp entrance provided to new EYFS Pre building.	
	Timetabling lessons to make as much use of ground floor rooms for pupils with mobility impairment has worked well. In addition, where there is a need to go to the 1st floor, the use of rooms on the same level for the previous or subsequent lesson(s) has also been effective.	Costings of possible stair lift in Broadway to provide access to Chapel and Classrooms - 2023.

Costings of possible for stair lift in Middle School for access to Science Labs 2022.

Costings for stair lift in Prep. |
| | Identify issues for any specific pupil with mobility impairment with the pupil and her parent / guardian, resulting in agreement of the way forward. Maintained risk assessments and parental meetings to increase independence where possible. | |
| | Disabled passenger lift installed in Upper Prep. | |

Area	Provision	Future Work

Reception	Reception desk height at 800mm. Consideration given to future addition of an induction loop when the Reception Office was designed.	Portable induction loop equipment can be installed if required. Possibly in 2022/2023 subject to budget.
Theatre	Access to the Theatre auditorium and disabled access WC in the foyer is possible without using steps/stairs. Provision for wheelchair users at rear of auditorium.	Braille signage to be investigated in 2022/2023 as the area is used by the public.
Corridor	Convex mirrors fitted to corridor bends to give warning of people coming in other direction. Fitted in Middle School.	
WCs	New Prep Build is DDA compliant and includes disabled access WC.	Any new building in future would need to have a disabled access WC. Review disabled toilet access in Broadway building.
Electrics	Reasonable adjustments to the location of switches or sockets will be made locally as need arises, considering affordability.	
Induction Loops	Consideration given to future needs.	If a hearing impaired pupil or member of staff joins the College, portable hearing loop equipment may be the most effective way to provide assistance. Investigate current technology with an ongoing review in 2023.
Fire Evacuation	Personal Evacuation Egress Plans (PEEPs) are provided for students who have specific mobility impairments following consultation with parents and pupil. Personal Evacuation Egress Plans (PEEPs) are provided for staff through HR & Line Manager.	If a pupil or member of staff joins the College with sight impairment, then braille signage would be installed as necessary. Amendments would be made to the Fire Plan. Ongoing review of pupil needs throughout 2022/2023 and 2023/2024

Access to Curriculum

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Achievement
Heighten awareness throughout the College of DDA issues	Include DDA issues in Finance and General Purposes Committee. Review DDA issues at future meetings. Discuss at SLT, HoDs and other relevant Forums.	College community becomes more aware of accessibility issues in general. In addition, this may enable access to be widened for prospective pupils with disability.	Finance and General Purposes Committee involved in capital spending proposals re DDA. Finance and General Purposes Committee oversee review of Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan. Ongoing reviews throughout 2022 – 2023.
Staff skills	Training and/or recruitment of staff with required skills.	Teachers better able to meet the requirements of individual pupils to access the curriculum.	Ongoing training 2022 – 2023.
Organisation of classroom layout to enable as full participation as possible	Review type of furniture, layout of rooms and location.	Upgrade projectors and screens.	Ongoing reviews throughout 2022 – 23 / 2023 – 2024.
Educational visits	Plan visits to enable inclusive participation in as full a way as Practicable. Where relevant, trip documentation and risk assessments consider access for individuals with disability. After trips, a review meeting with respective parents is held.	Leads to improved provision on future trips.	Ongoing reviews 2022 - 2023 onwards. Specific pupils are able to participate in a number of educationally valuable.
	Additional staffing provided to help full access to trips.		
PE and outdoor activity	PE activities are as inclusive as is practicable.		Ongoing reviews during 2022 – 2023.

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Achievement
Anti –bullying	Anti-Bullying Policy to include the unacceptability of direct and indirect bullying of pupils with disabilities.	Pupils and staff become aware of issues real or perceived in terms of treatment of pupils with disabilities, leading to inclusion in the College community in line with the Ethos.	There has not been a significant problem re bullying of pupils with disabilities. Keep anti-bullying policy up to date. Strong focus on anti - bullying in PHSE. Ongoing review of all the above anti-bullying achievements during 2022- 2023 onwards.
Mental Health Issues	Raise Mental Health awareness amongst staff further. Renew MyConcern provision. Provide facilitating space in exams. Well-being award.	Training 2022 - 2023 provided. Achieved in January 2019.	Ongoing training provided. Plan for reaccreditation 2022 – 2023.

Access to Information

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Notes
Provide written information in alternative format(s)	Review the current methods for providing information as part of website review. Consider what other format(s) may be available. Consider design regarding colours and contrast,	Determine whether current provision restricts unreasonably access of information about the College. Written information provided in a format(s) to suit individual's circumstances thereby widening access.	Recognition of limited use of communication methods, primarily letter to parents – ongoing. Review of website 2021 – 2022. Improved web site. 2020/21 to make further improvements.

	font size etc.		
Provide facilitating support	Counsellor.	Support for students with anxiety.	Improving provision by bringing it in-house 2021 – 2022.
Improve provision of written documentation for visually impaired pupils/ parents	Provide written information in different formats to suit individual's circumstances. Use of laptops as required.	Access to written information widened.	College email addresses issued to all pupils and staff. College now has all parents' email addresses. Ongoing reviews throughout 2019/20 onwards.

Related Policies:
Equal Opportunities Policy
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
Individual Needs Policy
EAL (English as an Additional Language) Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Disability Policy
Examinations Access Policies
Admissions Policy

Reviewed By	Deputy Head, Operations
Authorised By	Head
Effective From	September 2024
Next Review	September 2027

Appendix 1

Identifying Barriers to Access: A Checklist

This list should help us as a College community to identify barriers to access that exist in the College. The list is not exhaustive. It is designed to encourage a flexible approach to the further questioning of the accessibility of the College.

Section 1: How does the College deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support pupils with disabilities?	Y	
Are classrooms optimally organised for pupils with disabilities?	Y	
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?	Y	
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	Y	
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	Y	
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	Y	
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some pupils with disabilities, for example using lip reading?	Y	
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some pupils with disabilities to use equipment in practical work?	Y	
Do staff provide access to computer technology appropriate for pupils with disabilities?	Y	
Are school visits including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	Y	
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	Y	
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	Y	

Appendix 2

Identifying Barriers to Access

Is the College designed to meet the needs of all pupils?

Question	Yes	No
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the theatre, dining room, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playground and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?		**N**
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the College without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?		**N**
Are pathways for travel around the site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	**Y**	
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?		**N**
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings? E.g. lifts with tactile buttons		**N**
Has consideration been given to the décor or signage to check whether it could be considered to be confusing or disorientating for pupils with disabilities with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?	**Y**	
Are areas to which pupils have access well lit?	**Y**	
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment?	**Y**	
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	**Y**	

Appendix 3

Identifying Barriers to Access

How does the College deliver materials in other formats?

Question	Yes	No
Does the College provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils[1] and prospective pupils[2] who may have difficulty with standard forms printed information?	**Y**[1 & 2]	**Y**[2]
Does the College ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities? E.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams	**Y**	
Does the College have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	**Y**	
Does the College ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	**Y**	