



# THE ORATORY

## THE ORATORY SCHOOL

### ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2021/22 - 2024/25

#### A. Introduction

1. This paper summarises the findings of an audit of the School's accessibility for those with disabilities. The intention is to identify the existing arrangements for providing for people with disabilities, and consider what more should be done.
2. The Equality Act 2010 requires schools not to discriminate against disabled pupils and prospective pupils, in the provision of education and associated services (homework clubs, out-of-school activities) including admissions and exclusions. Schools are under a duty to prepare an Accessibility Strategy and Plan to increase the accessibility of their individual schools.
3. The School does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Some measures, including operating procedures as well as physical facilities, are already in place to enable access, and it is intended that this Plan will describe how School is planning to improve accessibility for disabled pupils. Should issues arise that have not been previously identified or addressed the School will take reasonable steps to respond in a way that does not disadvantage a disabled person.
4. The disabilities that the School may need to deal with fall into two categories:
  - a. A person is defined as having a disability "if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". This definition of disability is a broad definition and covers physical disabilities, sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and learning disabilities.
  - b. Special Educational Needs (SEN).
5. There is a separate policy on Educational Provision for Pupils with SEN. That policy covers: the aims of the SEN policy; the SEN programme; identification and assessment of pupils with SEN; dissemination of SEN information; the provision of learning support; partnership with parents of pupils with SEN; development of learning support at the School including staff development.
6. Our Accessibility Plan is divided in to 3 sections which describe how we plan to:
  - (i) improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school;
  - (ii) improve the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in

- writing for pupils who are not disabled;  
(iii) increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with SEN) can participate in the School's curriculum.

## **B. How do we plan to improve the physical environment of the School?**

### 1. School facilities generally

The School facilities consist of a variety of buildings of various age and construction types. The main school building is around 120 years old and has various extensions and additions, including a large dining hall, Chapel and various ancillary rooms, classrooms and facilities.

Various other buildings include boarding premises and sports facilities, offices and maintenance premises.

Details of the accessibility within the premises is included in Appendix 1.

### 2. Restricted mobility issues

A list of the facilities and comments on accessibility follows this introduction.

Whilst the School has shown that it can accept pupils with some disability problems, accessibility for wheelchair users is challenging in some areas, as a direct consequence of the nature of some of the listed buildings.

When new builds take place disability access requirements are required to be taken into account by law.

When major refurbishments are undertaken opportunities to enhance disabled access are considered and implemented where reasonable. When any part of the School is refurbished, due consideration should be given to enhancing access for those with impaired mobility e.g. installing lifts, ramping steps and installing disabled toilet facilities.

In the most recent buildings or refurbishments the doors installed are of a disabled access size, but in other areas the types and set-up of doors and door furniture present difficulties for wheelchair users. When the portable ramps are used it will generally be possible to provide wheelchair users with assistance opening and holding doors. Where permanent ramps are fitted consideration will also need to be given to adjusting the door arrangements.

### 3. Sight impairment issues

When redecoration is carried out, the opportunity is taken to consider improving accessibility for the partially sighted by increasing rather than reducing such contrasts.

### 4. Hearing impairment issues

No classrooms or larger indoor spaces have hearing loops or other disability aids.

When any major venue is built or refurbished consideration should be given to installing hearing loops.

## **C. How do we plan to improve access to written information?**

Clearer directional signage has been introduced around the site to help pupils to find their way better.

The School's data management system identifies pupils who need to have written instructions magnified or adjusted in some other way. It is the School's policy that those who work with pupils identified as needing such adjustment should bear the responsibility for knowing the need of the student they are working with and acting in the way recommended to address that need.

The use of pictorial or symbolic representations is to be explored further particularly for First and Second Form and in EAL classes.

**D. How do we plan to improve participation in the School's curriculum?**

	Improvement/action	Reason	Staff responsible	Timing
a	Introduction of a Computer Reader program for those pupils who struggle to read and hence work is read to them	Particularly important for exam Access Arrangements so pupils who are slow readers are not disadvantaged.	Head of Curriculum Support	Underway
b	Increase the curriculum resources which show and respect differences eg books with disabled people.	Encourage respect	Head of Curriculum Support & Librarian	Ongoing

## ORATORY SCHOOL

### Appendix 1 - accessibility within premises

Building	Use	Comments
Faber building & Wootten House	General subject teaching, library, admin, Chapel, dormitories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main Reception is at ground floor level which provides some difficulties in disabled visitor access. Wheelchair access from outside is possible using ramps to the front door. It may in fact be easier and quicker to use one of the rear doors for access into the building.</li> <li>• Chair lift provides disabled access to the main Chapel.</li> <li>• The disabled toilet facilities in the vestibule are reasonably accessible from any part of the ground floor of the main building.</li> <li>• Access to all the upstairs dormitories is very limited. The back stairs are narrow and quite steep but some investigation should be carried out on the main staircase.</li> <li>• Apart from the steps to lower areas, access around the remainder of the ground floor is good.</li> <li>• Doors are generally compliant in terms of width for wheelchair access</li> <li>• If some kind of access could be provided to the first or even second floors there are one set of steps within each floor. Ramps could be provided in both places without much difficulty.</li> <li>• Library shelves are available at wheelchair-accessible height.</li> <li>• Access to the staff accommodation on the first and second floor is restricted and would be very difficult to provide.</li> </ul>
Morey building	Main teaching block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheelchair access is available only to a few classrooms on the ground floor.</li> <li>• Lessons require rearranging for pupils unable to climb stairs.</li> <li>• The lift has been out of order for some years and will be replaced when funds are available.</li> <li>• Evacuation chair is available for anyone unable to evacuate the building speedily.</li> </ul>
Boarding Houses - Norris & FitzAlan	Boarding/staff accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lift in both houses to provide disabled access to all 3 floors.</li> <li>• Disabled toilets available.</li> <li>• Access to communal areas</li> </ul>
Dining Room	Dining Room /kitchen/staff and visitors toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to the dining room car park door is difficult for wheelchairs but access using the other external dining room doors is excellent</li> <li>• Double doors between the dining room and main building do not pose any access problems.</li> <li>• There is a disabled toilet facility on the ground floor but this is within Wootten House so access would need to be granted in advance.</li> </ul>

Theatre	Theatre performances and school assemblies etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is disabled ramp access to the theatre.</li> <li>• There is easy access from the main hall to the hallway of Tomlinson building.</li> <li>• There is a disabled toilet in the foyer</li> <li>• Doors are generally compliant in terms of width for wheelchair access</li> </ul>
Sport Centre	Indoor sport facility, indoor facility for boarders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The building is accessible to wheelchair users through the main doors.</li> <li>• Disabled toilet and changing room is provided</li> <li>• Water fountain accessible to a wheelchair user.</li> </ul>
ART/DT	ART & DT CLASSROOMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A ramp is provided at the front double door access.</li> <li>• There is level double door access to the ART room</li> <li>• Access can be achieved into all the DT classes through an additional external door.</li> <li>• There are no disabled toilet facilities in the building.</li> </ul>
St Joseph's Chapel		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External doors comply in width but ramps are required for disabled access.</li> <li>• Internal doors to be checked for width.</li> <li>• Pews are fixed and while there is space for a wheel chair by the old organ it is a fire exit route.</li> <li>• Stairs to gallery are narrow and steep but this is only used for overflow purposes in any case.</li> <li>• This building has very limited scope for change but there is a Chapel within Faber which has full disabled access.</li> </ul>
Main car park	Visitor access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no steps in or around the car park, the only hazard being an uneven cobbled surface near the front door.</li> <li>• Access to the building by ramp available at front door or via the vestibule double doors</li> </ul>