

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2009 - 2012

In drawing up this Accessibility Plan the following points were considered:-

- The procedure for admission to QM
- The site & premises
- Current provision for girls and staff
- Accessibility provision before 2003

Admissions Policy

QM Admissions Policy makes provision for the disclosure of physical or learning disability and confirms the school's commitment to handle the admissions process with sensitivity and therefore fulfils an *anticipatory duty* as defined by the act. The failure by a parent to divulge any physical or learning disability at this time constitutes a *justification* under the act for discrimination.

When a parent requests confidentiality regarding any physical or learning disability QM may be constrained in its ability to make *reasonable adjustments*. In such circumstances QM reserves the right to decide the balance between confidentiality and reasonable adjustments for inclusion.

If a physical or learning disability is disclosed at interview meetings are then arranged as required with the Medical Centre, Pupil Support Department and Sports Department.

No girl will be discriminated against during the admissions process because of her individual needs. However QM is an academically selective school and all girls admitted must satisfy the academic criteria.

The School regularly admits girls with learning difficulties, EAL needs, and physical and emotional difficulties.

In cases of physical disability or medical condition:-

The Medical Centre liaises with the parents and any Health Care professionals already involved. The Senior Sister gives a full briefing to the Housemistress and her assistants. The Senior Sister gives a full briefing to the Director of Sport and to other staff as necessary. The Senior Sister ensures that an entry is made on the Essential Information File.

In the cases of learning difficulty:-

The Head of Pupil Support meets with the girls and her parents to discuss the level and type of learning support required. The Head of Pupil Support always attends the Entrance Examination Results meeting to advise on a candidate's performance and potential.

Once a place has been accepted the Head of Pupil Support may agree a pre-admission programme with the parents, often liaising closely with the girl's current school.

On arrival at QM the girl is assessed by the Pupil Support Department and a programme is arranged.

Regular informal contact between the Pupil Support Department and parents complements the annual parents' meeting and end of term reports.

The Site

Queen Margaret's School stands in grounds of approx 65 acres. The gardens, possibly planned by Capability Brown, are greatly enjoyed by girls and staff. While retaining much of their former glory and having great charm, they were not designed for disabled access since they are built on many different levels, with numerous steps and different surfaces (e.g. paving, grass, gravel). They are officially designated as Historical Parkland and therefore the School has a duty to maintain them in their current state.

The classrooms and boarding houses are spread over a wide area and all members of the QM community (staff & girls) walk considerable distances around the campus during a normal working day.

The Premises

The main school is housed in a Grade II* listed building. Girls aged 12 - 15 years live on the first and second floors of this building which is linked to the stables block built by John Carr. Various alterations made to the original Hall before its current use as a school have left it with numerous stairways, steps and changes of level. Subsequent alteration made by the school from the late 1940s until recent legislation have also had a significant impact.

Provision for staff

The appointment of Mrs Ruth Doyle (who is confined to a wheelchair following a road accident) in 2001 to teach English led the School to review its provision of permanent ramps. In 1994 ramps had been installed to access Cloisters/The Art & Technology block, built in 1998, had a concreted ramp access with flush door thresholds and a disabled WC/The Swimming Pool, built in 1999 had ramped access with flush door thresholds and disabled WC.

The English block built in 1998 had one concreted ramp access and flush door thresholds to all classrooms. In 2001 removable timber ramps were provided to all access points to supplement the concrete ramps at the back kitchen door and the door out cloaks corridor. These concrete ramps were improved to allow access for Mrs Doyle. A further ramp was provided for the English classrooms in 2001.

From 2001 - 2006 the following adjustments were made to provide access for Mrs Doyle.

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| 2003 | Paved area resurfaced. |
| 2006 | Provision of reserved parking for disabled drivers. |

Provision for girls

Since 2000 QM has admitted girls with the following medical conditions:

Epilepsy

Cystic fibrosis

Muscular dystrophy (Genetic Charcot Marie Tooth Disease)

ADHD

Hydrocephalous with shunt, mild cerebral palsy

Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (in remission)

On average the Pupil Support Department sees 80 pupils per year.

The school employs a part time EAL teacher who provides support for those pupils for whom English is an additional language. Where there is the need QM arranges for extra language tuition with the agreement of the parents/guardians.

Appointment of Staff

QM is committed to equal opportunities in the recruitment of staff. Induction procedures for new staff include sessions with the Medical Centre, School Counsellor, Head of Pupil Support and Teacher of EAL.

Involvement in School Life

QM is fully committed to ensure that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas:

- Curriculum (including sport, music & drama)
- Extra curricular activities (including sport, music & drama)
- Examination arrangements
- Discipline (including suspension & exclusion)
- Preparation for Higher Education/Careers
- Social activities & outings run by QM
- Leadership roles

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments in order to enable access to the full range of educational opportunities and extra-curricular activities provided by QM. However in making reasonable adjustments the school will also consider

- The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting & other standards
- The financial resources available
- Health & Safety requirements
- The interests of other pupils

Access to buildings

Under SENDA the school has a duty to audit access to buildings and facilities and to incorporate its results into the schools plan as appropriate.

Complaints

Any claim for unlawful discrimination under SENDA should be made through the school's Complaints Procedure.

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Time Frame	Planning Area	Planning Activities	Responsibility	Outcome
2009/10	English classrooms	Doors widened to provide easier access to member of staff in wheelchair returning from sabbatical year	QM	Completed 2009
	Pupil Support	Provision of IEPs for all girls receiving pupil support	AB/MT/JE/DH	Improved standards of teaching & learning
	EAL	Provision of IEPs for all girls receiving EAL support	AB/MG	Improved standards of teaching & learning
	Paths	Resurface drives between Main Building & Red House & Main Street gates. Improve lighting	QM	Improved access around campus
	Boarding	Review use of Main Building with regard to disabled access	SMT/QC	Provision for girls with physical disabilities
	Admissions	Special arrangements (readers) for girls taking entrance examinations	RH/JH/MT	Improved provision for prospective pupils with identified learning disabilities
	Disabled access/facilities	Continue to monitor disabled facilities currently in place	QC/RD	Improved access for wheelchair users
2010/11	Boarding	Submit planning application for improvements/extension to Main Building	SMT/QC	Improved provision for girls with physical disabilities
	Paths	Continue programme of resurfacing paths/drives/paved areas	QC	Improved access around campus
	Better Pupil Support & EAL provision	Implementation of the new Plan of Day	SMT	Improved standard of teaching & learning
2011/12	Staff development Concerned with SENDA	Staff INSET programme to include SENDA training	SMT	Improved standard of teaching & learning
	Pupil Support/EAL	Review impact of changes in Plan of Day	SMT/MT/MG	Improved standard of teaching & learning

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	Maths Classrooms	Improve access to Maths Classrooms	QC	Improved provision for girls with physical disabilities
	Classrooms	Start planning new teaching block & future of Maths/English classrooms	SMT/QC/ Governors	Improved standards of teaching & learning

This Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to meet the requirements of existing or prospective pupils.

HOW DOES QM DELIVER THE CURRICULUM?

	Yes	No	See Plan
Do you ensure that teachers & boarding staff etc have the necessary training to support pupils with disabilities? Head of Pupil support EAL teacher, Medical Centre or School Counsellor offer training as necessary.	✓		
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	✓		
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups & the whole class?	✓		
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama & physical activities?	✓		
Do staff recognise the need for additional time required by some pupils?	✓		
Does QM facilitate access to ICT appropriate for girls with disabilities? Laptop.	✓		
Are all school trips & outings made accessible to all girls? Negotiated on individual basis.	✓		
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	✓		
Do staff work to remove all barriers to learning & participation	✓		

IS QM DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL PUPILS?

	Yes	No	See Plan
Does the size & layout of areas - including all classrooms, labs, chapel, theatre, common rooms & sporting facilities allow access to all girls? 1 st & 2 nd floors of Main Building, Cloisters, Red House, UVI cottages & Maths classrooms limit access.			✓
Can a pupil in a wheelchair access all areas? Many classrooms & rooms on 1 st & 2 nd floors in Main Building are inaccessible to wheelchairs.			✓
Is there parking for disabled staff/pupils?	✓		
Could any décor or signage be considered confusing or disorientating to pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy? Signs displayed outside theatre to warn of strobe lighting.		✓	
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit? Extra lighting on route to Red House is required. In the meantime lights in Classics 1 & 2 are left on.			✓
Is furniture & equipment selected, adjusted or located appropriately?	✓		