



# Accessibility Policy and Plan

STATUS: STATUTORY

**Review Cycle:** Every 3 Years

**Governors Committee Responsible:** Full Governing Board

**Date of Last Review:** 5/12/2024

**Date of Next Review:** Autumn 2027



## Introduction

### Purpose

This document sets out the policy adopted by the Governors of Tiffin School to deal with all types of accessibility issues within the site for all persons with disabilities. It provides a framework on which the School will base their arrangements for Accessibility Plans that are compliant with the relevant current legislation namely the “Equality Act 2010” and specifically Schedule 10 of that act, “Accessibility for Disabled Children”.

### Scope

Accessibility covers a number of issues within education which can be summarised as follows:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School’s curriculum
- Expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are equally prepared for life as are able-bodied pupils not only within teaching and learning, but also in the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in extracurricular activities. It also includes the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist individual pupils in accessing the curricular and extra-curricular within a reasonable timeframe.
- Improving the physical environment of the school, adding specialist or converting existing facilities as necessary for the purpose of increasing the extent to which the disabled take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe.
- Improving the delivery of written and electronic information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. By ensuring such information is made available in various preferred formats again within a reasonable timeframe.

Disability is defined within the Equalities Act 2010 (Chapter 2 Paragraph 6.1) 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 their ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. ‘Substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’ and ‘Long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer”

### Implementation

The organisation for the implementation of this policy is outlined below:

- The Governing Board of the School recognises and accepts that every student who meets the admission criteria has the right to a full education regardless of any impairment. It is the policy of the Governing Board to take all necessary steps to meet its responsibilities and therefore to make provision, over a given period, to ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum as well as the site/buildings.
- Tiffin School is committed to provide an environment that enables full curriculum access, which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs, and is committed to taking positive action with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the School.
- The school will maintain an Accessibility Plan, managed by the Chief Operating Officer and the Premises Manager in collaboration with the SENCo, which shows how access is to be provided and improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school in a given timeframe and anticipating

the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The current version of the Plan is shown at Appendix 1.

- School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility Plan which will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes, and include a projected plan ahead of the next review date.
- The school currently contracts in specialist support and advice from various bodies who provide advice and assistance on accessibility matters for both the physical and educational environment. These include:
  - The local authority (Achieving for Children)
  - A Service Level Agreement with Educational Psychology service for 22 days per year
  - Gold level membership to SPARK (the School Performance Alliance Richmond and Kingston)
  - Link to the Disabled Children's Service for support to families for some pupils with high needs
  - Access to local authority SLA with Speech and Language Therapy Services / Occupational Therapy Services / Physiotherapy Services for pupil with requirement for direct therapy or advice
  - Ability to make ad hoc requests for advice from the Education Inclusion Service,
  - Membership of professional networks for SENCO e.g. NASEN, SENCO forum, etc.
  - School Young Person Health Link Worker
  - Our own Deputy SENCo Therapeutic Practitioner, and Teaching Assistants
- The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions/references to support:
  - Increased access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability
  - The expansion of the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are equally prepared for life as are able-bodied pupils
  - Improved access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary
  - Improving the delivery of written and electronic information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities
- Access to the curriculum should be considered and incorporated within wider school policies such as Admissions, Curriculum, E-Safety, Exclusion, Equality and Diversity, Behaviour for Learning, Safeguarding, SEND, Spiritual and Moral, Teaching and Learning, Work Experience as and when they are developed or updated.
- The intake of the School is reviewed each year for any accessibility restrictions of new pupils including the details of their Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, where applicable. Accessibility arrangements will be made in accordance with any new requirement.
- An Accessibility Action Plan on the physical environment shown in Appendix 2 will be completed by the school yearly accompanying this policy in order to ensure the ongoing implementation of the Accessibility Plan for the on-going period.
- Accessibility requirements should be considered for inclusion in the design of all future building work and also accommodated where practical within existing buildings when planning refurbishment works.
- Suitable training for staff will be included in the CPD / PDD programme and will reflect the need to continue raising awareness on equality/disability/accessibility issues with reference to the various Acts, and these issues will also be considered as and when relevant School policies are reviewed.

## Appendix 1: Accessibility Assessment

### Physical Environment

The core accommodation of the School consists of three interconnected buildings.

- In the **Main Building**, disabled access is possible at ground floor level by either doors which are level with external ground surfaces or by pedestrian ramps where there is a change of height between the inside of the building and the outside ground level enabling access to all classrooms and the Main Hall. At first floor level classrooms at the western end of the building are accessed by a platform lift located in the adjoining Dempsey Centre and the laboratories at the eastern end by a similar lift situated in the Main Building itself. Thus the majority of teaching areas in this building (88%) can be accessed by both wheelchair and ambulant users, the exceptions being Rooms 17, 18, 19 (see below). The medical room, student and staff toilets in this buildings have facilities designed for disabled users
- The **Dempsey Centre** and the Judge Lecture Theatre are fully accessible at ground floor level with the upper floor being served by a platform lift. It also has two fully DDA compliant toilets on the ground floor whilst the male and female pupil toilets have had adaptations made to accommodate ambulant users. The Dining Hall is fully accessible, as are the Maths rooms above.
- The **Roberts Building** is fully accessible at ground floor level and the first floor can be accessed by the lift in the Dempsey Centre with which it also shares toilet facilities.

The remaining buildings on site are free standing:

- The Music, Drama and Technology departments in the **Chester Centre** are fully accessible from either ground level entry doors or by ramps. There is no disabled lift to the second floor which houses elements of the music department, rooms 94, 95, 96 and 97 and the Art department, rooms 90, 91, 92 (see below). Adaptations have been made in the food technology room where a height adjustable workstation and cooking equipment have been installed. There is a single partially adapted WC on the ground floor in the music department, predominantly restricted for staff use.
- Only the ground floor in **Elmfield** can be accessed. The other floors contain classrooms and music practice rooms, 70, 71, 75, 76, 77, 79 which cannot be accessed by those who are unable to walk safely up and down the stairs.
- Access to the ground floor Sports Centre is compliant via doors and ramped access. All changing rooms, shower and toilet facilities are on the ground floor, or accessible by lift, including 2 DDA compliant toilet and changing rooms. The first floor studios are accessible by lift.

The Harper Pavilion at **Grist's** has disabled access and toilet facilities.

The **Canbury Boat House** does not currently have disabled access but this is currently under review by the Directors of Canbury Boat House Limited.

To summarise the following specific areas do not have wheelchair access arrangements and special measures would need to be taken should access be required by anyone who is unable to walk safely up and down the stairs:

- Rooms 17, 18, 19 on the first floor of the Main Building
- Rooms 94, 95, 96, 97 (Music) on the First floor of the Chester Centre
- Rooms 90, 91, 92, (Art) on the first floor of the Chester Centre
- Rooms 70, 71, 75, 76, 77, 79 in Elmfield
- The upper floor of Canbury Boat House

Of those listed above, some provide a specialist curriculum facility and equipment:

- Specialist music room 95 currently has no access for the disabled. Lessons would need to be timetabled to the similarly equipped classroom on the ground floor Room 88
- The Art Department classrooms are not currently accessible to wheelchair or ambulant disabled – lessons would need to be transferred to a ground floor classroom as although Art is a specialist subject its resources are largely of a portable nature and such location can be easily coped with.

No other areas listed above include specialist curriculum facilities or equipment and therefore lessons can be relocated to alternative accessible areas of the School when such need arises. Furthermore none of these areas are considered as requiring access for visitors to the School. Should any visitor with disability require such access then appropriate arrangements to accommodate that situation will be made at the time

### **Curriculum**

- We endeavour to make all areas of the curriculum accessible to pupils with disabilities
- The School employs Teaching Assistants to work with specific pupils with disabilities
- The School employs a specialist Therapeutic Assistant
- The School uses access arrangements for public and internal exams; laptops or scribes are used as necessary and appropriate in accordance with JCQ regulations.

### **Accessible Information**

- Parents' Welcome and Information events and consultations are hosted in the Dining Hall where there is disabled access, parking and toilet facilities, or are held online
- All parent communication is via email. There is capability to translate communications into home languages where requested
- There is a hearing loop at Reception, and in the Judge Lecture Theatre
- Measures have been taken to make the site more accessible for those with visual impairments, such as making stair edges visibly / texturally different, making speed bumps in playground visually different, and having a siren for gate opening in the Birkenhead Avenue car park

## Appendix 2: Accessibility Action Plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim	Current Good Practice	Objectives	Actions to Be Taken	Person Responsible	Date to Complete Actions By	Success Criteria
<p>Improve and maintain access to the physical environment</p>	<p>Recognition that lessons scheduled for rooms 17, 18 and 19 on the first floor of the Main Building could be taught in a ground floor classroom, depending on the needs of disabled students or staff.</p> <p>Recognition that Music lessons scheduled for room 95 on the first floor of the Chester Centre could be taught in the ground floor classroom room 88, depending on the needs of disabled students or staff.</p>	<p>Instigate a process whereby any student or staff member who needs to use the lift to access upstairs floors on a temporary basis can be safely evacuated if the lift cannot be used (NB there are currently no site users with ongoing mobility needs which prevent them from using the stairs)</p>	<p>Consult with AfC Health &amp; Safety team for advice</p> <p>Identify where the disabled refuge points are and process for using these</p> <p>Instigate a new individual risk assessment/ action plan process</p>	<p>Samantha Joiner, Chief Operating Officer</p>	<p>1/1/2025</p>	<p>All staff aware of the need to report temporary mobility needs reported to COO</p> <p>All temporary mobility needs reported to COO by office staff/ teachers</p> <p>Individual risk assessment and action plan (i.e. temporary PEEP) completed for those who would be unable to evacuate safely in the event of a genuine emergency</p>
	<p>Recognition that lessons scheduled for music practice rooms on the first floor of the Chester Centre could be taught in rooms on the ground floor, depending on the needs of disabled students or staff.</p> <p>Recognition that individual music lessons taught on the first floor of the Elmfield building (a listed building) could be taught elsewhere on the school site, depending on the needs of disabled students or staff and the</p>	<p>Consider the installation of a platform lift in the Chester Centre as part of a future capital funding bid</p>	<p>Consider the installation of a platform lift in the Chester Centre as part of discussions about future capital funding bids</p>	<p>Samantha Joiner, Chief Operating Officer</p>	<p>31/07/2028</p>	<p>Platform lift installed in the Chester Centre</p>

	location of specialist music equipment needed					
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	<p>Teaching Assistants employed to work with specific pupils with disabilities</p> <p>Deputy SENCo Therapeutic Practitioner employed full time</p> <p>Access arrangements in place for public and internal exams including laptops/ scribes/ readers in accordance with JCQ regulations</p>		Install sensory circuits to support vestibular and proprioceptive input and ultimately the regulation of students with sensory processing difficulties.	Rachel Dyer, SENCo	01/09/2025	
Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability	<p>Hearing loop installed in Judge Lecture Theatre</p> <p>Stair edges visibly/ texturally different from rest of stairs</p> <p>Speed bumps in playground visually different from rest of ground</p> <p>Gate siren in Birkenhead carpark</p> <p>Support worker employed to enlarge resources for specific student with visual impairment</p> <p>Regular habilitation audits for visually impaired students</p>					