

Accessibility Plan (SENDA)

(Reviewer: Darren Carpenter; August 2022)
Applicable to College including EYFS Setting

1. Special Educational Needs and Disability / Reasonable Adjustments Policy Statement on SENDA

The following is the College's policy under the Equality Act 2010. It should be read alongside the College's Admissions Policy and Learning Support Policy.

Hurstpierpoint College is an equal opportunities establishment and we welcome applications from parents of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The College recognises that every child is unique. However, this policy does not seek to cater for every situation. It is intended as a general statement of policy which sets out the principles underlying our approach to making adjustments for disabled pupils and the factors the school will take into account when considering requests for adjustments.

Admission to Hurst depends upon a prospective pupil exhibiting the potential to cope with mainstream education. This includes an extended National Curriculum in all parts of the College. The College must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful college career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at Hurst.

In addition, it must be recognised that Hurst is a boarding school and consequently (and particularly in the Senior School) pupils should be physically self-sufficient. Furthermore, the geography and nature of the campus, which includes many listed historic buildings, means that Hurst is unlikely to be suitable for children with severe mobility problems.

Our policy is to apply the above criteria to all pupils and all potential pupils regardless of any special educational need or disability of which we are aware, and we will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils and applicants are not put at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with pupils and applicants who are not disabled. This is subject to the College's obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared with their non-disabled peers, and to capacity constraints which limit the number of places available in any one year group to children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.

In view of this obligation and the limited support available, it is essential that parents advise the College of possible learning difficulties or disabilities at the time of application, and provide the College with a copy of any relevant professional assessments including, for example, an educational psychologist's report and hearing and sight assessments. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil, the College may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate, but will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. (N.B. A pupil or applicant is disabled if he or she suffers from 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. In most cases, disabilities will have lasted or likely to last for 12 months or more.)

Policy Implementation

Section 1 covers general principles and responsibilities in relation to all disabilities, whilst

Section 2 covers specific matters concerned with particular areas of disability.

Section 4 is the College's current Accessibility Plan as required by schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

2. General

Admissions

- The Head of College has the responsibility for all decisions concerning the acceptance or non-acceptance of pupils with disabilities.
- Parents are responsible for declaring disabilities of any kind. These should be declared to the Admissions Department and on the College registration form or, if the child is a current pupil, to the Director of Learning Support or SENDCo. This is required of them in the College parental contract. Declaration is required irrespective of the provision by parents of any confidential information to the Medical Centre.
- The parent contract will be amended to include a clause to the effect that the College's obligations to any pupil are not unlimited. In the event, for instance, that all reasonable adjustments, having been agreed and implemented, are subsequently found to be insufficient for the reason of unforeseen deterioration of a condition or for some other reason, the College cannot be held responsible for its refusal to make yet further adjustments which it considers to be impractical, unreasonable, or unaffordable.
- On the admission of a pupil with a disability, or in the case of a pupil already in the College found to have a disability, a letter will be sent from the College to the parents setting out: the disability; its effect on the pupil; and the measures and adjustments agreed with the parents, and to be implemented by the College, so as not to place the pupil at a substantial disadvantage. The parents will be required to sign and return a duplicate of the College's letter to indicate their acceptance.
- The exchange of information and the involvement of colleagues most concerned with the management and welfare of individual pupils is of the greatest importance prior to the decision to accept, or not to accept, any child with a disability. This process will include a meeting, or meetings, with parents as well as liaison with colleagues in order to establish whether a pupil's individual needs can properly be met or not.

INSET

INSET provides an opportunity for staff to be briefed regarding the needs associated with particular forms of disability. Since many staff come into contact with any particular child during the course of his/her education, it is important that there is a good level of awareness as to the issues which are likely to arise.

Health and Safety

- Pupils with certain disabilities will be at greater risk of accident or injury and boarding pupils may be particularly vulnerable at night.
- The College will undertake a specific risk assessment for all disabled children entering the College and will determine in each case what particular action or procedures may be necessary to avoid or reduce risk. For example, the location of studies in Houses is likely to be a key consideration. Pupils may also need a 'buddy', and this could involve a pupil sharing a study even if the pupil is a member of the fifth or sixth forms. It may be appropriate to install a non-standard fire alarm in some circumstances.

Helpers/'Buddies'

- Mention is made in the above item of the possible need for a 'minder' when a pupil is a boarder. It is possible to imagine other situations in which helpers or 'buddies' would provide support. This could range from an adult being with a child on a one-to-one basis each day, to the more occasional help of a pupil, perhaps at lunchtimes.
- It is likely that the senior school 'guardian' system would have a useful role to play in the case of pupils with certain disabilities.

Reduced Curriculum

Depending on the individual circumstances, the full range of College academic and non-academic activities may not safely or reasonably be available to pupils with disabilities. An assessment will be made as part of the admissions process. Where reasonable and practicable, other options will be offered.

Participation in sports, CCF, College clubs and other activities

Risk assessments will be necessary for each pupil per sport/activity.

Assessment and Exams

Where it is appropriate to make adjustments regarding assessment and exams, the College will take advice from the examinations boards. The College will adopt the procedures of the boards for its internal examinations.

College Trips

- College trips are already subject to scrutiny at the planning stage. Risk assessments will be appropriate for pupils with disabilities.
- It may be appropriate to invite parents to go on the trip or to have another adult 'buddy' present.
- Thought should be given to activities/venues which are more suitable for disabled pupils although choices made should not in any way disadvantage the majority of pupils.

Counselling

It is recognised that specialist counselling may from time to time be appropriate for particular pupils. Needs would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

University Applications

Sensitive, focused advice is appropriate when matching the needs of pupils having disabilities with appropriate Higher Education Institutions.

College Database

- Access to pupil information by the teaching staff is particularly important where pupils have disabilities or other health problems which make them vulnerable or can put them at risk in particular situations.
- The College database enables information to be held which is relevant to the needs of pupils. The database incorporates information concerning medical/health issues; particular risks or concerns arising from a disability; and learning difficulties.

3. Specific Disabilities

Pupils who have mental illness/mental health problems

- Pupils falling into this category can be the most challenging for schools. Procedures are already in place for dealing with pupils at risk. In most cases the College's Medical Centre is the first port of call. However, difficulty and delay in accessing the appropriate psychiatric services may be difficult given the pressures on these services generally. It might be

appropriate to research a list of experts including those whose services are available privately.

- The College must know the details concerning pupils' medication requirements.
- Pupils will be subject to a clear and appropriate set of rules.
- Staff should know where pupils are at all times.

Pupils who have learning difficulties

- In the case of pupils with learning difficulties, it should always be established whether on any previous occasion additional support has been recommended. Since all pupils are tested prior to admission, learning difficulties should generally be apparent at the outset.
- Further details are given in the Learning Support Policy.

Pupils who are deaf/have hearing loss

- The College has experience of catering for pupils with hearing loss and will provide additional facilities as necessary, depending on individual need. These may include specific arrangements to ensure that the pupil is able to access the curriculum; arrangements to ensure that general instructions and announcements made verbally can be accessed; and physical aids to ensure the Health and Safety of the pupil concerned across the campus, particularly if boarding.
- The College will consider installing hearing loop technology in public buildings, but it is unlikely to be feasible to extend this to all buildings around the campus.

Pupils who are blind/have visual impairments

- It is considered very unlikely that a pupil who is totally blind will wish to come to the College.
- For other pupils with less serious visual impairments, a number of strategies will be considered. The parents may fund a helper. It may be possible to improve or adapt lighting. Braille learning materials are available, as are large fonts. IT solutions are various and a 'minder' could assist with these, for instance producing the enlarged material which the pupil might need. Books and other materials are available in taped form. Larger notices may be required.
- Whereas pupils with hearing difficulties may need to receive written notices, those with visual impairments may need to be told about announcements and other information which is normally transmitted in visual form.

Pupils who have mobility difficulties

- It is recognised that pupils confined to wheelchairs are very unlikely to want to come to the College. Our buildings and facilities do not generally provide level access. The practicalities would need careful and sensitive discussion with parents and pupils.
- However the College does have experience of dealing with existing pupils who have become wheelchair bound and various improvements have been made to existing buildings to provide improved access.
- The College will make further improvements where possible to provide for the needs of individual pupils and visitors in general. However it must be recognised that because of the layout of the College's historic buildings certain facilities and areas of the campus will never be fully accessible to pupils (or visitors) with mobility difficulties.

4. Making Reasonable Adjustments

The College has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments for pupils and applicants who are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 when they are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils and applicants who do not have disabilities. This includes:

- Changes to policies, criteria and practice (i.e., the way we do things), for example:

- Ensuring that all parts of the curriculum are accessible to pupils with disabilities.
- Ensuring that disabled pupils have ready access to information (timetables, regulations and instructions, all communications about College events and activities.)
- Having prepared and having in place Disability Access Plans which address issues arising from the above.
- Improving the physical environment to increase access.
- Providing auxiliary aids and services (i.e. additional support or assistance), for example;
 - Extra staff assistance
 - Items of equipment i.e. Induction loops, audio-visual fire alarms

In order to ensure these obligations are fulfilled, the College will undertake a needs assessment for all disabled pupils entering the College and for all current pupils who are diagnosed with a disability after entering the College. Responsibility for undertaking this assessment and ensuring that any necessary action is taken lies with the following:

- For new pupils: the Head of Admissions in consultation with the Head of College and of the appropriate School;
- For existing pupils (including the annual review of existing assessments): the pupil's Houseparent in the Senior School and Head of Year in the Prep School, each in consultation with the Deputy Head (Pastoral);
- Educational support including equipment, materials, exams and assessment: the Deputy Head (Academic) in consultation with the Head of Learning Support of the appropriate school;
- Extra curricula and sports activity – the Deputy Head (Co-Curricular);
- Overall planning and finance, physical access, health and safety – the Chief Financial Officer, supported by the Health and Safety Manager.

In addition to its legal obligations and where not constrained by cost, the College will seek to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with Special Educational Needs who, under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, are not disabled.

Needs assessments when completed will be stored with the pupil's records on iSAMS, reviewed annually and updated as appropriate from time to time.

The Needs Assessment template is included as s5.

5. Accessibility Plan – Specific Objectives for 2023 - 2026

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum:

- Reduced curricula based on individual capabilities and needs have been in place at the College since 2008. This process will be continued and extended for entrants to the Senior School with specific learning difficulties in future years and, in addition, subject options will be adjusted for pupils as they move up the school, the aim being that all pupils receive teaching which is appropriate to their needs and abilities. Staff will receive general briefings and training at INSET meetings on an annual basis, and specific briefing and training whenever a pupil with disabilities or specific learning difficulties is joining the school, or if required because of the changing needs of an existing pupil.
- For children in the Junior Prep and Senior Prep Schools, training will be given to staff according to a pupil's individual needs on entry to the school and thereafter every term as update training at staff meetings. Curriculum adjustments will be made as necessary.

Improving the physical environment

- The College has a policy of making ongoing incremental improvements to existing buildings and funds will be allocated in the annual budgets to allow for this. Such improvements, which will be undertaken to overcome identified shortcomings and meet specific needs, will include improvements to steps, stairways, exterior surfaces and paving, building entrances and exits, internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, floor coverings, signs and furniture.
- The Academic block (opened in 2009), the extensions to the Science block (2011 and 2015), the Library and Moore Hall (2014), the New Bury Theatre (2018) and the Music school extension (2019) all comply with the latest Disability Access requirements under the Building Regulations. They include library and laboratory facilities for pupils in wheelchairs, and lifts which provide access to the majority of teaching facilities. Wheelchair access has been provided to St. John's House (2012), disabled toilet facilities installed in the Science & Design Technology block (2015), and alterations have been made to the external paths around the College to remove steps and improve access to the central areas of the campus. The New Bury Theatre and the adjoining extension to the Music School also allow access and provide facilities for disabled students and visitors.
- A new boarding house (Pelican) which is fully accessible to disabled students was completed in 2020.
- The College has undertaken a gradual expansion of its parking facilities over the recent years with improvements to the main, Prep and other car parks, which include improved facilities for disabled drivers.

For 2023-25 the College plans further major improvements including:

- A new swimming pool complex with disabled access. Phase two of this project will include an accessible cafeteria and co-curricular spaces.
- In addition and where necessary the College will provide physical aids to help pupils gain access to education, including enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept key boards, switches, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with poor hand/eye skills, such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

Improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils:

- The College will continue to give active consideration to increasing the amount of information available in alternative formats for pupils with specific visual or hearing impairments and will make information available in larger font sizes where necessary. However, many initiatives are costly to implement and will only be considered if additional funding is available (e.g., from either the local authority or the parents of the child concerned).

Needs Assessment Template

	Applicable?	Issue to be Addressed	Responsibility
Access to the curriculum			
Admissions procedures			
Teaching and learning			
Classroom organisation			
Timetabling			
Homework policy and practice			
Access to College facilities			
Sport & Co-curricular facilities			
Fire alarms and other emergencies			
Transport to/from school			

Breaks and lunchtimes			
Provision and serving of meals			
Interaction with peers			
Assessment and exam arrangements			
College discipline and sanctions			
Exclusion procedures			
College clubs and activities			
College trips			
Arrangements for working with other agencies			
Communications/announcements			
College policies – e.g. anti-bullying, SEN policies, health and safety			
Access to information			
University applications			

Owner: DRC	Date of last review: August 2022	Date for next review: August 2024
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