



# ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2022 – 2024

## Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful.

The Laurels School's Accessibility Plan aims to:

- Enable disabled pupils to access the full range of the curriculum;
- Ensure that the physical environment of the school continues to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

We recognise the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will regularly review them. This plan should be read in conjunction with other relevant documents such as:

- The Laurels School Assessment Policy
- The Laurels School Curriculum Policy
- The Laurels School EAL Policy
- The Laurels School Equal Opportunities Policy
- The Laurels School Special Educational Needs Policy

## Definition of Disability

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one.

*A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.*

The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions, such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included.

If persons have been disabled in the past (for example, those who have recovered from cancer or with a history of mental illness), they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their lives.

## Vision and values

The PACT Charter of Educational Principles states clearly that PACT schools must “aim to provide each pupil with a full and balanced education in intellectual, cultural and spiritual matters” (Article 2). This applies to all pupils, regardless of disability or indeed any other characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010.

PACT schools also seek to “ensure that each pupil develops his or her talents to the full and acquires a sense of individual and social responsibility”. (Article 3)

PACT schools have an inclusive outlook and Article 7 states that “(The) schools should seek to share their resources with the greatest number of people”.

Article 9 of the Charter commits PACT schools explicitly to equal treatment and celebrates the diversity within its schools which “should be seen as a means of mutual enrichment”.

## Pupils

At The Laurels School, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all pupils. We do this by taking account of pupils’ varied life experiences and needs. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our pupils matter. Our plan helps to ensure that the School promotes the individuality of all staff, pupils of and visitors to The Laurels School, regardless of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. Please see also the Equal Opportunities Policy.

## Staff

When we recruit staff we strive to appoint the person with the skills and qualifications appropriate to the post without prejudice. The Laurels School is dedicated to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. We have rigorous procedures for new staff and all DBS checks are made in line with statutory guidance.

## School context

The School opened in January 2014. We have two pupils with an EHC plan and have no other pupils with severe disabilities. We assess all prospective pupils using the CAT tests and continue to monitor pupils throughout their time at the school.

In September 2021, The School moved to its new location in SE19. This followed an extensive and ambitious refurbishment plan that constantly kept accessibility on the radar to ensure our facilities would be future-proof.

We operate from three buildings:

- A modern and functional building that was erected in 2009. This building is called St. Catherine’s Centre. As a recent construction, accessibility was part of the design. As a result we benefit from a disabled toilet on the G/F, a lift that can accommodate a person in a wheelchair and someone accompanying the person, call points on each floor, accessible entrance from either West or the East side. It is worth noting that to

accommodate the special needs of our new student, we have prepared a new private room where the student can take a rest whenever she needs it, with the disabled toilet close by.

- Part of a Gothic Building, which we usually call the South Wing. This building is locally listed, hence some constraints on the possible changes. On G/F, the refectory, music practice rooms and Headmistress's office are accessible thanks to a ramp that can be set up anytime. Areas that are not yet fully accessible include the oratory on the G/F and the library and 6<sup>th</sup> Form areas on the I/F of that building. Access to that I/F is through a staircase.
- The Cube is a small building outside of the schools' grounds and is used for Art lessons. It is fully accessible with a ramp and disabled toilet.

This plan has been produced in consultation with PACT Directors, the School's Senior Management team and others involved in the preparation of the buildings.

### Priorities

- To improve accessibility for anyone wanting to enter the school;
- To identify areas that need improvement, particularly the more physical aspects of the curriculum;
- To identify statutory guidelines when providing an enhanced environment for learning;
- To appoint a person to oversee the objectives highlighted in the plan;
- To assist teachers with resources or training to help them support children with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD);
- To draw up an action plan for pupils who may be temporarily disabled;

### Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the PACT Board and the School Management Team to put the plan into action and to ensure that it is adequately resourced. If inspected, a copy of this plan will be made available to the relevant inspecting body or to a Minister of the Crown, upon request.

## The Plans

### Section A: Improving access to the physical environment

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?</b>	<b>BY WHEN?</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>REVIEW MECHANISM</b>	<b>DATE OF REVIEW</b>
Periodical check of the lift and call point mechanism	H&S Officer	Ongoing	Certificate to be issued and record of the checks filed	H&S committee	H&S meetings
Move the phone that collects calls from the call points to staff room	H&S Officer	July 2023	New process explained to all stakeholders (staff, pupils, visitors with disabilities)	SMT	August 2023
Consider access arrangements for pupils and visitors with temporary disability (e.g. broken leg)	Head	Ongoing	Tailored plans for individual pupil needs	SMT	Termly H&S meetings
Plan refurb of the SW lift	H&S Officer	Design to be shared by Apr 2023	Feasibility study	Head and Central Office	August 2023

## Section B: Improving access to the curriculum

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?</b>	<b>BY WHEN?</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>REVIEW MECHANISM</b>	<b>DATE OF REVIEW</b>
Provide opportunities for all pupils to take part in school sport	Director of Sport	Ongoing	Wider provision of sports	Accessibility Plan Review I	Ongoing
Consider how staff training can help secure access to the curriculum for all	Health and Safety Officer	Ongoing	Staff training needs audit	Accessibility Plan Review I	Ongoing
Audit resources available to increase access, such as writing slopes, pencil grips large print books.	SENCO	Ongoing	SEN resources audit	Accessibility Plan Review I	Ongoing
If applicable, review participation of disabled pupils within lesson observations	SENCO	Every Autumn term	Lesson observation forms	Accessibility Plan Review II	Every Autumn term
If applicable, review participation of disabled children in school visits	SENCO	On a case-by-case basis	Report on participation	Accessibility Plan Review II	On a case-by-case basis
Identify all pupils requiring extra support	SENCO	Half-termly	SEN register	SMT	Half-termly
Review curriculum in order to determine adaptations necessary to ensure access for all	SENCO	Annually	Curriculum review	Accessibility Plan Review I	Annually

## Section C: Improving access to written information

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?</b>	<b>BY WHEN?</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>REVIEW MECHANISM</b>	<b>DATE OF REVIEW</b>
If necessary, audit school books and resources to ensure availability of large font and easy read texts	SENCO	Annually, by October	Audit, and new books if necessary	SMT	Annually
Audit signage around school to ensure it is accessible to all	SENCO	Annually, by October	Audit	SMT	Annually