

CONCORD COLLEGE

DISABILITY POLICY (recognising responsibilities under Schedule 10 of the 2010 Equality Act)

Preamble

1. Concord College is a selective co-educational boarding college.

The academic life of the College is central. Admission is based upon a selective process. The guiding principle is whether or not a student will be able to cope with the high academic expectations that are explicit and implicit within the structures and ethos of the College as well as the more tangible demands of GCSE, IGCSE and GCE A Level courses. The College must feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective student to the best of his or her ability and in line with the general standards achieved by the student's peers at the College. It is only in this way that the student will emerge from the College confident and enriched. It is expected that all GCSE students will be able to cope comfortably with a programme of 7-10 subjects. Indeed, entry into the Sixth Form normally requires students to have achieved at least 49 points across their best six subjects in their GCSE examinations (for instance, five grade 8s and one grade 9). In legacy subjects, each A* grade will count as 8.5 points and each A grade will count as 7 points. The A* or 9 grades should be in the subjects or related subjects to those that the student wishes to study at A level. This is borne in mind when offering places. In the Sixth Form it is expected that students are able to study at least four AS subjects in the first year, moving to at least three full A levels in the second year. Class sizes average 12-16 in the Sixth Form and 16-20 in the Lower School.

2. Standards of teaching at Concord College are high and care is taken when appointing staff to employ skilled and dedicated professionals. These teachers work hard to give students individual attention. However, there is limited access to teaching assistants who can provide one-to-one support. If a student does require extra help, either to stretch or support, it is expected that this may be provided by private tuition, if it can be provided and an extra charge will be made.
3. The College asks parents to declare any disabilities in respect of a prospective student at the time of application. In assessing any student or prospective student, the College may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards appropriate. Subject to this, the College will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. Formal assessments will not be undertaken without parental consent. Such assessments are expected to be funded by parents.
4. The College's physical environment has buildings have developed over the past 45 years (though many of the buildings are much older and subject to listed status). There is a mixture of purpose-built and adapted accommodation. While every effort is made to adapt and modernise facilities, the nature of some of the buildings and their listed status can lead to inflexibility in usage (for instance it is not usually possible to install lifts in some older buildings, most notably the Main Hall). In addition, the College has fixed teaching areas for some subjects, based on the principle that it is invaluable to centralise subject facilities. This requires pupils to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs without lifts. Some of the boarding facilities pose similar problems to a greater degree.

5. It is not hard to conclude that a student with impaired mobility for instance might be put at a disadvantage by these problems, and find access difficult to some or all of the educational facilities the College offers. Nor can all these matters be reasonably improved without making major alterations to physical features of the College at prohibitive cost. The College Accessibility Plan aims to make reasonable adjustments to address these issues. Even the completion/fulfilment of long-term plans can only help to ease, rather than solve the problem.

Disability Policy Review Group

The College has set up a Disability Policy Review Group which consists of:

- Senior Management Team
- The SENCO
- Health & Safety Officer

It also has the power to co-opt any member of staff whose skills and expertise might help in fulfilling its brief e.g. PSHE. The Disability Review Group's terms of reference are:

1. To review the College's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect current and prospective staff and pupils who are disabled.
2. To make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education to pupils and prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future.
3. To prepare the College's Disability Policy.
4. To prepare the College's Accessibility Plan.
5. To review such plans and policies as necessary every two years.

The Disability Review Group has discussed the College's provision in the light of the demands of the Disability Act.

In drawing up this policy and accessibility plan the Disability Review Group acknowledges that disability could take many forms:

- physical
- educational
- emotional
- aural
- visual
- medical
- multi-sensory impairment

In line with the preamble to this policy and with the College's admission procedures, the College is willing to make reasonable adjustments to the normal educational provision offered in order to accommodate the special needs of individual pupils and to allow access to the daily life of a busy boarding college.

These adjustments currently include:

Education

- Where lifts are not available in buildings, room changes can be made in certain subjects to allow easier access to lessons.

- Making Individual Education Plans (IEP's) and Pupil Profiles available (for appropriate students) to members of staff via the SIMS database.
- Giving individual support via the College's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Extra charges incurred are likely to be passed on to the parents.
- Tailoring (and often reducing) a student's curriculum to suit their individual needs (though this is not usually at the expense of the core subjects).
- Flexible attendance, testing and work arrangements can be made for individual students with particular needs in consultation with parents.
- Allowing the provision for extra time (and laptop use) in all end of term College examinations and in Saturday tests.
- Classrooms, indoor public spaces and boarding residences have full access to the College IT network.
- Ongoing investment in IT to allow clearer and more accessible educational provision.
- Sympathetic seating arrangements for certain individuals.
- Provision of a reader/amanuensis when recommended for examination purposes.
- Producing educational resources on coloured paper when appropriate.
- Making provision for students with Individual Education Plans in College Schemes of Work.
- Encouraging staff to report students to the SENCO who may have learning needs and who might benefit from a full educational psychologist's report.
- Disability awareness training included in annual programme of staff training.
- The routine screening of students on admission to highlight any who might exhibit traits that suggest a learning difficulty. This information is kept under review by the SENCO.

Welfare

- Clear notices regarding pupil welfare are routinely displayed in boarding residences.
- Staff in boarding residences have access to information regarding student care history. This includes first aid instructions in case of a known medical condition.
- Where appropriate, other students are made aware of difficulties.
- Fire evacuation procedures can be tailored to individual needs as required (e.g. for students with visual impairment further visual stimulus can be provided).
- A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be prepared together with the individual and tailored to their needs.
- The College seeks advice from outside agencies to gain as full an understanding as possible of disability issues.
- Specific arrangements for individual students are discussed with parents. If behavioural problems manifest themselves parents are kept fully informed.

- The College provides comprehensive medical support (doctor, nurses, counselling services and listeners) as well as emotional support provided by the boarding parent, the tutor and the Head of House or Head of Year. A counselling service is provided which may incur additional cost over time.
- The chefs are made aware of special dietary requirements. Allergy information is routinely displayed.
- Staff are made aware of the potential vulnerability of students with disabilities.
- Where necessary, for those with hearing difficulties, written procedures will be produced which will be signed by the student (and parent/guardian) to say they have been understood.
- The College's database has been made more precise in the information that it holds regarding student difficulties. Staff have access to this information as appropriate.
- An awareness of the difficulties of others is built into the PSHE programme and into the assembly programme.
- Alternative or augmented forms of communication would be investigated as the need arises.
- In certain circumstances, outside expert assistance will be sought (School Action Plus); e.g. Sign language expert, Harlescott Resource Centre (Independent living Partnership Ltd 01743 250820), Berriewood Stables. (As appropriate to the individual need).
- The appropriateness of the College's actions is regularly reviewed with the students and parents.
- The dining room menu is provided weekly in advance as necessary to enable meal choices to be made for collection by medical staff or carers as needed and to cater for any special dietary requirements.
- If required, a room either in the medical centre or, if available and more appropriate, elsewhere on campus could be made available as a personal care room.
- Wheelchairs are located in the Sports Hall and Morris Building to be used to transport a casualty to the medical centre.

Enrichment Activities

- A variety of sports is offered by the College, both individual and team, which rely on differing senses and skills.
- A wide range of enrichment activities is offered.
- Safety aspects of activities are demonstrated by various means (visual, written etc.)
- Staff are given appropriate information about individuals and help with possible first aid techniques that might be needed.
- There may be discussion with parents as to whether a particular trip or activity is appropriate to the particular child and their individual needs.

- For those with hearing difficulties, written procedures will be produced which should then be signed to say they have been understood.
- The SIMS database would be updated to give information on all difficulties that might have an impact in this field.
- The delivery of certain activities will be reviewed in the context of making them accessible to pupils with difficulties.
- The local availability of specialised activities will be discussed.

Physical

- Ramps have been fitted to certain areas within the College including the Castle Block.
- A portable ramp is available in the main entrance hall to provide wheelchair access to the reception, main staff room, medical centre, old chapel recreation room and classrooms on the ground floor of the Main House.
- Handrails have been fitted in areas of the College to give further access.
- Lifts have been fitted in new College buildings (e.g. the Science Block, the Jubilee Block, Wrekin, Paul, Taylor's and the Castle Block).
- Designated parking spaces are available for disabled persons. Disabled parking bays are clearly marked and sufficiently wide enough to allow disabled person or wheelchair access.
- Signage has been improved around the College to make navigation around the campus more straightforward.
- There is a hearing loop facility in the Theatre and West End.
- A Deafguard Vibrating Pillow Alarm is available for use.
- A medical room on the ground floor of the Main Hall provides two single bedded rooms and a twin bedded room with en-suite facilities. This is due for extension in the 2018-19 academic year.
- The Jubilee building classrooms including the Library, Castle Block classrooms and art studios and the Science building laboratories and classrooms are all accessible to students confined to a wheelchair via internal passenger lifts. These buildings have refuge points with telephone systems and evacuation chairs.
- Disabled toilets are located in the main teaching areas including the Science Block, the Jubilee Block, the Art School, the Morris Building, the Castle Block and the Sports Hall, as well as in the Dining Room, the students' recreation area, the West End and boarding residences.
- New buildings (the Science building, Jubilee building, Castle block) have all been designed with disability access in mind; the buildings have passenger lifts, automatic entrance doors opening during the school day and internal fire door magnetic releases. The following boarding residences Paul, Wrekin and Carr Taylor's also have passenger lifts, internal fire door magnetic releases and bedrooms with disabled toilet and shower facilities.

- Magnetic door releases have been fitted to corridor fire doors throughout the Morris Building and where possible on some fire doors on the ground floor in Main Hall.
- Wheelchair space has been provided in the theatre auditorium.
- Transport arrangements for trips and activities have been made with a local coach company who can provide different sized coaches all with disabled facilities and drivers who have attended customer care and disability awareness courses.
- Height adjustable tables can be provided in classrooms, where required.
- Additional locker spaces can be provided around the campus for disabled persons to store and retrieve books and bags.

It will be the duty of the Disability Review Group to ensure awareness and observance of the policy throughout the College. The policy will be reviewed biennially.

Areas that require further consideration and/or development:

Main Hall

- There is no access to the basement, first floor classrooms or SMT offices, second floor classrooms and the third floor boarding residence for physically disabled persons and wheelchair users.
- There are no disabled toilet facilities in the Main Hall. Could a disabled toilet be factored into the medical centre extension, perhaps accessible from the corridor?

G Block (formerly Evergreen Oaks)

- There is no disabled access to G Block.

Jubilee Building

- Wheelchair access is not possible in classroom J10 due to the computer desk configuration.

Castle Block

- There is no wheelchair access to 1st floor classrooms C10 to C15.

Student Laundry

- There is no disabled access.

Dining Hall

- Disabled access to the servery is restricted.

Swimming Pool

- There is access to the pool complex for a disabled person or wheelchair user as a spectator, but not to swim. Swimming activities will be determined by the level of disability and support needed.

- There is a disabled toilets poolside, but no disabled shower or changing facilities are available. Specialised equipment would be required to assist a disabled person into and out of the pool.
- Appropriate lifeguard training would be required to assist a disabled person in a lifesaving situation.

Sports Hall

- There is no disabled access to the first floor in the sports hall.
- Consider a paved pathway access to the playing field for wheelchairs users.
- Consider providing the hearing loop system in the sports hall and teaching blocks.

External movement around the teaching blocks

- Consider a smooth path rather than textured around the teaching blocks to avoid problems and discomfort for wheelchair users.

Boarding Residences

- Keypads are not at wheelchair user height.

Accessibility Plan 01.12.2016 to 31.11.2019

The following have been carefully considered by the College's Disability Review Group and are regularly monitored:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Education
- Extra-curricular activities
- Governing body representation
- Physical school environment
- Selection and recruitment of staff
- Sporting education and activities
- Staff training
- Welfare

The results of Concord College's audit and monitoring of the above has informed the action plan below which relates to the following ISI Regulatory Standards on special educational needs and disability

ISI Regulatory Standard	Description
98 (a)	Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with learning difficulties) can participate in the school's curriculum;
98 (b)	Improving the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in writing for pupils who are not disabled

98 (c)	Improving 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.
--------	--

Target	Standard To Be Met	Action Required	Lead	Resources Required	Evidence of Impact on Stakeholder	Target Completion Date (short/ medium or long-term)
Improve access to education	98 (a)	Hearing loops to be fitted to the main teaching blocks (Jubilee, Main Hall, Science & Castle)	Bursar	tbc	Evaluate with stakeholders	TBD (long term)
Improve physical access	98 (c)	Automate main entrance to the Morris Building and Sports Halls to enable a physically disabled student access without undue restriction. Improve access to Main Hall; the entrance doors are heavy and awkward and puddles form outside following wet weather.	Bursar	tbc	Evaluate with stakeholders	TBD
Improve physical access	98 (c)	Provide ramp access to the tennis courts to enable outdoor activities and training exercises to be accessible to physically disabled students and staff without undue restriction. Alter the opening to the tennis courts to open inwards so that the doors do not open on to the road which is also used for vehicles.	Bursar	c.£1,000	Evaluate with stakeholders H and S review	TBD

Improve physical access	98 (c)	Provide sufficient access measures to Hall Meadow to allow a physically disabled student to use the facilities.	Bursar	tbc	Access possible in different weather conditions	TBD
Improve physical access	98 (c)	Provide ramp egress from the Dining Hall fire exit out to the fire assembly point to enable a disabled student to exit the building in the event of an emergency.	Bursar	c.£30,000	Availability and use	September 2019
Improve physical access	98 (c)	Consider disabled access (lift or external path/slope) to aerobics room and balcony area in the Sports Hall.	Bursar	Dependent on the project to be considered	Availability and usage in consultation with stakeholders	September 2020
Improve access to education	98 (a, c)	Investigate and provide sports aids for disabled or wheelchair users in the weights and/or aerobics room	Sports Staff/ Bursar	Dependent on stakeholder need	Availability and usage in consultation with stakeholders	September 2017 onwards
Improve access	98 (c)	Relocate the card reader from the careers room to the library foyer (wheelchair users have difficulty in accessing the careers room because of the double doors, one door is usually locked and the reader is on the far side of the room).	Bursar, IT	c.£1,500	Availability and use	September 2019
Improve physical access	98 (c)	Consider the provision of a shelter for disabled parking.	Bursar	£5,000	Consultation with stakeholders	September 2019
Improve physical access	98 (c)	Consider purchasing a minibus with a disabled lift	Bursar	c.£45,000	Consultation with stakeholders	September 2020

		facility (drivers would require training)				
Improve physical access	98 (c)	Improve path surfaces and fill pot holes around campus (paths are damaged due to traffic - college vehicles, delivery vehicles, oil tankers, tractors etc.). The pebbly surface is extremely uncomfortable and difficult for wheelchair and bicycle movement.	Bursar	c.£5,000	Review of potholes and consultation with stakeholders	In progress and on-going
Improve access to education	98 (a, c)	Improve swimming pool facilities for disabled or wheel chair users - separate changing & toilet facilities, equipment/lift to assist access in and out of water, staff training.	Bursar	c.£150,000	Consultation with stakeholders	September 2021

Due to the layout, construction and Heritage England restrictions on the Main Hall, to provide sufficient access measures to the basement, first, second and third floors for a physically disabled person is not reasonably practicable. When necessary, the College will review and adapt lesson timetables to accommodate physically disabled persons.

This Policy and Plan were reviewed in March 2017 - NGH

Reviewed by the Welfare Committee of the Board of Trustees Board Dec 2015 & Dec 2018

This Policy and Plan were reviewed in November 2018 - NGH

The policy is next due for review on 01/09/2019