

Disability Access Plan

St Michael's Catholic Grammar School

We recognise our duty under the Disability Discrimination Acts of 1995 and 2005 to: “have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity for disabled persons and eliminate discrimination.” This is very much in keeping with our Christian values where we view each person as equal in the sight of God. Our Mission Statement states that: “Each person is recognised as an individual and everybody is valued and enabled to fulfil their potential.”

St Michael's has experience of educating students and visitors with visual and hearing impairment as well as visitors with mobility difficulties. Advance notice of student enrolment has allowed us to adjust our practices, teaching and environment in order to assist these students to make full use of the opportunities offered by our school. As a result, all students have flourished and have been very successful in both their academic and extra-curricular lives. In addition to our students we are able and willing to provide sign language and physical access for disabled visitors.

Whilst we do not have other students with physical impairment (we do have students with hearing impairment), we are conscious that we may at some future time admit a physically disabled student or a student with visual or hearing impairment or employ a physically disabled member of staff. In preparation for these eventualities we have put together the following plan. This plan will act as a starting point for future adjustments to enable greater access for those with disabilities to join our community. The plan used will also depend upon the funding made available and the restrictions placed upon us by the older structure and variety of our buildings. Currently, the fact that classrooms are dispersed across several buildings and floors with total dependability on stair access, limits disabled access to most of the site.

Current provision is to ensure that a portable ramp is available to allow access to the main School administration and meetings area where we have also have easy access to a disabled toilet (cost £3,500). In the case of physically disabled students lessons can be timetabled in ground floor classrooms and INSET for teachers is sought to aid lesson delivery. Staff are kept informed and records updated annually of all pupils who have a recognised disability / medical condition. A lift is available to access the Sports Hall which was a new building added in 2008 and funded largely with private donations and a bank loan. The provision of this lift and its annual service cost represents (£90,000) a relatively large investment and is a sign of the School's commitment to improving access to the site as part of its long term site development.

In the **Medium term** (2 years) the school has been successful in applying for a public grant to refurbish the most inaccessible part of the site – the Senior Building with 8 specialist teaching areas (mainly science laboratories plus the library and Art rooms) and 8 general teaching areas. Work on this project will start in Summer 2018 under the

Priority Schools' Building Programme 2 scheme. This will provide lift access, wider doorway access to classrooms and another disabled toilet in this 4 storey building allowing students vastly more access to the curriculum on offer at the School, as well as those visiting the site. At the time of amending this policy the cost of this project is still uncertain but is estimated to be in excess of £1million. Widening of doorways to enable easier wheelchair access

Long-term adjustments (6 years+) are included as part of the School's site development plan which will concentrate on improving access to the Junior building and The Grange, mainly through installing a lift as part of a new adjacent 6th Form learning centre. As the provision of a lift is unsuitable as part of the existing buildings this necessarily awaits the attracting the funding for the new 6th form building. This is estimated to cost around £1.5 million.

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