



# CLIFTON COLLEGE

## **Accessibility**

# Accessibility at Clifton College

Clifton College aims to ensure that any prospective pupil who fulfils our admissions requirements, is able to come to the College, without discrimination and irrespective of personal disability or special educational need, on a case by case basis.

Our educational principles are built around providing a secure, collaborative, non-discriminatory and caring learning environment. Whilst we have collective aspirations for all of our pupils to achieve and develop themselves, everyone is treated as an individual and places are offered within the College on a case by case basis, taking into account any reasonable adjustments the College can realistically make. We are therefore equally ambitious for our disabled pupils and staff.

## LEGAL CONTEXT

This policy sets out the proposals of the College to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by The Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”). The Act imposes a duty on the responsible body of a school to prepare an accessibility plan outlining how the school intends to improve access for disabled pupils to:

1. Written information
2. The curriculum
3. The physical environment

Under the Act, disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Treating every child as an individual is vitally important. We therefore welcome pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can provide them with the support that they require. We do not however, have the facilities to offer highly specialised and intensive treatment. We require parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to discuss their child’s requirements with the Admissions department before their child sits our entrance exam so that we can make appropriate provision.

The College’s Admissions Policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation, including the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. This policy therefore supersedes all previous College policies on Disability, Ethnicity (i.e. Race) and Gender. The Equality Act combines the existing three duties into one new Equality Duty that covers all nine of the equality strands, known as protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. At Clifton College we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the college community and its life, everyone will be treated equally.

An Accessibility Plan exists to record planned and completed work to demonstrate the College's commitment to continually improve access to its curriculum and facilities for those with accessibility needs. This plan is updated each term and reviewed by the College's Compliance Committee and Council annually, and in intervening periods when circumstances dictate.

The Accessibility Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- The Prospectus
- The College Admissions Policy
- Terms and Conditions
- Clifton College Registration Form
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy (Attached)
- Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Behaviour Policy

## **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Clifton College comprises the Upper School, the Preparatory School and the Pre-Preparatory School, and is committed to providing a non-discriminatory environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. The Admissions Policy and Reasonable Adjustments Policy seek to remove barriers to entry for prospective pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the College strives to ensure that each and every pupil can take part in the whole school curriculum, including a broad range of extra-curricular activities and school trips. The College takes a fully inclusive approach to staff recruitment and aims to appoint the best person based on their skills and qualifications, regardless of any disability they might have.

Clifton College seeks to work closely in partnership with parents in order to get the best outcome for all pupils at the College. It is therefore mandatory that parents disclose the needs of a pupil prior to their entry to the College, as we feel it essential to have this knowledge in order to best support individual pupils.

The College Accessibility Plan considers:

- The views and aspirations of those children receiving special provision. The college seeks to address issues raised e.g. inability to climb stairs on an individual basis as necessary.
- The views and aspirations of the parents of children receiving special provision e.g. through parent consultation evenings with a member of the Learning Support Department.

- The views of external surveying companies who have visited and assessed the College campus. Appropriate adjustments to buildings are built into the planned cycle of building works, prioritised as necessary by the Estates Manager.

The College plans, over time, to increase the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors in the following areas:

- To inform staff of their rights under equality law in all College recruiting adverts.
- To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the College curriculum by adapting curricular activities to ensure as much access as possible for all pupils e.g. the provision of a hoist into the swimming pool if required.
- To improve the physical environment of the College to increase access to education by disabled pupils e.g. through appropriate use of technology to aid learning and to make disabled access as easy as possible.
- To improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities, through clearly defined job descriptions, disability advice in staff handbooks and guidance given to Heads of Department responsible for pupils or staff with disabilities.

## **ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM**

Pupils with special educational needs, or with disabilities requiring extra support, are supported by our specialist Learning Support Department. Clifton College's SEND Policy can be downloaded from the College website or requested from the Admissions Department.

Clifton is a school with an aim to support and see pupils progress through the College from age 2-18. It is acknowledged that on occasion, a pupil will be identified who will not thrive in the Clifton environment. These pupils will be monitored and supported as far as possible by their class teachers and the Learning Support Department. If the concern continues and/or the pupil's happiness and wellbeing is compromised, a decision will be taken as to whether the College can provide the most appropriate learning environment for the pupil. Parents will always be involved in this process.

Since the formation of the College's Accessibility Plan, the following steps have been taken to improve the accessibility of disabled pupils to the curriculum:

- The parents of all prospective pupils with special educational needs, including medical or physical disabilities, are encouraged to discuss their needs prior to our entrance procedures to enable us to make any adjustments that may be necessary;
- On acceptance of a place, the Parent Contract requires parents to declare any psychological, physical, medical or special educational needs, disability or allergy that a child has or subsequently develops;
- Pupils in the Preparatory and Pre-Preparatory School with SEND may opt to receive learning support lessons within the curriculum;
- Staff receive ongoing training to enable them to understand the needs of SEND and disability.
- Individual support reports are prepared to inform teaching staff about the needs of SEND pupils and to offer specific guidance on appropriate adjustments and

strategies for teaching. These can be accessed by all teaching staff via the SIMS programme;

- Creation of a dedicated learning support centre in the Upper and Preparatory School to facilitate easier access to resources for staff and pupils;
- ICT resources have been introduced to screen for SEND in all new pupils to the College.

In the three-year period from 2018-2021 the following educational and physical developments are planned to further increase access for all:

- Employment of a College based Educational Psychologist to work with the Learning Support Departments in their support of pupils.
- The complete refurbishment of Big School to provide step free access for those with physical disabilities to all levels of the building and dining facilities.
- Creating step free access to the College Health Centre to allow easier use of the facilities as well as improving access to the Sports facilities and Redgrave Theatre and drama opportunities for those with physical impairments.

## **PHYSICAL ACCESS**

Despite the historic nature of much of our site, Clifton College is committed to improving accessibility to our buildings wherever it can. A full accessibility audit of every building has been conducted by a professional external survey company, from which a programme of work has been established and is controlled by the College's Estates Manager.

An historic estate such as ours, poses challenges to adaptation and accessibility. However, many alterations have already been completed to the physical environment, all with the aim of adapting and making accessible as many areas as possible across the wider campus. Due to the era of much of the College's construction, it is unlikely that every room in the College is able to be made physically accessible to all.

All new buildings built by the College are fully compliant with the latest building regulations. Where we are completely refurbishing existing buildings, every effort is made to make the building as compliant as possible. An example of this is the Modern Languages Block, which now has level access and disabled toilet facilities.

In addition to major project work the College is committed to making as many buildings accessible as possible.

This has allowed for the construction of ramps (e.g. Wilson Tower) the installation of stair lifts (e.g. Hallward's House), and for other programmes such as providing designated and signed disabled parking in the main car park.

The College have identified two Boarding Houses, one girls and one boys, as most suitable for adaptation (Watson's House for boys and Hallward's House for girls). Access to these buildings has already been adapted. Watson's House has a lift and Hallward's House has a stair lift to give access to the ground floor facilities.

Further adaptations would need to be made on a case by case basis should a pupil with such needs present. Having addressed the major physical obstacle to access in these two houses, the College is as prepared as it can be in advance of such a requirement being necessary.

## **IMPROVING THE DELIVERY TO DISABLED PEOPLE OF INFORMATION THAT IS PROVIDED IN WRITING**

All written communication, either hard copy or electronic, can be provided on request, in a suitable format to enable access. This includes large print and audio formats.

## **COLLEGE LAYOUT AND FACILITIES**

The College was founded in 1862. The buildings and site have developed over the years with many facilities and buildings shared between the Schools. The College buildings are a mixture of purpose-built facilities and converted Victorian town houses including some historic and/or listed buildings of several stories spread over several blocks adjacent to residential property. The principal sports facilities are at Beggar's Bush Playing Fields, approximately 2 miles away.

Whilst there are fixed classrooms for some subjects, pupils regularly move from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts. The boarding and day houses, sporting, recreational and co-curricular facilities are often part of buildings with split levels, many of them without lifts.

The College has a fully staffed Health Centre that provides support during the school term, including an on-call weekend service. The College Medical Officers hold four surgeries each week. The Health Centre team are available to discuss pupil's health problems and/or medical conditions with parents as well as College staff as appropriate.

## **REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR PUPILS**

For the purpose of clarification, the College is legally required to make reasonable adjustments in order to cater for a child's disability and seeks to comply fully with this requirement. The following pages outline how the College seeks to make adjustments to its current access arrangements.

# Reasonable Adjustments Policy for those with disabilities

## INTRODUCTION

Clifton College is committed to treating all people equally. According to the Equality Act 2010, we must take reasonable steps to ensure that those with disabilities are not put at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with those who are not disabled.

Clifton College recognises that each person is unique. This policy does not therefore seek to cater for every situation. It is intended as a general statement of our policy which sets out the principles underlying our approach to making adjustments for those with disabilities and the factors the College will take into account when considering requests for adjustments.

## WHEN DOES THE DUTY ARISE?

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils, staff and applicants who are disabled under the Equality Act 2010, when they are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with those who do not have disabilities. A person is disabled if they suffer from a physical or mental impairment that has 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 be likely to last for 12 months or more.

## WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THE DUTY?

Clifton College seeks to ensure that no one is put at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments:

- to our policies, criteria and practices (i.e. the way we plan and do things); and
- by providing auxiliary aids and services (i.e. additional support or assistance).

There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service. Examples include:

- pieces of equipment;
- extra staff assistance;
- note-taking;
- induction loops;
- audio-visual fire alarms;
- readers; and
- assistance with guiding.

## WHAT IS NOT COVERED?

Clifton College is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities. Similarly, we do not need to

provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with the education and services provided by the College.

## **ENTRY TESTS**

Clifton College welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities that each School offers, and can flourish in the caring environment which we provide.

We are allowed by law to apply an entry test, and we do so as part of our admissions process. If necessary, we make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants sitting the entry test, such as, for example, allowing it to be completed on computer rather than by hand. However, the pass mark for the test is not altered as this would not be a reasonable adjustment.

## **HOW DO I REQUEST AN ADJUSTMENT?**

Clifton College prides itself on considering whether there is any adjustment it could make to overcome any substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled applicant or pupil. However, we do not always think of all possible adjustments and we want to work with parents to think as creatively as possible about this matter.

If your child is disabled and you believe that they are being put at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils without disabilities. If there is an adjustment that we could make which would overcome this, you are encouraged to write to the relevant School's Deputy Head (Pastoral), setting out in full the adjustment that the College could put into practice.

## **THE COLLEGE'S RESPONSE**

In some cases, the College will be able to agree to and implement the requested adjustment as soon as possible. In other cases, for example where the adjustment would be logistically difficult, require planning consent due to being a listed building or more financially costly, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the substantial disadvantage that the pupil or applicant is suffering and what measures it is reasonable for the College to take. In these cases, the College may seek input from teachers, other experts such as doctors and/or educational psychologists, parents/carers and the child in question.

## **HOW WILL THE COLLEGE DECIDE WHETHER AN ADJUSTMENT IS REASONABLE?**

When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, the College will consider the following factors:

- whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering;
- the practicability of the adjustment;



- the effect of the disability on the pupil;
- the cost of the proposed adjustment;
- whether it will be provided under a statement of special educational needs from the Local Authority;
- the College's resources;
- health and safety requirements;
- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and
- the interests of other pupils (and potential pupils).

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The College is sensitive to all matters of confidentiality and the parents and/or the prospective pupil may request that the existence or nature of the disability be treated as confidential by the College. Clifton College will take any such request into account when considering whether an adjustment is reasonable.

## **OUTCOME**

Once the College has determined whether the relevant adjustment is reasonable, the College will write to the parents, setting out the decision and the reasons.

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE COLLEGE'S DECISION?**

If you are not happy with the College's decision about the reasonableness of the adjustment, you may lodge a complaint using the College's Complaints Procedure.