



Buildings Accessibility Plan

Introduction

Background

The aim of the review was to assess the current state of physical accessibility of the buildings on site as well as to identify opportunities for improvements to what already exists and is in place. Areas and opportunities for improvement have been identified by building and area, they have been summarised in the attached plan.

Site and Building Use

The school has approximately 1200 students and up to 100 staff daily. There are also events such as concerts and award ceremonies where parents/carers attend the site and the school site is used widely for overnight camps and onsite activities as part of our personal development and character education programme, The FSGBacc.

The site is expansive with 6 separate buildings; St Stephens, Main School, Prospect, Sherlock, Penfold and the Upper School Hall, with some 7 storeys to negotiate. There are a number of mobile classrooms too – mostly located around Penfold House. The general fabric and decoration of the school is of a high standard and the school provides a warm and welcoming learning environment for students with lots of open green spaces which are well used. We enjoy excellent facilities with a radio station, climbing wall, recording studio, dance studio, escape room, archery facilities, dark room, paintballing and even a mountain bike trail all on the school site. Offices are dispersed across the site with the Admin office being in the Main School Building. The staff room is in the centre of the site.

There are five access points from the main road but only four are in general use. The unused entrance is currently to be sold as part of our site development plans. Most traffic (foot and vehicle) is through the main gate.

A new classroom block was added (Sherlock) to the site in May 2020 and meets modern Building Regulation Standards as well as Building Bulletin (BB) Requirements for schools. It is DDA compliant and as part of the build a link bridge was added to join Sherlock to Prospect – thus improving its accessibility too. Prospect House enjoyed a complete redecoration to bring its standard of decoration in line with Sherlock and both blocks have spacious and airy classrooms in which to learn.

A new path was also added to improve access to Penfold House and to the departments housed therein and in surrounding buildings.

We are currently in the final throes of planning for the addition of a new 4 court sports hall.

Recommendations

Opportunities for change are part of the consideration for any future refurbishment or additional builds or building developments. Minor enhancements are listed as recommendations and are summarised in attached plan.

It must be acknowledged that our school site presents challenges for students or staff with mobility issues. The school is not yet fully DDA compliant and with an expansive site, several separate buildings and some seven stories of classroom accommodation, mobility issues and/or wheelchair access would prove challenging. Compounding access challenges are the age of the buildings, their listed building status and the very topography of the school site - the stunning sea views achieved by a steep incline across parts of the school site. Students with restricted mobility may not be able to access a full, broad and balanced curriculum, as many of our specialist teaching rooms simply cannot be accessed easily. The school has a duty to plan strategically to increase physical access over time and to provide effective learning opportunities for all students and indeed has done this in recent developments. New classroom block, Sherlock is fully DDA compliant, with Disabled WCs and lift access and a link bridge to Prospect was built to improve accessibility there too. Similarly, a new path was created at Penfold to address changes in ground levels that previously meant a flight of steps needed to be negotiated. Penfold therefore and the depts housed therein are now accessible – at least on the ground floor, as is Drama. Redecoration works always are done to comply with the requirements for visually impaired students to demarcate doorways, pillars, etc. However, older parts of the school remain challenging in terms of access presently and tackling this would be time consuming and costly as many of the buildings are old and have listed building status.

We aim to make all **reasonable adjustments** and **best endeavours** to limit the impact of our school site and the ramifications on an individual student's education, should they develop a medical condition or should this worsen whilst at the school. Even so, accessing science laboratories and/or other specialist facilities, may still require the ability to climb stairs, but it should be acknowledged that admission to the school for students with, or very likely to develop mobility issues would be challenging as we are simply unable to ensure that they can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other student. The school has worked hard to increase physical access over time and has a duty to continue to do so – but we are not there yet.

General Observations

The site does run a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (Peep) for every student and staff member that requires one i.e. would have difficulty with an evacuation from a building in an emergency.

The site is supplied with a Polycom IP Phone system and handsets which have hearing aid compatible functions installed including magnetic coupling.

There is a site way finder information map, which is available to assist with navigating the site.

St Stephens

This building was constructed in the late 1890s and was built as a boy's boarding school. There are 3 main floors and 3 split levels within the building, which makes up the 6 levels. The loft spaces have also been developed into useable rooms and teaching/storage areas.

St Stephens is accessible from St Stephens's Way (road level and through the main school building). St Stephens Way does restrict wheelchair dependants to level 2 (Music) and access from the main

school is via a number of flights of stairs. Most rooms are small, especially the welfare facilities and there is no lift in St Stephens or the main building link.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	Car parking available if required	Bookable through reception to ensure space available in advance	Alternatively drop off and collect
	Maintain routes for leaves in autumn/winter	Site staff maintenance programme	Limited utility, difficult to get a wheelchair down
Routes and external level changes	Investigate the viability of a ramp for the level 2 St Stephens Way entrance	Investigate requirement for a ramp for wheelchair access to level 2	Plan and cost
Entrances Including Reception	Kick plate and lower-level glass which is frosted.	Review if doors are replaced or required for routine access by wheelchair	Remains an opportunity if the doors replaced
Horizontal Movement and Assembly	All corridors have some level changes – not suitable for wheelchairs	Ensure paint schemes and stair nosing's are maintained for the visually impaired	
	Fire signage. Familiarisation with the building is required for new staff and students		PEEP to be maintained for all who require it
Vertical Movement and level Change	There is no lift in the building		
Lavatories	There is no lavatory provision for wheelchair dependants	To be considered on any refurbishment projects	
	Restricted cubical spaces for ambulant individuals	To be considered on any refurbishment projects	
Information	There is no hearing assistance in the building	To be purchased as required	Investigate portable devices/ induction loop
Means of Escape	Final routes on level 2 only are accessible to wheelchairs dependants. Evacuation is then restricted with only one route out of the building in the event of a compromised route.	No access to upper floors for those with mobility restrictions	Fire routes are to be maintained and kept clear.

Main Building

This building was constructed in 1964 and is a typical concrete cast reinforced school building. There is good access to the main part of the building from the reception to the main hall and dining facilities as they are all on the same level.

Corridors are wide but there is only disabled adapted lavatory facilities on the ground floor (Level 4). There are no lifts in the main building.

The area at the front of the building is fairly level, although there is an incline either side of the car park.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	There is a dedicated and maintained disabled parking space close to the main reception	Continue to maintain this parking space correctly marked	Included on the maintenance plan
	Kerbs are ramped to avoid obstructions by kerbs	Repair damaged ramp by main kitchen. There are cracked blister tiles.	
Routes and external level changes	There are no ramps at the front of the building. The path to the main door is on a slight incline	Not required	
	Stair nosing's are repainted as required	Maintain a stock of paint for maintenance	Fitted solution for step nosing's in high foot traffic areas
Entrances Including Reception	The main reception desk does not cater for wheelchair access	Investigate the possibility of adapting the reception desk	Main consideration if there was a refurbishment
	No kick plate on the main front or internal doors	Considered when the doors are replaced	
Horizontal Movement and Assembly	Signs in the main reception areas	Review signage in the main reception areas where parents and visitors gather	
	No facility for audio impaired in the main school hall or reception	Investigate the provision an induction loop	Forward plan, investigate and costing
Vertical Movement and level Change	There is no lift in the building. Restricted access to upper floors for wheelchair users	PEEP and individuals with mobility issues are under constant review	
Doors	Fire doors have kick plates	Considered when the doors are replaced	

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Lavatories	One equipped facility on the ground level floor only. Left sided approach only	Consider additional facilities when lifts installed	
Information	No hearing assistance for reception	Investigate the provision an induction loop	
	Reception and Kitchen staff trained to in communication with people with physical and sensory disabilities	Most staff experienced in dealing with students and adults. Investigate training available - external and in house	Forward planner with costing for training provision.
	Way finder plans available to show rooms to floors	Issued as required Maintain the plans as changes occur	
Means of Escape	There are no lifts so access to the upper floors is restricted		

The Lodge

The Lodge is the old caretakers house built in the 1960s and is now used as offices. It is a small three-bedroom building with a narrow staircase. Access is restricted to the ground floor for wheelchair dependants.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	Close to the main gate and disabled parking		
	The main entrance door has a raised threshold. There is a portable ramp for wheelchair access.		Held by the site team and used as required
	The front door does not have a vision panel It is a domestic glass door which is frosted glass		
Routes and external level changes	All doors have been replaced with vision panels in the last twelve months		
Lavatories	There is no adapted lavatory in this building. The existing facilities are restricted to a small domestic sized toilet facility		
Means of Escape	Audible fire and visual alarm only		

Prospect House

Prospect is a three-storey purpose-built teaching block built in the late 1990s. There are lifts in this building. There is a link bridge to Sherlock building which can be used to access the first floor.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	There is parking at the front of the building. Parking can be reserved if required The path from the car park to the building entrance is restricted in width	Assess the ability to widen the path alongside the building.	Forward maintenance plan
Routes and external level changes	The two entrance doors are on the level plane.		
Entrances Including Reception	The main doors have been repainted to show other distinguishing features	Redecorate with contrasting colours to improve the LRV	
Vertical Movement and level Change	The first and second floor corridors are restricted in width due to fire doors	Fire doors have been replaced	Lighting and doors have been upgraded
Doors	Corridor fire doors have now been replaced and held back by magnets		Completed 2021
Lavatories	There is no specific provision of lavatories for people with disabilities	To be investigated when lifts are installed. Access to Sherlock toilets via the link bridge	Main School Building and Staff room
Information	No hearing assistance	Procured as required	To be kept in reception
Means of Escape	Restricted access to ground floor for wheelchairs	Restricted access to the second floor	Can be used by mobility impaired students. Judged on a case-by-case basis

Sherlock

Sherlock is a purpose-built teaching block that was completed and handed to the school in May 2020. The build is designed to building regulations and Building Bulletin 91. It links to Prospect House via a first floor bridge and other areas by linked footpaths.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	There is parking at the front of the building. Additional parking can be reserved if required		

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
	The path from the car park to the building entrance on the south side of the building		
Routes and external level changes	The two entrance doors are on the level plane.		
Entrances Including Reception	The main doors are power assisted		
Vertical Movement and level Change	Access to the first floor is via a platform lift in Sherlock		
Doors	All doors meet regulations		
Fixtures and Fittings	All fixture and fittings meet the building regulations and conform to Building Bulletin 91 where appropriate		
Lavatories	There are two purpose-built lavatories for people with disabilities One on each floor		
Information	No hearing assistance	Procured as required for individuals	
Means of Escape	Restricted access to ground floor for wheelchairs There is a purpose built 60-minute fire rated refuge at the top of the main stairs case. There is a contact alarm fitted		

Staff Room

The staff room was probably part of the old Clewer building construction and dates to about 1920/30s. A single storey sports pavilion type building which is now used as a staff room with some storage. The staff room is positioned in the middle of the site. There are steps between the staff room and Penfold House.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	The closet access is via the gate at the rear of the building by the school shop.		
	Parking can be at the main school car park, Penfold House or the shop.		The shop may be sold off in the future
Routes and external level changes	Ramp at the rear of the building. There are no handrails on the ramp	Maintain the edges and kerbs on the ramp for contrast	No handrails required due to the ramp size

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
	Front of the building is accessible with one step on the door threshold. A ramp would extend on to the main access path for the school and would likely cause a hazard	Consider a ramp if the door is replaced	
Entrances Including Reception	The rear door where the ramp is situated does not have a vision panel	Vision panel a consideration when a new door is fitted	
Horizontal Movement and Assembly	This is a small single storey building		
Doors	There is no kick plate for the rear door	Consider a ramp if the door is replaced or use of the ramp increases	
Lavatories	The building has its own adapted disabled toilets. Ramp access at the rear of the building. Left sided approach only.		
Means of Escape	The fire alarm is audible only	Investigate the possibility of a visual device for the staff room alarm	Forward maintenance plan

Penfold House

Penfold is a three-storey building constructed in 1904 as a girl's boarding school. The building is listed and therefore has some restrictions on what changes/alterations can be made. Planning permission is required for alterations. There are some movement restrictions due to the design and size of the main areas and spaces. There is no lift for this building. Some fire escape routes are fixed to the outside of the building and require a step up to access them.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	There is dedicated parking to the front and rear of the building. Parking can be booked if required		
	External lighting needs reviewing as there are some darker areas to the side and rear of the building	Lighting review. Install additional lighting as required	Complete
	External step nosing's are showing the signs of wear	Repaint or replace with a harder wearing surface	Site team to maintain
	There is a newly constructed path linking the main school and Penfold.	Enter via Penfold car park gate which is level	Maintain the step nosing's

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
	The links allows wheelchairs to get to Penfold avoiding steps		
Routes and external level changes	There are two steps into the building at the front and rear. There are no ramps	Investigate the provision of on step being fitted with a ramp or the provision of a mobile ramp	Forward maintenance planner
Entrances including Reception	The doors are solid wood with no glass vision panels. The building is listed		
Doors	Most of the doors are solid wood with no vision panel	Review when replaced	
Lavatories	There is one dedicated wheelchair fitted lavatory restricted size due the space available.	To be reviewed when the area is refurbished	
Information	Wayfinder plan available to show rooms to floors as well as the remainder of the Upper School		

Mobile 914

The building is a single storey mobile, probably installed on site in the 1980s. It is high off the ground and requires 6 steps to access the building. There are no ramps or lifts for this building.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	Parking is within 20 meters in the Penfold/Drama quadrangle		
	The lighting at the front of the building requires a review as it is not well lit and may leave dark areas on the paths.	Lighting review, Fit and replace lamps and fittings as required	Completed Aug 2017
Routes and external level changes	There are no ramps. Stairs only.	Access the viability of a ramp when the stairs are replaced	
Entrances Including Reception	Signage	Review signage heights when they need replacing	
	Main doors require repainting/maintenance	Review colours	Completed Aug 2017
Lavatories	Nearest lavatories are in Penfold House		
Means of Escape	Stairs only on both exits	To be reviewed on replacement	

Classrooms 905 & 906

There is no clear date for the installation of these wooden construction classrooms. It is estimated that they are at least 20 years' old which would make them 1980s vintage.

The building consists of 2 basic single storey classrooms which are accessed by steps. They are no longer used as classrooms and instead solely for CCF & FSGBacc.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	Penfold quadrangle		
	The area around the classrooms	The upper school requires an external lighting review with a view of improvement. Act on the findings.	Completed Aug 2017
Routes and external level changes	Steps only		
	Step nosing's are showing signs of wear	Maintain and repaint	
Entrances Including Reception	The door threshold is raised. This is part of the door design	Review when doors are replaced	
Lavatories	Penfold House		
Means of Escape	Steps to escape the building		

Building 904

A traditional single storey prefabricated mobile classroom. It is estimated to have been on site for at least 20 years which would date to the 1990s. It has a ramp for access at the front but no lift.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	Penfold Quadrangle		
	Busses drop of at the main gate by main building. There are steps to negotiate to get into to 904		
Routes and external level changes	There is a ramp at the front of the building	Repaint handrails and ramp edges for contrast	Aug 2023
Lavatories	Penfold House		

The Drama Building

This is a single storey building of brick-built construction. It appears on plans as far back as the early 1940s. It was originally a school kitchen and dining area.

There are no steps for access to the building. It is currently used for drama.

As a pre-1947 building it has special status for alterations.

It is located within the curtilage of a listed building.

Area	Observation	Action Required	Remarks
Approach and Car Parking	Close to the main road (Coolinge Lane) with parking in the Penfold quadrangle. Parking can be reserved.		
	External lighting needs have been reviewed and enhanced	Reviewed as part of the upper school review	
	No vision panels in the main door. This door is normally left open.	Review when replacements required or refurbishment.	
Lavatories	There is a toilet in the building, but it is not adapted for wheelchairs. Penfold house for toilets.		