



## **SENDA (Special Educational Needs and Disability Act) POLICY and Accessibility Plan (2015-2018)**

***This whole school policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage***

### **Introduction**

Tormead is committed to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities and recognises its responsibility under the current legislation to ensure that it does not discriminate against pupils or potential girls with a disability. In particular, it recognises its responsibility to make reasonable adjustment to ensure that, in relation to the arrangements for determining admissions and providing a broad and balanced education, a disabled girl is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with someone who is not disabled. To determine whether a disabled person or girl is placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to someone who is not disabled, it will take into account the time, inconvenience, effort or discomfort entailed in comparison with other people or girls. It understands that a 'substantial' disadvantage is one that is more than minor or trivial. Tormead welcomes girls with disabilities and specific learning difficulties and is committed to the continuing development of an 'enabling' environment and a non-discriminatory culture within the school community.

Admission to Tormead depends upon a prospective girl meeting the criteria required to maintain and, if possible to improve, the educational and general standards for all its girls commensurate with the ethos to which the School aspires. The School must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective girl to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the girl's peers, so that there is every chance that the girl will have a complete happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded young woman with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the girl's time at the School. The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all girls and potential girls regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled girl or potential girl at a substantial disadvantage compared to any girl who is not disadvantaged because of her disability.

The School's Senior Management Team (SMT) is responsible for the development of the School's plans in this area. Its responsibilities include:

- reviewing the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect girls and prospective girls who are disabled;
- making recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects to girls or prospective girls with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future;
- preparing the School's SENDA Policy;
- preparing the School's Accessibility Plan;
- Reviewing its plans and policies as necessary and at least once every 3 years.
- The following areas have been considered in detail by the (SMT) with the results set out below:

### **Admissions**

The SMT has reviewed the School's admissions literature, policy, examinations and procedures (including access to scholarships and bursaries) and now extends an invitation to parents of all prospective girls, to give full details of the nature and effect of any disability so as to enable it to consider any adjustments it might need to make.

In assessing any girl or prospective girl the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. Some adjustments can and will be made, such as seating a girl with a known hearing or visual impairment at the front of the class during the entrance examinations.

Given the academically selective nature of the School, no adjustment will be made to the minimum

overall academic standard required of all girls, but individual reports on Special Educational Needs will be taken into account when assessing performance in the examinations.

## **Physical Layout of the School**

### **Senior School**

From September 2015, the completion of the re-development of the Senior School site means that to a great extent the buildings and grounds are physically accessible to disabled pupils. There are a small number of areas that are not fully compliant and these are addressed in the accessibility plan.

### **Junior School**

SMT has considered the Junior School and has identified the following problems:

- The Junior School has (in common with many other schools) a layout which covers a large area and consists of three separate buildings (one of three storeys). Whilst one building, Shackleton House, does have a lift the other two do not. Whilst generally in the Junior School pupils have a static classroom they need to access specialist rooms (such as Science, IT) to be able to take part in the breadth of education available. This means that they have to access those buildings that do not have lifts. It is not hard to conclude that any girl with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether from access to some or all of the educational and other facilities the Junior School offers. Nor can these matters be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to physical features of the School at prohibitive cost and subject to the granting of planning permission. It is the school's long-term aim to ensure that, like the Senior School, the Junior School is physically accessible for disabled pupils.
- The School allocates funds annually towards its goal of improving accessibility for all. Over the years, the school has carried out considerable works that have significantly increased the school's accessibility and it will continue to work towards having a fully accessible school.

## **Curriculum and Extra-curricular Activities**

Senior Management has considered:

- The problems of physical access caused by the fixed classroom system.
- The difficulties of "access" to the education generally for specified types of disability: e.g. sight- or hearing-impaired, dyslexia, etc. Girls with particular disabilities e.g. Marfan Syndrome, Diabetes or Cystic Fibrosis may not be able to access some of the physically challenging aspects of the curriculum such as PE and Games, or some extra-curricular activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. SMT considers it appropriate to provide for flexibility in the curriculum, to provide those girls affected with the ability (subject to their parents' consent) to 'opt out' of certain activities and lessons for which they would be physically unsuited.

## **Welfare**

Senior Management has considered:

- The difficulties which might arise for specified types of disability such as bullying, non-integration, physical and mental welfare, health and safety.
- It is considered that the caring and inclusive ethos and values of the school, combined with the current strong system of pastoral support (e.g. Academic and Peer Mentors, Form Tutors, Heads of Year, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Nurses etc.) will mitigate against such difficulties. This will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

### **Awareness and Observance of the Policy**

Tormead is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this policy is fully effective. In addition to the provision of specialist support for girls with disabilities and specific learning difficulties, it is committed to ensuring that all staff have the opportunity to discuss their current work practices in the light of SENDA requirements.

This policy and appendix are written with reference to the following legislation

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2002
- Disability and the Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- Every Child Matters 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014

The School also has policies in related areas that should be read in conjunction with this one. They are:

- Restraint
- Anti-Bullying
- Safeguarding
- Code of Conduct for Behaviour
- Rewards and Sanctions

**Date of Last Review:** June 2015

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Short Term</b>	<p>An annual assessment will be carried out of any measures that might be taken to improve disabled access to the site; to assist the prioritisation of expenditure in its development and maintenance plan</p> <p>Annually check that the fire safety risk assessment and procedures is up to date with regard to changes in personnel, building and girls. To ensure all disabled people can be safely evacuated from premises: Annual review of fire exit signs, and relevant doorways.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>MODO/ CPHI</p>	<p>August (annually)</p> <p>On going</p>	Also discussed at Health and Safety meetings 3 times a year.
<b>Medium Term</b>	<p>Review of paths, car parks and roads to assist movement as much as possible</p> <p>Junior School - development of classrooms to ensure that all classrooms provide a conducive learning environment for all:            -ongoing upgrade of lighting            -Use of appropriate colour schemes            -Floor coverings to be appropriate            -Doorways and doors to conform to regulation widths</p>	MODO/ CPHI	<p>2015-16 onwards</p> <p>3 Years</p>	
<b>Long Term</b>	<p>Junior School - review taking place of the building requirements. Outline plans to be drawn up for discussion and development purposes.</p> <p>All new buildings or major refurbishments to include plans that include lifts, ramps to allow suitable access.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>SMT</p>	<p>Ongoing (5 yr plan)</p> <p>As required</p>	Long term plan and funding

**Increase the extent to which disabled girls can participate in school curriculum**

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Short</b>	Annually check that the needs of new and	SMT/CPOO/	Annually	

<b>Term</b>	<p>existing girls are met and ensure that staff involved with the girls have information of their needs</p> <p>Ensure that School Nurses are aware of any special needs and receive training as needed, review of Health Plans</p> <p>Have meetings with Parents and girl as needed to ensure all needs are supported as reasonable and practicable</p> <p>Liaise with outside Health and Support agencies as needed and ensure that access to specialist help is available where reasonable and practicable</p> <p>Ensure inclusivity on all visits and extra-curricular activities whenever reasonable and practicable</p> <p>Consider the implications of delivering the curriculum to those with specific disabilities</p> <p>Be aware that media files, large print or Braille documents may be required to respond to need</p> <p>Development of learning through Virtual Learning environment (Google Drive) and mobile device use</p>	<p>Nurse/ HOY</p> <p>SMT/ Nurse/ HoY</p> <p>HoY/ Nurse</p> <p>HoY and Visit leader</p> <p>SMT/HoLS</p> <p>SMT/IT dept</p> <p>SMT/IT/HoLS</p> <p>SMT</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<b>Medium Term</b>	<p>Continue development of the provision and use of digital mobile technology to aid learning which facilities communication with girls with disabilities providing clear images, large text, high quality audio/visual material</p>	<p>SMT/IT dept</p>	<p>August 2016</p>	
<b>Long Term</b>				



### Improve the delivery of information to disabled girls (2015-2018)

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Short Term</b>	Arrange for documents including the prospectus to be provided to prospective parents of girls who have a disability in forms that meet that need, if so requested and it is reasonable to do so. E.g. large font or on audiotape for visual impairment. To be actioned within 10 days if requested.	SMT/ CPOO/ LASP	Sept 2015	
	Ensure that staff provide relevant School documents for girls who have a disability in forms that meet that need, if so requested and it is reasonable to do so. E.g. large font or on audiotape for visual impairment	Resources dept	Ongoing	
	Provision of INSET for staff in order to support girls with Special Learning Needs or Disabilities as appropriate and necessary	SMT	Ongoing	
	Be prepared to translate documents into Braille should need arise	SMT	Ongoing	
<b>Medium Term</b>	Review of signage to ensure it meets the needs of current staff and girls	CPHI	December 2015	
	Use of IMS to improve communication with girls with Special Learning Needs or Disabilities	SMT/ IT dept	Ongoing	
<b>Long Term</b>				