



Accessibility Strategy

2024-2028

Plan administration	
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Person responsible for review	Headteacher

History of Document and Changes Made

Date of Change	Changes made by	Changes made
May 2024	Headteacher	Legal advice from School Lawyer
May 2024	Headteacher	Change of names in Appendix of review committee
May 2024	Headteacher	Review of action plan to end in 2024 and input of 'Action Taken' in plan
June 2025	Headteacher	Update to each 'Duty' in the Action Plan
June 2025	Headteacher	Update to Action Plan
August 2025	Headteacher	Signing of plan by MC and RAC for publication

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HAMILTON COLLEGE

Hamilton College is a co-educational, non-denominational, Christian, independent, day school accepting children and young people aged from 2 to 18 years of age incorporating a Nursery, Junior and Senior School.

We have a strong and supportive ethos based on Christian values of

**GRACE • CONFIDENCE • WISDOM
INNOVATION • COMPASSION • REFLECTION**

Grace

We aim to be humble, generous, and polite. To give willingly without expecting anything in return. To be aware of the consequences of our actions. To trust and forgive, valuing friendship and service.

Confidence

We aim to be determined. To always do our best and celebrate achievements. To develop our communication skills so that we can express ourselves clearly and articulately. To work well independently and as part of a group.

Wisdom

We aim to make responsible decisions founded on sound knowledge, considered understanding, and informed evaluation. To be balanced, expressing our views assuredly, while respecting other beliefs and opinions.

Innovation

We aim to ask difficult questions and try new things. To dare to be different. To find joy in our learning, and to inspire others. To keep trying when things get tough and to work hard, actively seeking help when we need it.

Compassion

We aim to be caring, empathetic and respectful. To be a welcoming and supportive family which contributes to local, national and international communities. To be principled, honest, and fair.

Reflection

We aim to consider our strengths with self-awareness, while learning from our mistakes. To know ourselves, considering our relationship with God and with the wider world. To listen, think, and use our experiences to advise and support others.

At all times we aim to ensure that all of the children and young people in the school enjoy a holistic educational experience in a positive, safe and nurturing educational and social environment so that the learning needs of all pupils or prospective pupils can be met.

We are fully committed to ensuring that pupils are safe, nurtured, healthy achieving, active, respected, responsible and included (Getting it Right for Every Child, GIRFEC, 2009) and this is defined in our Child Protection and Wellbeing Policy.

We welcome pupils of all faiths or none, and we seek to be proactive in promoting inclusiveness and equality through our professional development and training of our staff who will positively promote awareness of equality issues to allow all pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes and achievements.

KEY PRINCIPLES

This Accessibility Strategy aims to improve access to the full provision of education and related services for pupils with disabilities, and 'prospective pupils', i.e. those who may in future attend Hamilton College and their families. A summary of education and associated services is attached as **Appendix A**.

The Strategy has been developed in line with Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice and the Scottish Government guidance: 'Planning improvements for disabled pupils' access to education: Guidance for education authorities, independent and grant-aided schools.'

The following key principles underpin the development of this Accessibility Strategy:

Successful learners

- Promote excellence in the learning and teaching for all pupils in Hamilton College including those with additional support needs and/or disabilities as a part of a life-long learning approach.
- Deliver a full, broad, balanced and coherent curriculum for pupils from 2 to 18 years set within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).
- To ensure all pupils are safe, supported and cared for through our approach to GIRFEC.
- Enable the pupils of Hamilton College to achieve their full potential and develop their skills, talents and imagination by participating in a range of creative activities.
- Undertake a rigorous process of quality assurance using national performance measures to deliver best value in all aspects of service delivery.

Confident individuals

- Encourage pupils to enjoy new experiences, build confidence, ascertain hidden talents through our wider-curricular experiences, promoting the greatest degree of independence, social competence and social communication.
- Enhance the knowledge and skills of all staff through involvement in a continuing programme of personal and professional development, support and training.

Effective contributors

- Have in place an assessment process to enable parents, professionals and the pupils themselves to make informed judgments regarding matters which may affect their life, now and in the future.
- Promote effective collaboration with other agencies, voluntary organisations and persons involved with the child or young person.
- Embrace the philosophy of inclusion by involving young people in making decisions and enhancing their ability to communicate about matters affecting the school and their learning.
- Provide alternative means of communication and access to information in different formats and languages.

Responsible Citizens

- Foster individual and collective excellence through the creation of a caring and welcoming ethos.
- Ensure children and young people, where possible, can become active citizens and contribute to the local and school community.
- Manage the finances and resources of the school efficiently and effectively to ensure maximum accessibility

LEGISLATION

Accessibility Strategies were introduced as a result of legislation contained within the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupil Records) (Scotland) Act, 2002, which placed a duty on Local Authorities in Scotland and those responsible for Independent and Grant Aided Schools to adopt a proactive and consistent approach to strategic planning to address three distinct elements of planned improvements for disabled children:

The purpose of the policy is, over time (each 3-year period) to:

- increase disabled pupils' participation, as far as is possible, in a full and coherent curriculum similar to their non-disabled peers.
- improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by the school. In addition, consideration should be given to ensure access to the school buildings and outdoor facilities provided for both pupils and adults using the campus.
- improve communication with and access to information with disabled pupils within a reasonable timescale; and in ways which are determined by taking account of their additional support needs and/or disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their families/carers/advocates. Information is to be available in a number of different formats.

The two key duties of this legislation are:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably; and
- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage

In addition, schools have duties under the Additional Support for Learning Act (2004, and as amended in 2009).

The Equality Act 2010

This Strategy should be read alongside the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which sets out the School's commitment to complying with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for pupils,
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Disability

The Equality Act contains specific protections for disabled people and these protections apply to pupils in schools as well as prospective pupils. The Equality Act 2010 considers a person to have a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities

Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Disabilities such as dyslexia, autism spectrum disorder and speech and language impairments are all likely to be disabilities under the Act. It is also important to recognize that a diagnosis is not always required for someone to meet the definition of disability.

The Act sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

The overriding principle of equality legislation is one of equal treatment. However, the provisions relating to disability discrimination are different in that a disabled person may and often must be treated more favourably than a person who is not disabled. Schools therefore may have to make changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what is offered to the same extent that a person without that disability can.

The more complex provisions that apply in the case of disability are:

Direct discrimination

A school must not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled, for example, by having an admission bar on blind applicants.

There cannot be justification for direct discrimination in any circumstances. This means that if a school discriminates against a person purely because of his/ her disability (even if they are trying to achieve a legitimate aim), then it would be unlawful discrimination, as there can be no justification for their actions.

Indirect discrimination

A school must not do something which applies to all pupils, but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only, for example, having a rule that all pupils must demonstrate physical fitness levels before being admitted to the school, unless they can show that it is done for a legitimate reason, and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability

A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability, for example, by not allowing a disabled pupil with crutches outside at break time, because it would take too long for him/her to get out and back to the classroom. Like indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability can potentially be justified.

Reasonable adjustments and when they have to be made

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. For schools, the duty is summarised as follows:

- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.

However, schools in Scotland are not subject to the requirement of reasonable adjustment duty concerned with making alterations to physical features of the school building or environment because this is already considered as part of the Accessibility Strategy planning duties.

Auxiliary aids and services

Schools have to consider whether to provide auxiliary aids as a reasonable adjustment for disabled children. Many disabled children will also have an additional support need (ASN) and may need auxiliary aids which are necessary as part of their ASN provision. This will particularly be the case where a disabled child does not have a Co-ordinated Support Plan. Schools require to take account of the requirements of the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004, as revised in 2009.

THE PLANNING GROUP

The responsible body is the “Proprietor” i.e. Christian Schools (Scotland) Ltd. In practice, any persons acting on behalf of the responsible body, including employees of the school, are liable for their own discriminatory actions, and the responsible body is also liable unless it can show that it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the individual from doing the discriminatory act.

The Principal (Head Teacher) of Hamilton College developed an Accessibility Strategy in 2016, by chairing a Strategic Planning Group and establishing 3 sub-planning groups involving staff, parents, Governors and key stakeholders involved with the school.

The sub planning group ceased to exist after the strategy was implemented. This has now been replaced with a group who oversee and audit the policy. See Appendix B for names.

AUDIT AND REVIEW

Hamilton College is a selective Independent School where impact on learners' achievement is a key focus in providing a range of learning and teaching approaches.

At present, we have a number of pupils with disabilities including some with hearing and visual impairments. We also recognise that pupils can suffer physical and mental health issues, family stress and bereavement, for example, at various times during their lives. We also have pupils for whom English is an additional language and we take pride in the inclusive nature of our provision and celebrate the different religions and cultures in the school.

This policy is audited annually and progress documented in the Action Plan at the back of the document.

Admissions Policy

Our Admissions Policy sets out the key requirements for entry to the school and identifies that reasonable adjustments will be put in place to ensure pupils with disabilities are not disadvantaged or discriminated against and are given additional support where required. The Admissions Policy was thoroughly reviewed in January 2020 and is reviewed annually.

We have an assessment process for entry to the school and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure children or young people with disabilities or their families are not disadvantaged or discriminated against in the admissions process.

THE ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan for 2024-2027 has stemmed from the strategy document (2016 - 2019) and will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis. National performance measures e.g. How Good is our School (HGIOS 4) and How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare (HGIOELC) were used to shape this policy along with the legal framework set out above. The priorities for inclusion in the Action Plan also take account of the School Improvement Plan priorities, Self-evaluation through HGIOS 4, HMIE and external evaluations.

The Plan sets out the timescale for the action plan and focuses on a manageable and meaningful number of key priorities and outcomes.

The Action Plan

Duty 1 - Increase the extent to which learners can participate in the curriculum		Issue	Action	Person responsible	Timescale	Success Criteria	Method of Evaluation	Any Actions Taken
1.1		Ensure appropriate employment and deployment of PSL staff.	Review needs of learners and assign PSL staff to meet needs of student and using the staff expertise	Headteacher, Depute Head of Pastoral and Head of Junior School	Ongoing and as appropriate adjustments will be made	Increased access to the curriculum. Needs of all learners met in line with Student Profiles	SLT Day to day basis Lesson observations Analysis of Admissions information Parental input and feedback	Additional teaching allocation to PS in August 2025, when the pupil needs have decreased
1.2		Ensure quality teaching, through CPD (including Scaffolding, deployment of PSL in the classroom) for all to improve disabled learners' access.	Deliver regular staff training during mandatory staff CPD time.	Director of Education Heads of Department	Regular programme of CPD is delivered throughout academic year	Increased access to the curriculum Needs of all students met in line with student support plans Student progress	SLT during lesson observations. Parental feedback	The implementation of HC4E during 2024-25
1.3		Appropriate use of specialised equipment to benefit individual	Identified specialised equipment will be purchased and used where a need is	PSL, PSP and HoDs	As appropriate adjustments will be made on a case by case basis	Increased access to the curriculum Needs of all students met in	Learners' Progress Staff feedback	Hearing equipment reviewed for learners in J1 for August 2025

Installation of visual alarms in toilets in August 2024

line with student ASN and ASP Profiles.

identified by Physiotherapy, Occupational Health, Educational Psychologist, Audiologist, need for extra support

learners and staff.

Analysis of Sanction Data will show adjustments being made to meet the needs of the learners - August 2025

Learner Progress
Staff feedback
Parental feedback

Increased understanding of learners' needs and improve learners' behaviour.

AAs and when appropriate for learners' needs.

All staff

The ongoing requirement to recognise individualised needs when implementing the Whole School Policy for Appropriate Behaviour

Ensure equity while making reasonable adjustments on behaviour sanctions.

Learner Progress
Staff feedback
Parental feedback
Admissions feedback

Increased understanding of learner needs
Increased access to the curriculum.
Needs of all learners met.

At points of transition when learner begins school journey .

SLT and PSP, PSL, Admissions.

Information sharing between year groups throughout the school
Information sought from feeder schools on learners' ASN needs
Review of transition/

Transition - ensure all information regarding learner disabilities is shared and adjustments in place prior to transition events.



Learner
Processes

Information rich
and accurate
support plans

Uty 2- Improve the physical environment to enable better access to education and the associated service	Issue	Action	Person responsible	Timescale	Success Criteria	Method of Evaluation	Any Action Taken
2.1	Access to varying levels on the ground floor	Ensure that the School has options to move those with disabilities around the School, including ramps and wheelchairs support methods	Facilities Manager and Business Manager	Ongoing	Those who require support with access, can gain full access to the varying levels on the ground floor		
2.2	Handrails at every stair accesses in and around the School	Fix or replace handrail	Facilities Manager	Analysis to be completed during August to October 2025 and an action plan issued and delivered In place.	Purchasing of Wheelchair access machinery Handrails in place	Evaluation of analysis and action plan	
2.3	Access to JS classes from J4 - J7 for a wheelchair unless through assembly hall.	Install a ramp at the end of the infant corridor down the stairs to the red carpet area	Facilities Manager		Ramp is installed Access to classrooms is easier	Learners and guests in wheelchairs can access all JS classes without going through the hall	
2.4							

2.5	Analysis of PVSAR for the future PVSAR - Notified on 16 Dec 19 that buses that transport children to and from school need to be fit for ASN. Our supplier does not conform to this.	Create ongoing plan to ensure that the School meets the requirements of the legislation	Business Manager	In line with the Regulations	Legislation is delivered	We comply with new legislation
2.6	New developments	Ensuring all new developments consider the access requirements for legislation and meeting the needs of the learners	SLT and project teams	Ongoing	Legislation is met and the community have access	Observations and reporting
2.7	Access to the School pitches for fixtures	Consider ways in which our parents and guests can access the School fields	SLT	Ongoing	Our visitors and guests will be able to access the School fields	Observations and data on visitors for events

Duty 3- Improve Communication with pupils and the community with disabilities	Issue	Action	Person responsible	Timescale	Success Criteria	Method of Evaluation	Any action taken
3.1	Ensuring that all learners can access communications	Upgrading the School ICT platforms to allow for ease of communication -	Director of Education and ICT Manager	Continual analysis and action plans to improve access and communication.	Seamless communication between learners and the School	Student Feedback Staff feedback Parental feedback	
3.2	Prospectus and other literature not easily available in different languages	Continue to update and adopt varying methods of our promotional materials to meet the needs of prospective markets Create list of services that can convert parental documentation into different languages and braille	Director of Admissions and Marketing	Ongoing	Our prospective parents will be able to access our promotional material	Staff feedback Parental feedback	
3.3	Greater access to ICT provision	Moving to BYOD, increased choice for learner. Office 365 and in built tools tailored to individual needs.	Director of Education and ICT Manager	Ongoing annually	Learners in J6 - S6 have a 1:1 device	Learner Progress Staff feedback Parental feedback	BYOD was introduced in August 2024

3.4	Pupils printing from own device	Pupils able to print from own devices and using mobility print	ICT Manager	In place	Pupils can print from any device	Learner Feedback Staff feedback
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Appendix A - Education and Associated Services

The following are examples of what would be considered within the broad definition of education and associated services. Most of these examples will carry duties under the Equality Act 2010:

- preparation for entry to the school,
- the curriculum, teaching and learning,
- classroom organisation,
- timetabling,
- grouping of pupils,
- homework,
- access to school facilities,
- activities to supplement the curriculum (such as a drama group visiting the school),
- school sports,
- school policies,
- breaks and lunchtimes,
- the serving of school meals,
- interaction with peers, assessment and exam arrangements,
- school discipline and sanctions,
- exclusion procedures,
- school clubs and activities,
- school trips,
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies, and preparation of pupils for the next phase of education.

Appendix B - Audit and Review Group

- Richard A Charman (Headteacher)
- Heather Stark (Director of Education)
- Penny Simpson, OBE (Chairman of Board of Governors)
- Marion Cunningham (Governor)
- Jenny Paterson (Head of Junior School & Nursery)
- Stuart Ross (Depute Head Pastoral)
- Kenny Gibson (Facilities Manager)
- Martin Murphy (Business Manager)
- Phil Macfarlane (IT Manager)
- Fraser Swan (Pupil Support Learning)
- Greta Montgomery (Director of Admissions and Marketing)

Appendix A - Education and Associated Services

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- school discipline and sanctions,
- exclusion procedures,
- school clubs and activities,
- school trips,
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies, and preparation of pupils for the next phase of education.

HAMILTON COLLEGE ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Education (Disability, Strategies &
Pupil Records) (Scotland) Act 2002

SECTION A: GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Our policy as Hamilton College Board of Governors is to improve access to the full provision of education and related services for pupils with disabilities, and 'prospective pupils' i.e. those who may in future attend Hamilton College and their families.

The allocation of tasks and duties for accessibility matters and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement this policy are as set out within this document.

This policy will be brought to the attention of, and/or issued to, all members of staff.


We intend to achieve continuing improvement in our accessibility arrangements. To that end, we shall review this policy and the way in which it operates on an ongoing basis. The policy shall be subject also to a formal annual review.

The above Statements may be downloaded under Whole School Health Policies.

Signed: 

Marion Cunningham, (Board of Governors)

Date: - 4/9/25

Signed: 

Richard A Charman, (Headteacher)

Date: - 5/9/2025