

Disability and Special Needs Policy for Public Examinations



One of the obvious problems at Hurst Lodge is its lay-out, due to the fact it was first built in 1889. The school consists of several separate buildings of several stories without lifts, which have grown up since the school was founded. This requires pupils to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings where lifts would be impracticable to install. 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.

The responsibility for the Disability Policy 'Reviews' falls under the jurisdiction of the schools Senior Leadership Team who may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

The Team regularly reviews the school's admissions literature, policy, examinations and procedures and will require formal notification (to be treated as confidential if the applicant or parents require) giving the school details of the nature and effect of any disability so as to enable it to consider any adjustments it might need to make; this includes examination administration.

Aids such as modified papers, extra time, readers, scribes, transcripts, word processors, supervised rest breaks, individual rooms, a bilingual dictionary, etc are provided to be used in examinations whenever necessary. Outside help would be sought from suitable professional bodies, if a person such as a lip reader/speaker is required. There is the possibility of invigilators wearing a microphone/hearing loop for those who have some hearing problems.

The main examination room, known as Studio 3, is on an upper floor. Access to upper floors and the widening of corridors to allow wheelchair access is not possible. Should a candidate suffer a physical disability which means they cannot climb stairs to access Studio 3; alternative arrangements will be made by using Studio 2. This room is on the ground floor and has access by ramp from the school drive through one of the main studio doors; there is also easy access to toilets from this room.

Candidates with dyslexia, dyspraxia, a degree of autism and Asperger's syndrome have been, and are catered for in the special needs department. The school adopts a 'whole school approach' to the teaching of dyslexics and this includes examinations. Staff, including invigilators, are regularly trained and the candidates involved have an IEP, which is made available to all invigilators.

Technical backup is immediately available if there is a problem with technical equipment used for examinations; e.g. word processors.

Many of the staff are first aid trained and medication can be administered with prior training and permission slips. Epi pen training is given to selected staff and training is also undertaken on asthma, epilepsy and diabetes.

Every effort is made to ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made for candidates with disabilities and to ensure they are not treated less favourably than others.

Invigilators are trained, including disability equality training and health and safety. They are provided with all relevant information about candidates.

This policy is directly in line with the Whole school 'Disability and Accessibility Policy'.