ABBEY COLLEGE IN MALVERN

Accessibility Strategy
2026 – 2027

Related Documents Include:

- Equality Act 2010 – Schedule 10 – statutory accessibility planning duties.
- DfE – Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools.
- DfE – SEND Code of Practice (0–25 years).
- ISI Inspection Framework – September 2026.
- ISI Inspection Handbook – September 2026.
- JCQ – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, March 2026.

Legal Status:

- To meet the accessibility planning duties in the Equality Act 2010, particularly section 88 and Schedule 10 (Accessibility for disabled pupils), together with the applicable provisions of the Equality Act 2010 concerning discrimination and reasonable adjustments.
- To have regard to the Disability Discrimination (Prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) (England) Regulations 2005, as applicable, and the requirement for accessibility planning over the prescribed period.
- To meet the relevant requirements of the Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended, including the standards concerning quality of education, pupils' welfare and the quality of leadership and management.
- To have regard to the Department for Education's Equality Act 2010: advice for schools and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, where applicable to the College and its pupils.
- To follow the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Inspection Framework and Handbook in force from September 2026, including the expectations concerning SEND, inclusion, curriculum access and reasonable adjustments.
- To comply with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments regulations applicable to the 2026–2027 academic year, including the March 2026 version which JCQ confirms remains in force during that academic year.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.
- The Principal will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of the arrangements and the extent to which the related duties have been discharged. The review will take place no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the College's systems, premises, pupil needs, legislation, regulatory requirements or best-practice guidance so require.

Produced by:	Various	Date:	01/05/2018	Checked:	JKS	Date:	15/11/2025	Approved by:	MN	Date:	16/11/2026

- The College will keep the accessibility plan under review throughout the period to which it relates and will revise it where necessary. The plan will be implemented and will take account of the College's resources and identified priorities.
- The next official date for review is: **November 2027.**

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools, including independent schools, to prepare and implement a written accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to improve, over time, access to education for disabled pupils. The College's accessibility planning addresses three areas:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the College's curriculum.
- Improving the physical environment of the College to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and the benefits, facilities and services provided or offered by the College.
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Information must be provided within a reasonable time and in a form which takes account of the pupil's disability and any preferences expressed by the pupil or their parents. The College will consider appropriate formats and communication methods on an individual basis.

The accessibility planning duty is distinct from, and complementary to, the College's duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. The reasonable-adjustment duty requires the College to consider appropriate steps to avoid substantial disadvantage. In the school context, the reasonable-adjustment duty does not require physical alterations to premises; improvements to the physical environment are addressed through the accessibility planning duty. This distinction does not remove the College's responsibility to consider other reasonable adjustments, including changes to practices or provision and the use of auxiliary aids or services where appropriate.

The College recognises that disability may be permanent, long-term, fluctuating or otherwise have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The College will consider each pupil's circumstances individually and will not assume that a diagnosis, label or type of impairment automatically determines the support or adjustments required.
The accessibility plan must be in writing, kept under review and implemented. The responsible body must have regard to the need to allocate adequate resources for implementation. The statutory planning period is governed by the applicable regulations; the College will maintain the plan over the prescribed period and will undertake an additional formal annual review as part of its management and quality-assurance arrangements.

The responsible body of the College is responsible for the accessibility plan. The Principal will coordinate its development, implementation and review, involving relevant members of staff according to their responsibilities:

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026

- The development of access to the curriculum will be led by those with curriculum responsibilities, in consultation with the staff responsible for identifying and coordinating support for pupils with SEND.
- The development of materials in different formats will involve all staff in respect of materials used in their own teaching and communication with pupils.
- The Principal or a senior manager will lead on improvements to the physical environment, the deployment of resources and the coordination of the plan across the whole College.

ISI may consider the College's performance in preparing, publishing, reviewing, revising and implementing its accessibility plan. The current ISI framework also expects leaders to ensure that policies, plans, schemes of work, teaching and assessment take account of the needs of pupils with SEND, including pupils with EHC plans, and that the College proactively considers reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

As an approved examinations centre, the College must support disabled candidates and candidates with special educational needs during teaching, internal assessment and external examinations. The College will apply the relevant JCQ regulations and awarding-body requirements.

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026

Abbey College Accessibility Strategy

Access to the Curriculum

Access to the curriculum at Abbey College has traditionally been affected by students' English language skills. The English Language Department is responsible for delivering English language support to academic students to help them access substantive academic courses by raising their level of English. The College recognises, however, that English as an additional language is not itself a disability or a special educational need, and that a pupil may require additional support or reasonable adjustments for reasons unrelated to English language proficiency.

The College policy is to assess all students in English and Mathematics upon arrival. This is followed by a counselling session with either the Principal, Director of Academic Studies or Director of Studies (EFL), where an appropriate academic course is decided upon, usually by mutual consent. The academic course will be one of the following:

1. Mainstream Academic Course (with English language support)
2. Intensive English Language (in preparation for joining a mainstream course)

The provision of intensive English language courses allows students with even elementary levels of English to access the curriculum. Where a pupil has a disability or special educational need, the College will also consider whether additional assessment, specialist advice, individual support or reasonable adjustments are required.

With small classes, Abbey College is ideally placed to increase accessibility to the curriculum. Subject teachers have the potential to differentiate between weaker and stronger members of classes and to allow pupils of different ability levels to access the curriculum.

The most obvious ways that this can be approached are as follows:

- Differentiated directing of verbal questions.
- Differentiated tasks to complete in class.
- Differentiated tasks to complete for prep.
- Differentiated expectations.
- Adaptation of teaching approaches, pace, instructions, classroom organisation and resources to take account of identified learning needs.
- Use of appropriate assistive technology, auxiliary aids or additional adult support where this is a reasonable and effective way of reducing a pupil's disadvantage.

The small classes allow teachers to spend time with individuals during a lesson, enabling the more able to be stretched and those who require more individual support to be offered it. If a student requires one-to-one classes in a mainstream subject, this can often be offered by the College. Any additional support or adjustment will be considered in light of the pupil's identified needs, the effectiveness of the proposed provision and the College's ability to put it in place.

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026

Where a pupil has SEND or a disability, relevant information about their needs and effective strategies will be shared appropriately with teaching and support staff. The College will take account of relevant professional advice, assessment information, EHC plan outcomes where applicable, and the views of the pupil and parents. Teaching, learning and assessment will be adapted where reasonably necessary so that the pupil can participate and demonstrate their learning.

Mainstream academic teachers are given guidance in teaching English as a Second Language students through workshops regularly run by the teacher trainer, Director of Studies (EFL) or Principal, termly observations by the Director of Studies (EFL) or Principal and the peer observation programme, where mainstream academic teachers observe the classes that they teach in an EFL class being taught by an EFL teacher. Relevant staff development will also address inclusive teaching, disability awareness and practical strategies for supporting pupils with SEND.

This policy is monitored through Academic, Departmental and Management Meetings, schemes of work, classroom observations and the progress of individual students. The College will also consider whether agreed support and reasonable adjustments are being implemented consistently and whether they are effective.

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026

Development of Materials

Materials used by teachers in the classroom tend to fall into two categories, either those purchased as 'purpose designed' resources, i.e. textbooks, or those created by the teacher, i.e. worksheets.

The choice of textbooks used in a class is determined by both the nature/level of the class and the level of English of the students. This is a relatively simple exercise for EFL classes where there are a vast number of textbooks that will fit every language level. In these cases, the class level is determined at the start of the course and the English Department will identify a suitable course book for the students to follow. Sometimes, more than one course book is followed simultaneously.

The choice of textbook is more restricted for GCSE and A level courses. It therefore becomes the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure that their teaching and classroom activities will allow increased accessibility to the chosen textbook for students whose language skills may be less developed. Likewise, the teacher can produce additional materials for students who may need academic stretching beyond the content of the textbook.

In addition, teachers will consider whether materials need to be adapted for pupils with disabilities or SEND. Depending on the individual pupil's needs, this may include providing materials in large print, electronic or screen-reader-compatible formats, accessible fonts and layouts, simplified or chunked instructions, clear visual presentation, alternative methods of recording work, or other appropriate formats. The College will take account of the pupil's preferred means of communication and will aim to provide accessible information within a reasonable time.

The College will consider the accessibility of information provided to pupils in writing, including teaching resources, instructions, assessments, timetables, notices and relevant pastoral information. Where a pupil cannot access the usual written format, staff will discuss and provide a suitable alternative where reasonably practicable. Digital resources will be selected or adapted with regard to readability, navigation and compatibility with relevant assistive technology.

The College has a teacher trainer/experienced teacher observe all teachers at least once a year. One purpose of these observations is to comment and make suggestions on use of classroom materials. There are also regular workshops run throughout the year for teachers; many of these workshops incorporate elements on development and use of classroom materials. Observations and workshops will also consider the accessibility of resources and the effectiveness of adaptations for pupils who need them.

The College intends to increase the provision of PowerPoint projectors, interactive whiteboards and other ICT tools for suitability inside the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to research suitable software for departmental purchase to be used in tandem with these resources. The suitability of such technology will be considered in relation to pupils' individual needs, including compatibility with assistive technology where appropriate.

This policy is monitored through Academic, Departmental and Management Meetings, schemes of work, classroom observations and the progress of individual students. The College will consider feedback from pupils and parents about the accessibility of learning and communication materials.

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026

Examinations – JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable adjustment

Where applicable, the College provides access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for examination candidates with special educational needs or disabilities, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the current JCQ regulations and the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies.

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are one of the principal ways in which the College supports candidates and fulfils its responsibilities in relation to reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments:

The Equality Act 2010 requires the College and, in relation to qualifications, the awarding bodies to consider reasonable adjustments where a disabled candidate would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage. The appropriate responsible body must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage. An adjustment may be specific to an individual and may not be included in the list of standard access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment is reasonable will depend on the circumstances, including:

- The needs of the disabled candidate.
- The effectiveness of the adjustment in reducing or avoiding the disadvantage.
- The cost and practicality of the adjustment.
- The likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.
- The need to maintain the integrity, security and validity of the assessment and the assessment objectives.

An adjustment will not be approved by an awarding body if it would involve unreasonable costs or timeframes, or compromise the security or integrity of the assessment. The College will nevertheless consider its own duty to make reasonable adjustments and will not assume that the absence of a standard JCQ arrangement removes the need to consider other appropriate support.

All applications for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments requiring awarding-body approval must be made and approved in accordance with the relevant regulations and deadlines. The College must not put in place an arrangement requiring approval until the necessary approval has been obtained. Centre-delegated arrangements may only be used where the current JCQ regulations permit them and the required evidence and records are in place.

Evidence of Need:

The evidence of need will vary depending on the disability and the access arrangement(s) being applied for. Evidence must comply with the current JCQ regulations and may include appropriate

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026

assessment information, records of the candidate's normal way of working, teacher feedback, evidence from internal tests and mock examinations, and relevant reports from suitably qualified professionals. A diagnosis or report alone does not automatically establish entitlement to a particular examination arrangement.

The Examinations Officer, Head of Centre (the Principal), the person appointed by the College to coordinate access arrangements (SENCo/access arrangements coordinator), and relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team will familiarise themselves with the current JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments regulations.

The Head of Centre will ensure that the person coordinating access arrangements has sufficient time, support and appropriate training to manage the process. The coordinator, supported by teaching staff and members of the Senior Leadership Team, will lead the identification, evidence-gathering, application and implementation process.

Teaching staff and members of the Senior Leadership Team will support the coordinator in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. Decisions must be based on the candidate's individual needs, the evidence available, the candidate's normal way of working and the current JCQ criteria.

The coordinator must work with teaching staff, student support staff and examinations office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and external examinations.

Where appropriate, the coordinator will also work with specialist advisory teachers, educational psychologists, medical professionals and the College's appointed assessor to identify needs and obtain evidence. Advice from external professionals will inform the College's decision-making but does not replace the centre's responsibility to apply the JCQ regulations.

The coordinator will work with teaching staff to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers, in accordance with the current JCQ regulations, to enable candidates to access their examinations.

The current JCQ regulations must be used when processing applications through Access Arrangements Online. Applications must only be processed where the candidate meets the published criteria and full supporting evidence is in place. The College will also ensure that candidates are informed appropriately about the processing of their information and that personal data is handled in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Failure to comply with the JCQ regulations may constitute malpractice and may affect a candidate's result(s). This includes putting in place arrangements which have not been approved where approval is required, or permitting arrangements which are not supported by appropriate evidence. Equally, failure to consider an appropriate adjustment may raise concerns about compliance with the College's duties.

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026

The JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments – Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*, updated in March 2026, remains applicable during the 2026–2027 academic year. The College will check the JCQ website and relevant awarding-body guidance for any further updates before each examination series.

The Physical Environment

The location of Abbey College presents particular challenges for people with some mobility impairments. The campus is situated on a steep hillside, with changes in level and sloping routes between parts of the site. Some routes and outdoor areas may therefore be difficult or unsafe for people with particular mobility needs. The topography and established layout of the campus mean that it may not be practicable to make every part of the site fully accessible to every person.

This limitation does not remove the College's responsibility to consider the needs of an individual disabled pupil or to make reasonable adjustments that are appropriate in the circumstances. Each case will be considered individually, taking account of the nature and extent of the pupil's needs, the facilities and activities they need to access, the views of the pupil and parents, relevant medical or specialist advice, and the effectiveness and practicability of possible adjustments.

The College will continue to consider improvements to accessibility around the campus. These may include improving or maintaining pathways, providing safer routes to facilities, reviewing access to outdoor areas, and considering accessibility when buildings, facilities or external areas are modernised. The College will consider the proposed pathway from the badminton courts to the old rose garden and improvements to routes serving outdoor facilities, including the tennis courts, when planning works and resources.

Where a pupil with mobility difficulties is admitted or is considering admission, the College will, where appropriate, assess the routes and facilities required for that pupil's normal school day. Possible arrangements may include allocation of suitable classrooms or teaching rooms, use of ground-floor facilities where available, adjustments to the pupil's timetable or movement between lessons, assistance with access, or alternative arrangements for activities and facilities. Any such arrangements will be considered individually and reviewed if the pupil's needs or the College's circumstances change.

The College will also consider accessibility in relation to evacuation and emergency arrangements, including the preparation of an appropriate individual plan where required. Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken and reviewed, with staff made aware of the arrangements necessary to support the pupil safely.

Each case for a person to be admitted to the College with difficulties in manoeuvrability will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, taking medical or expert opinion if necessary. The College will keep the interests of the potential student as the primary consideration in its deliberations and will consider all reasonable adjustments before reaching a decision.

The Principal will monitor the physical accessibility of the campus and consider priorities for improvement as part of the College's ongoing premises management and accessibility planning.

Abbey College in Malvern Ltd (Number 08661073)
Registered in England and Wales. Registered office: 253 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4JF
Member of ENGLISH UK, Accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, DfES Reg. No. 8856026