

Holme Grange School

Whole School Policy Including EYFS



Access Arrangements Policy

Date:	Amendment:	Reviewed by:	Authorised by:

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Holme Grange School has a written record, which clearly shows the centre is leading on the access arrangements process and is complying with its "...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements..." [JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, (section 5.4)]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCo alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each file/e-folder contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

Where the SENCo is storing access arrangements documentation electronically he/she **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([AA](#) 4.2)

The policy is reviewed annually to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#)

What are Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements are actions taken to remove the disadvantages to a student accessing an examination caused by physical, learning, sensory or psychological difficulties, without creating any unfair advantage or compromising the integrity of an assessment. These arrangements are agreed before an assessment and must reflect a student's normal way of working within the school.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010, requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. A candidate with a disability or difficulty, which has a substantial and long-term effect on performance in examinations, may qualify for access arrangements. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

General principles

The general principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (section 4.2). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. The SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination.

Available Access Arrangements include:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra Time
- Reader / Computer Reader
- Scribe
- Word Processor
- Separate Room within the centre
- Prompter
- Bilingual translation dictionaries
- Modified Papers

A reasonable adjustment may not be included in the list of available access arrangements because it may be unique to an individual.

Please note, many Educational Psychologist reports recommend a 'quiet room, away from distractions'. In Prep school, given the size of our classes, the classroom under exam conditions is by its very nature a 'quiet room' and is a student's 'normal way of working'.

In Eaton Grange, the exam room is also relatively small and will always be quiet, under exam conditions.

Only in **very** exceptional circumstances will access to a separate room be granted.

Timeline for Awarding Access Arrangements

Prep School

Holme Grange will always endeavour to help our students to perform to the best of their ability. Students are still very young at this stage and we do not want to make assessments too formal or intimidating.

Class teachers are aware of what support a student needs as their 'normal way of working' in the classroom.

Access arrangements, which are recommended in external professional reports, will be taken into consideration, in conjunction with the school's knowledge of the student's 'normal way of working' and what resources are available to accommodate these. *We also refer to the Government's guidance for Key Stage 2 access arrangements.*

Arrangements are recommendations at this stage and need to be trialled. It would be highly unusual to put all recommendations in place immediately, as we will need to monitor which arrangement works best for each student where required.

Years 7-11

1. Year 6: A student's primary school or parent informs the SENCo of any history of need or Access Arrangements implemented in KS2 examinations.
2. KS3: Teachers monitor students closely and gather evidence of need regarding Access Arrangements, passing it to the SENCo / Access Arrangements Coordinator. Access Arrangements trialled in tests / exams.
3. Year 9: Part 1 of Form 8 is completed (for students with learning difficulties), based on evidence supplied by teachers. A qualified Access Arrangements Assessor will assess all pupils in the year group using standardised tests.
4. Evidence for the detailed file note (for students with a substantial impairment such as a physical disability, sensory impairment or medical condition) is gathered and the file note drawn up.
5. SENCo / Access Arrangements Coordinator applies for Access Arrangements online.
6. KS4: Access Arrangements in place and being used as normal way of working for the student.
7. October of Year 11: Final deadline for teachers to submit evidence and request for Access Arrangements. Mock examinations provide the last opportunity to trial Access Arrangements.
8. Summer of Year 11: Examinations completed with Access Arrangements in place.

Evidence needed for Access Arrangements

Various pieces of Evidence are required to apply for an Access Arrangement from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), depending on the arrangement required. This could include:

- From 8 report from Access Arrangement Assessor/SENCo
- Previous Access Arrangements from other schools
- Subject teachers – evidence of ‘normal way of working’ & examples of work as appropriate
- Results of any testing
- Any letters / reports from outside agencies, specialists, hospitals or doctors
- Statement of Educational Need (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Once the Access Arrangement is granted, this evidence will be held on file and available for inspection, together with:
 - Permission from the awarding body for the arrangement
 - A data protection notice, signed by the student
 - Certificate of Qualification of appropriate Assessor(s)

If a student leaves Holme Grange (either post Year 11 or before), the relevant paperwork will be transferred to the next setting.

Medical Letters and Private Assessments

Letters from medical professionals will trigger an investigation but any request for an access arrangement also needs to be supported by evidence from within the school.

A growing number of parents are having their children assessed by private educational psychologists and submitting the reports to the SENCo as evidence that their child should be awarded extra time, or other Access Arrangements. Private educational psychologist reports cost a significant amount of money, putting those unable to obtain a private report due to financial circumstances at a disadvantage. We can only accept private reports as part of wider school evidence. External assessors are required to contact the SENCo before carrying out an assessment. The SENCo will provide the Assessor with any existing information about previous support and current difficulties. A student’s ‘normal way of working’ in the school is key, and Access Arrangements will not be awarded purely on the basis of a private report.

We may choose not to accept a private assessment report as evidence for an access arrangement, if it conflicts with evidence gathered at school and by our Access Arrangements Assessor. In this case, a written rationale for rejecting the report will be held on file and made available.

Temporary Arrangements

Temporary Arrangements may be required by students suffering from injury or illness.

Normally students with leg injuries can be accommodated in the main rooms near the doors for easy access and exit. Students with an illness or injury that has a direct impact on their ability to access the examination should obtain a letter from a GP, consultant or other professional giving a brief outline of their condition and the access arrangements that are deemed to be necessary.

In all cases where an access arrangement or a reasonable adjustment is needed, the school is entitled to expect reasonable notice to carry out its responsibilities. Where a need for access arrangements has been identified before an examination session, the SENCo / Access Arrangements Coordinator and Examinations Officer should be provided with medical evidence in reasonable time. Temporary arrangements last for one examination session. If the condition persists another letter may be required for the next session.

Evidence Held and Malpractice

Schools are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ regulations- usually during the summer examination season. The school is required to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. For this reason, the school will keep evidence of need, Form 8, letters from outside agencies, record of Access Arrangements used and any Statement of Special Needs or EHCP, together with a data protection notice signed by the student.

The consequences of malpractice can be severe. These may include disqualification of the student from one or more examinations.

Example for malpractice include:

- Students being granted Access Arrangements which are not their normal way of working
- Access Arrangements being granted when a student has no history of need or provision
- Access Arrangements being granted without sufficient evidence

Any questions about Access Arrangements should be addressed to the SENCo (Mrs Alison Millar) or the Access Arrangements Coordinator (Mrs Beverley Targett) at senco@holmegrange.org.

January 2021

BTA

Next review due September 2021