LACON CHILDE SCHOOL
PART OF FOUR STONES GATEWAY

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EXAMINATIONS POLICY – ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

DATE POLICY WAS APPROVED	16.12.2025
DATE POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED	Autumm 2026
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW	Exam Co-Ordinator

Key Definitions

All policies incorporate the following schools or organisations, unless specified otherwise, within Four Stones Gateway Trust ('the Trust'):

- Clee Hill Community Academy
- Cleobury Mortimer Primary School
- Haybridge High School and Sixth Form
- Haybridge Teaching School Hub
- Haybridge SCITT
- King Charles I School
- Lacon Childe School
- SHaW (Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Wolverhampton) Maths Hub
- Stottesdon CofE Primary School
- TDMS (The De Montfort School)
- Any other schools or organisations that may join the Trust from time to time and not listed above.

The terms Academy, School, Organisation and Trust are considered interchangeable in the context of all Trust policies.

Where appropriate, in this policy the term:

"CEO" includes the Chief Executive Officer

"CFOO" includes the Chief Financial Officer

"Trust Senior Leadership Team" includes Executive Headteachers, Headteachers, strategic operational leads and Teaching School/SCITT Directors.

"Headteacher" includes the appropriate School Headteacher.

"Trustees or Trust Board" are appointed Trustees who oversee the business of Four Stones Gateway Trust, agreeing the overarching strategic direction and ensuring robust governance.

"Local Academy Boards (LAB)" are appointed Governors at a local level associated with the Trust's Worcestershire Schools. LAB Governors act as advocates for their school's Safeguarding, SEND, Standards and Stakeholder engagement.

"Local Governing Bodies (LGB)" are appointed Governors at a local level associated with the Trust's Shropshire Schools. LGB Governors are advocates for their school's Safeguarding, SEND, Standards and Stakeholder engagement.

"Chair" responsible for leading the board and ensuring its effectiveness.

"Stakeholders" are any individuals or companies who are invested in the welfare and success of the Trust and/or School and its students, including staff members, students, parents, community members, LAB, LGB or Trust members, trade unions, local business leaders etc.

Examinations Policy – Access Arrangements

This document outlines the school policy on Access Arrangements in public examinations. These arrangements are put in place to ensure **all** students (including private candidates) have equal access to examinations. Students should not be disadvantaged by any learning, medical, physical, sensory or psychological difficulty they may experience.

The school must comply with the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications publication.
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make '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 disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. According to statutory guidance, disability means 'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people'*.

A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a ***substantial and long-term effect*** on performance in examinations may qualify for Access Arrangements. Access Arrangements should allow students with substantial long term special educational needs or short-term illnesses or injuries to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without affecting the integrity of an assessment or examination. Access Arrangements are not intended to help certain candidates, or give them an advantage, but to give them a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

*`Failure to comply with the JCQ regulations (permitting Access Arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence) has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result(s).* `

Access Arrangements encompass a wide range of provisions which include:
- being allowed to sit examinations in a smaller room
- supervised rest breaks
- use of colour overlays
- prompter
- extra time
- reader or e-reader pen
- scribe
- use of a word processor
- practical assistant

The Identification of Candidates who Might Need Access Arrangements:
There are several ways in which this might occur:
- Lacon Childe School acts on the information provided by students' previous schools to identify those who may need Access Arrangements. These students normally have a history of Special Educational Needs (SEN), these arrangements are clearly noted on the SEND register.
- A teacher may voice a concern about a student with difficulties that prevent them from completing tests or practice papers.
- A parent / carer may raise concerns about their child who is attempting but unable to complete work set in class and as homework.
- In the Summer term of Year 9 students who are on the SEN register who have been identified as having a need for Access Arrangements are tested by an external Learning Support Team (LST) Confirmation will be sent to parents by the end of the Autumn Term of Year 10 outlining the Access Arrangements that have been put in place.
- By the Spring Term of Year 10 a full up to date document is in place which includes a list of students who receive Access Arrangements in Public Exams.

External Learning Support Team Reports must be submitted in a timely manner giving the school the opportunity to concur and ensure there is a reasonable opportunity to put any suitable adjustments in place if required.

We will endeavour to take all evidence into consideration when making judgements; however, the decision must ultimately rest with the school who is required to evidence all judgements to an external verifier.

In all cases, there must be a genuine need for the arrangement. The school *must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties. 'Long term' means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.*

Students with special educational needs are not automatically eligible for Access Arrangements in public exams. For example, a student with a slight hearing impairment, a previous diagnosis of 'mild dyslexia' or a physical disability that does not affect performance in an examination may not meet the criteria for Access Arrangements.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the Centre.

However, when concerns are raised about a particular student, the SENCO or Specialist Teacher will gather information from all the student's teachers to see whether they have similar concerns. If the initial concerns are echoed by others, the student will be assessed for Access Arrangements.

The access arrangements put in place for an examination/assessment must reflect the support given to the student in the school (their "normal way of working") for example:

- in the classroom (where appropriate);
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- literacy support in lessons;
- literacy intervention strategies;
- in internal school tests/examinations;
- mock examinations

The Use of a Word Processor

We will only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained. Students' need for a word processor is considered by judging access to each subjects' exam specification. We will only allocate the use of a word processor to a student where it is their normal way of working within the school and it is appropriate to their needs. Further details can be found in the *'Examinations – word processor policy'.*

The Use of Rest Breaks

For the school to consider granting rest breaks to a candidate medical evidence will usually be required from a clinician outlining the individual need. Candidates will have their individual needs assessed by the centre and a plan for the number of rest breaks and the approximate duration of the rest breaks will be agreed prior to the examination series. The guidelines stipulate that it is not anticipated that a student will require a rest break in the first 10 minutes of the examination and no rest break will last longer than 30 minutes in duration. For further details on supervised rest breaks please refer to: Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications

Notification about Access Arrangements

Parents/carers are informed by letter when formal applications for Access Arrangements are approved.

Conduct and Procedures

The SENCO is responsible for the records about candidates' access arrangements and will present them for inspection. Students' records should include:

- if known, arrangements made for Key Stage 2 tests;
- comments and observations from teaching staff and support staff (i.e. Achievement Assistants);
- intervention strategies (e.g. individual education/learning plans and school action support plans) in place for the candidate;

- screening test results;
- use of baseline data;
- information about any differentiation in the classroom;
- normal way of working in the classroom (where appropriate);
- arrangements made for end of year internal school examinations/mock examinations.

External Assessors
Our SENCO is our specialist assessor.

Our specialist assessor has the correct qualifications to undertake the assessments required within our provision. We ensure we have seen the original certificates and we have taken copies of their qualification and insurance details to keep on file. A copy of their qualification is kept with the Access files and the SENCO of the school.

Where a parent/carer provides a privately commissioned assessment we explain that we are unable to accept this assessment as it has not been completed by our own assessor. Where we feel a student requires an assessment for exam dispensation we would commission our assessor.

Once an assessment is undertaken we ensure that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. This happens using the following process:

- SENCo builds a picture of need over time and normal ways of working
- SENCo arranges the assessment with the assessor to take place in the centre
- SENCo provides the assessor with background information which is also detailed in Section A of the Form 8
- The assessor undertakes the assessment with the student using assessments that are relevant to the student's needs
- The assessor provides a report using standardised scores
- The assessor and SENCo discuss the most appropriate adjustments according to the student's needs if an impairment has been detected which substantially affects their performance
- SENCo ensures the Form 8 is complete, including Section B in making recommendations, Section C with information from the assessment and is signed by the assessor
- The application is made online for access arrangements

The SENCO liaises with the Examinations Officer, departmental and associate staff to ensure sufficient rooms and staffing are organised for candidates with Access Arrangements when examinations or controlled assessments are taking place.

It must be noted that staffing and room constraints mean that candidates **cannot normally be seated alone** in a separate room.

The Examinations Officer monitors the need for renewal of Access Arrangements when necessary and liaises with the SENCO to ensure that reassessment is carried out for students with additional arrangements (reader, scribe etc.) that expire after their GCSEs. This is to ensure that candidates still meet the criteria for those additional arrangements.