



Thistly Meadow Primary School
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
2025-29

Thistly Meadow Primary School

Accessibility Plan

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act.

The Department for Education (DfE) has published advice on the Equality Act for schools, which explains on page 29 that schools must have an accessibility plan aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

This Accessibility Plan is drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting of progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

The plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given time frame and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

The plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

1. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a physical disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as the able-bodied pupils; this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
2. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;
3. Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

It is a requirement that the school's Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is an action plan, (Appendix 1) showing how the school will address priorities identified in the plan.

Definition of disability according to the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that "schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation".

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

School values

At Thistly Meadow we are committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education for **all** children which enables them to:

- Be happy, highly motivated lifelong learners
- Achieve their very best in all areas of the curriculum
- Develop enquiring minds, creativity and a spirit of curiosity
- Develop self-confidence, self-esteem, self-reliance and self-respect
- Respect themselves, others and the world in which they live
- Be able to work collaboratively and independently
- Extend themselves in mind, body and spirit
- Develop flexibility, adaptability, technological and problem-solving skills required for the modern world

We consider our teachers to be a teacher of *every* child and we have the highest aspirations and expectations of all children including those with special educational needs and disabilities. We aim to provide all children with a broad, balanced, academic and social curriculum, which is accessible and ensures they are included in all aspects of school life and feel equally valued and part of the school community.

Links to other documentation and policies

This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Equal opportunities policy
- Overarching Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policies
- Educational trips policy
- Emergency Evacuation plan
- Health & Safety Policy
- School Development Plan

The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the governing body. It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of this accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

The plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. Staff are made aware of the plan through meetings and relevant training sessions. Parents and pupils can access the plan by download from the school website or by request from the school office.

Review and monitoring

This plan is reviewed every three years by the Business committee. The review will be informed by feedback from staff, pupils and parents including questionnaires, discussions and guidance from supporting agencies.

Training

Training will be included in SENCO and staff meetings, INSET days, CPD planning in performance reviews and arranged to meet the needs of specific needs of children.

Supporting partnerships to help develop and implement the plan

The school SEND policy ensures that staff identify, assess and arrange suitable provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, working with the LA and specialist services including:

- Hearing Impaired Children's service
- Visual Impairment Advisory and Support Service
- Occupational Therapists and physiotherapists
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Birkett House Outreach Team
- Autism Specialist Teachers
- Education Psychologists
- NHS Paediatricians

School support

Facilities and support currently on offer at the school include:

- SENCO
- Designated areas and support for 1:1 or small-group work
- A range of learning styles including, visual, auditory and kinaesthetic
- Visualizers and interactive Smartboards are used in all classrooms.
- Speech & Language teaching assistant for S&L intervention, inc. social communication
- SEAL small group work (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- iPads/accessible technology
- Range of literacy and maths interventions
- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) interventions
- Access to Counsellor
- Bereavement support
- Advice and support from School Nurse Team
- Medical Room and Paediatric First Aiders
- Outdoor learning
- Transition arrangements, planning and support

The school's Special Educational Needs and Disability report (Local Offer) published on the school's website provides information for parents.

Complaints procedures

Any complaints regarding this plan or accessibility will be dealt with under the school's complaints policy.

Appendix 1
Thistly Meadow Primary School Access Improvement Plan 2024-27

1. Improving physical access

Priority	Owner	Action	Resources/Cost	Time	Success criteria
Maintain safe access round the interior and exterior of the school.	Premises Officer, SBM	Ensure all areas are safe and cleared to ensure children are safe and walkways and other areas are clear. Communication with parents through letters/newsletters/website/1:1 school staff Safety improved with parking restrictions to parents/children with a blue badge, Premises Officer to provide visible presence and challenge/monitor unauthorised parking. Continue to promote safe parking around the school in consultation with local PCSO.	E-communications to parents included in subscription budget.	Ongoing	Safe access throughout the school, no accidents or near misses in the car park. PCSO produced safe parking leaflet for parents.
Evaluate day and residential trips for each cohort.	Educational Visits Co-ordinator, teaching staff, office staff	Ensure all children are included in assessments for trips and appropriate support is put in place so children are able to access the trip to its full extent, with an individual risk assessment. Liaise with provider and parents. Liaise with Birkett House teaching staff.	Trips budget.	Ongoing.	Children with SEND are able to trips during their time at Thistly Meadow.
Ensure all children feel safe and involved at playtimes.	SENCO and playground duty staff, lunchtime supervisors	Playground Pals encourage children to join in games. Staff to report children who may not be involved at playtimes and liaise with SENCO and class teacher to develop inclusion strategies.	Training for Playground Pals and Lunchtime supervisors. Buddy system for new children.	Ongoing.	Children feel safe in school – evidence in survey results from children.
Improve the quality of provision for children with specific special needs.	HLTA and Premises Officer	Provide a tranquil space where children who suffer from over stimulation can receive supervision appropriate to their needs.	Calm room design and painting, premises budget.	Completed August 2024.	The school experience enhanced for children with specific special needs.

Priority	Owner	Action	Resources/Cost	Time	Success criteria
Appropriate use of specialised equipment to benefit individual pupils and staff	SENCO	Specialist equipment sourced as required for pupils with specific needs.	Included in SEND annual budget.	Ongoing.	All pupils are able to access the school and curriculum independently.
Improve access to school Paddock	Business Manager/ Premises Officer	Ensure access maintained to the paddock with regular maintenance.	Included in Grounds Maintenance budget. Grant applications.	Ongoing.	All pupils are able to access the school and the outdoor space.

2. Improving curriculum access

Priority	Owner	Action	Resources/Cost	Time	Success criteria
SEND and Medical register and information on children with additional needs to be updated	SENCO and SBM	SEND and Medical register and information on children with additional needs to be reviewed and updated.	SEND and Medical register on Arbor pupil database	April 2025	SEN and Medical needs will be up-to-date. Teachers and TAs will be aware of the needs of children in their class. Database to be checked with termly review prior to each school census.
Effective communication and engagement of parents	SENCO	Introductory meetings in the autumn term to teachers and SENDCo, followed by termly meeting with parents and carers. Termly review meetings with parents of children with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) EPs and Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).	Up to date IEPs EHCPs Rooms for meetings Diary dates		Increased engagement of parents
	SENCO	SEND newsletter termly	Arbor e-comms to parents, hard copy in lobby	Termly, ongoing	Increased engagement of parents

	SENCO	Regular parent events, coffee morning with a variety of topics, language, behaviour etc.	Rooms for meetings Diary dates	Termly, ongoing	Increased engagement of parents
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum	Head teacher/SENCO	Review staff training requirements. Audit Staff strengths/gaps in knowledge. Internal and external training from outside Agencies - Autism support, Speech and Language, Educational Psychologist and Occupational Therapist etc LSA training on adapting lessons for their 1:1 pupils. Staff meetings addressing inclusive practice and SEND procedures.	Various, according to workshops/resources. Within training budget.	Ongoing, Staff workshops and INSET days.	Staff confidence in adapting the curriculum is improved. Children's participation in the curriculum is more broad and effective.
Staff are trained to meet the medical needs of pupils as required.	SENCO, identified staff	Policy – Supporting pupils with Medical Needs includes process for assessment of needs and individual health plans to be formulated. First Aid policy and database of first aid trained staff reviewed every three years.	Included in training budget.	Ongoing.	Staff able to support and plan for children's medical needs, confident in dealing with conditions and treatment/medication required.
All out-of-school activities are planned to ensure, where reasonable, the participation of the whole range of pupils.	Head teacher, Education Visits Co-ordinator	Educational visits policy includes requirements for SEND children and checklist for planning, risk assessment and inclusion.	Included in SEND annual budget.	Ongoing.	All out-of-school activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements. Increase in access to all school activities for all disabled pupils.
Classrooms are organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils.	Teaching staff and SENCO	Ensure IEP and Provision Map assess reasonable adjustments required - equipment, support, environment and risk assess. Seek specialist advice.	Included in SEND annual budget.	Ongoing.	All pupils are able to access the school and curriculum independently.

All children are visible in the curriculum and resources.	Teaching staff and SENCO	Resources will reflect the needs of the pupils. Teachers will make a conscious effort to show a variety of people with additional needs in their classroom practice.	Included in Learning Resources annual budget.		Children will be able to identify with characters in stories, historical figures and illustrations. They will feel seen in the curriculum and resources.
Appropriate use of specialised equipment to benefit individual pupils and staff		iPads available to support children with difficulties using other materials. Sloping boards for children with physical disabilities. Coloured overlays or coloured paper for children with visual difficulties or dyslexia. Use of wobble cushions, weighted blankets pencil grips, fidget toys, chew toys etc. Software and subscriptions to support SEND accessing the curriculum.	Audit of equipment and needs Staff training SEND annual budget Subscriptions budget	Ongoing	SEND children have appropriate equipment and resources which supports their learning and removes barriers to learning.
Integration of special school unit (Birkett House)	All staff	Ensure curriculum timetable includes BH pupils, liaise with BH staff. Consider level access rooms, additional equipment, individual needs and staff required to support activities. Include and liaise with Birkett House teaching staff for pupils to participate in external activities i.e residential trips.	Included in school budgets.	Ongoing.	All pupils are able to access the school and curriculum with required support and adaptations.
Effective communications with nurseries and schools to provide a quality transition.	EYFS teachers and SENCO	To identify pupils who may need additional or a different provision for the September and mid-year intake. SENCO attends local network meetings to build relations with other local SENCOs.	Included in SEND annual budget.	Ongoing.	Transition for children from nurseries/pre-schools/childminders and other schools is smooth with adequate and appropriate resources and provision.

3. Improving written information

Priority	Owner	Action	Resources/Cost	Time	Success criteria
Availability of written material in alternative formats, braille, alternative language etc	SENCO, Office staff	<p>Ensure staff are aware of services available to provide alternative formats.</p> <p>Ensure office staff are able to use google translate to translate any written letters and newsletters and ensure parents know this is available.</p> <p>Ensure parents with visual impairments can access policies through either a braille service or enlargement of papers.</p> <p>Invite parents in who may need help completing forms.</p>	Included in SEND annual budget.	Ongoing.	Written information available in alternative formats and languages, on request. Support available for parents.
Signage is suitable for non-readers	Head teacher	<p>Ensure signage uses symbols where necessary and can be understood by all.</p> <p>For visually impaired individuals signage may be supplemented by Braille.</p>	Included in SEND annual budget.	Ongoing.	Pupils are able to navigate the school regardless of any disability.
Improve use of pictorial communication systems (Widgit)	SENCO and teaching staff	<p>Purchase Widgit to improve picture communication support.</p> <p>Use Widgit to make classroom resources (eg.word mats, visual timetables, social stories).</p> <p>SENCO to train staff on most effective ways to use Widgit.</p>	Staff training. Subscriptions budget.		All school staff aware of disabilities of children in their classes and resources and support.

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