

# **The Meadows Primary School**

## **Accessibility Policy**

### **Three-year period 2026-2029**

#### **Introduction**

The Equality Act 2010 replaced earlier disability discrimination legislation and provides the statutory framework for promoting equality, eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and visitors.

The Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

1. a duty not to treat disabled pupils less favourably, without justification, for a reason which relates to their disability;
2. a duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to pupils who are not disabled (reasonable adjustments may include the provision of auxiliary aids and services where appropriate, in line with the Equality Act 2010); and
3. a duty to plan strategically and make progress in increasing accessibility to schools' premises and to the curriculum, and in improving the ways in which written information provided to pupils who are not disabled is provided to disabled pupils.

In accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), the school has due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled persons; and
- foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled members of the school community.

This policy sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to improve access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services; and
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

The aims of the New Children's Act 2006, which is based on the principles on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, will also be incorporated. These are for "every child":

- to be healthy;
- to stay safe;
- to enjoy and achieve;
- to make a positive contribution; and
- to achieve economic well being.

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The Governing Body will address equality duties as they apply to the employment of people with disabilities where reasonable adjustments will apply. They will ensure that reasonable adjustments will be made to enable equality of opportunity to existing and prospective staff, in relation to:

- recruitment and selection;
- terms and conditions of employment;
- place and hours of work;
- access to work;
- induction and professional development; and
- full participation in the life of the school.

When it becomes necessary, this policy will form the basis of an accessibility plan.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. The action plan showing how the school will address the priorities identified follows.

#### **Definition of Disability**

Disability is defined as: ***A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities:***

- substantial – more than minor or trivial effect;
- long term – a year or more;
- day-to-day activities – living and learning.

The definition of disability has been amended from the 1995 Act in order to reduce the reliance on the 'medical model' for individuals with a mental illness which no longer has to be 'clinically well recognised'.

Included in the definition are impairments such as: sensory, dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorder, diabetes, speech and language, severe asthma and learning difficulties resulting from complex profiles of disability. Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties for social and domestic reasons are not included.

The definition includes people with progressive conditions including HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer.

#### **Section 1: Starting Points**

##### **1a The purpose and direction of this school's plan: vision and values**

The school is committed to, and has high ambitions for, all its students, responding to their diverse needs and expecting them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life.

The school will make every reasonable effort to ensure equal opportunities for staff, students and visitors, making realistic allowances for their individual circumstances.

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**1b The school's priorities for the development of information and data to support the school's accessibility plan**

These are to:

- utilise and expand the existing school databases to ensure all relevant information is recorded and accessible to appropriate staff and agencies inline with the school's retention policy;
- identify all staff and students' various disabilities and impairments including those who may not have a formal diagnosis but who require reasonable adjustments to access learning to ensure adequate and suitable provision can be identified;
- consult with students, parents and outside agencies to agree adequate provision for individual student's needs; and
- consult pre-school providers to ascertain advance information on the needs of future intake.

**1c The school's priorities with respect to consultation on the plan**

This plan will be published on the school website, for all staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils to view and make comment on.

**Section 2: The Main Priorities in the School's Plan**

- Information collected regarding disabilities for both pupils and staff is used to improve provision of services.
- Pupil achievement is monitored by disability; trends and patterns are acted upon.
- Disabled pupils are encouraged to participate in all areas of school life.
- Bullying and harassment of disabled pupils and staff is identified and acted upon.
- Disabilities are positively portrayed in school books, displays, discussions and class assemblies.
- The school raises awareness of disabilities.
- The school environment is as accessible as possible to all pupils, staff and visitors regardless of disability.
- Information is available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in an accessible format.
- This includes consideration of digital accessibility, online platforms and assistive technologies to ensure disabled users can access school information safely and independently.

**2a Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum**

When a disabled pupil is due to be admitted to school, we will ascertain that there is appropriate provision to cater for the child's needs, to include full access to the school curriculum if required, by providing:

- modified (if appropriate) access to the curriculum;
- access to extra-curricular activities;
- using specialist agencies (e.g. speech, Teacher of Deaf, LSA etc) to investigate and extend opportunities; and
- accessing appropriate training for Teaching Assistants.

**2b Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services**

This extends from 2a above, that when a disabled pupil is due to be admitted to school we will look at the physical environment to ensure it meets the pupil's needs, this may include:

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- provision of wheelchairs;
- access to areas of the school by wheelchairs; routes, temporary ramps;
- provision of appropriate furniture for those with physical disabilities;
- appropriate and adequate signage;
- toilets;
- parking; and
- sound deadening materials (to aid pupils with hearing impairment).

**2c Provide appropriate provision of information for disabled pupils**

The school will ensure that all relevant school information is provided for disabled pupils and their parents/carers in a format appropriate to their needs.

**Section 3: Implementation**

**3a Management, coordination and implementation of the plan**

The leadership team will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and for raising awareness of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with the school population. The designated lead person will be the Headteacher.

The plan will be linked to the School Development Plan to provide budget and staffing provision as needed.

Training for teachers on adapting the curriculum is ongoing. Specific training on relevant disabilities will be undertaken as required.

**3b Availability of the policy and related action plan**

The plan will be available, via the school website, to anyone on request and its existence will be made known to all parents via the school's website.

The policy will be reviewed every three years, or amended sooner, if required. It should be read in conjunction with the relevant Behaviour, Health and Safety, Risk Assessment, Inclusion, SEND and Equalities Policies as well as any other relevant policies.

Progress against the Accessibility Plan will be monitored by the leadership team and governing body. Impact is evaluated through pupil outcomes, participation in school life, stakeholder feedback and ongoing review of reasonable adjustments.