

POLICY FOR DEVELOPING AND REVIEWING OUR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

School name:

3-year period covered by the policy: 2024/2025 to 2026/27

Date agreed by governing body: January 2025

Policy to be reviewed: 1.09.2027

Introduction

At Thornhill Primary we believe in equality and inclusion for all. It is our intention to remove, as far as we can, those barriers which make it hard for children and adults with a disability to take part in the day-to-day life of our school and benefit from the educational experiences and services we provide.

Everyone should have equality of access to facilities and high-quality education. With this in mind, we put accessibility for all at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to providing a fully accessible school which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents, carers and other visitors. We recognise the importance of a review and planning procedure associated with continuous development and improvement.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'*

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEND.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.
- Schools are allowed to treat disabled children / young people more favourably than non-disabled children / young people, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with children / young people without disabilities
- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.

The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

School governing bodies and proprietors must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

The Responsible Body

The responsible body (in maintained schools this is the governing body) must prepare—

- an accessibility plan
- further such plans at such times as may be prescribed

An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period—

- increasing the extent to which disabled children can participate in the school's curriculum;
- promoting the understanding of disability and working to show positive models of people with a disability
- continually reviewing the physical environment of the school, the way we plan, prepare and deliver the Thornhill curriculum and the information we provide so that we can improve the access to both individuals and groups; and
- improving the delivery to disabled children —
 - (i) within a reasonable time, and
 - (ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, of information which is provided in writing for children / young people who are not disabled.
- An accessibility plan must be in writing.
- During the period to which the plan relates, the responsible body must keep its accessibility plan under review and, if necessary, revise it.
- It is the duty of the responsible body to implement its accessibility plan.

The Statutory Policies for Schools (Sept 2014) states that it is a requirement that maintained schools must review their accessibility plan every three years. It also states that approval should be by the governing body however, they are free to delegate the approval right to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the head teacher.

Other relevant legislation, regulations & guidance;

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

Children & Families Act (2014)

The Special Educational Needs & Disability Regulations (2014)

The SEND Code of Practice (revised April 2015)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)

Disability Discrimination Order (2006)

The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 & 3

Relevant School Policies & Documentation

- Thornhill Curriculum statement
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Health & Safety (including off-site safety)
- Special Educational Needs Policy and the school’s SEND Information Report.
- Behaviour Policy
- School Development Plan

The School’s Context

We are a maintained school for children who age from 3 years to 11 years. We serve an area of poor socio- economic background. Our community suffers high level of deprivation in relation to unemployment and it is identified as an area of high incidents of drug- related behaviour and criminal activity. Currently, the figure for children who have English as Additional Language lies at 52%. We are proud to have children with 36 different languages in school.

The School’s Aims

At Thornhill Primary we believe in equality and inclusion for all. Everyone should have equality of access to facilities and high quality education. With this in mind, we put accessibility for all at the heart of everything we do.

We are committed to providing a fully accessible school which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents, carers and other visitors. We will challenge negative attitudes about disability and accessibility in our aim to develop a culture of awareness and inclusion.

Formulating our Accessibility Plan

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified by a planning group who consisted of:

- **Chair of Governors**
- **Headteacher**
- **SENCO**

In addition to this we will;

- continually review the environment of the school, the way we plan, prepare and deliver the curriculum and the information we provide so that we can improve the access for both individuals and groups;
- work to provide an atmosphere where all children feel safe and valued;
- promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with a disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.
- examine those parts of our active and extra-curricular activities which may have limited access for children with a disability and see if it is possible to provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.

Accessing the School's Accessibility Plan

The plan will be made available via the school [website](#) and a paper copy on request.

Access Planning Template for Period 2024/25 – 2026/27

Lead member of staff: Ela Barnes (HT)

Victoria Davies (DHT),

Sophie Cardwell (SENDCo)

Date: 8th January 2025

Date of Review: September 2027

Name of Reviewer: Headteacher

The main priorities in our access plan focus on:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled children can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled children and adults can take advantage of the facilities, education and associated services.
- Improving the accessibility of information that is provided in writing

Thornhill Primary School will monitor the implementation of the plan and keep under review the access needs of the school.

Aim 1: To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum. Our key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability, medical condition or other access needs.

Category	Target	Action	Intended Outcome	Timeframe			Lead	Review
				2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027		
Participation and engagement	All staff prepared for new cohort of pupils	FS2 staff to organise meetings and visits to EY settings once intake list is	Children transition smoothly into new class with staff confidently	√	x	x	SENDCo Class Teachers	

in the curriculum		released. FS staff to arrange 'stay and play' as well as meetings with the SENDCo to ensure the school fully understand and meet children's needs. Receiving teacher to liaise with previous teacher to get up-to-date information-specific time allocated during summer term. SEND register Class profiles Pupil profiles / SEND plans/ EHCPs, care plans If necessary, seek further advice and support from specialists to ensure provision is appropriate. Any resources or intervention programmes transferred to the new teacher • Enhanced transition package for Y6-Y7 including meetings with all KS3 settings, invite representatives from KS3 to review meetings. Support parents with communication, meetings, visits to new schools	meeting their needs.					
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		• Home visits supports were required eg children previously home educated Make reasonable adjustments and adaptations to teaching and learning plans.						
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	High quality teaching is consistent throughout school.	Teachers use a range of adaptive teaching approaches to ensure all pupils are adequately supported.	All pupils achieve best learning outcomes.	√	X	X	Class Teachers	
	Children with disabilities can access the full curriculum offer including extra-curricular activities and external visits.	Work with families and specialists to ensure provision is appropriate and reasonable adjustments are in place. Complete individual risk assessments for visits and extra-curricular activities using the information to make reasonable adjustments. If appropriate use of alternative learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.	Children are fully included in school life impacting on well-being, progress and attainment.	√	X	X	Class Teachers and subject leads including Educational Visits Coordinator	

Aim 2: To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupil's families or professionals with a disability, medical condition or other access needs can access education and associated services

Category	Target	Action	Intended Outcome	Timeframe			Lead	Review
				2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027		
External Areas	Provision of car parking for Blue Badge holders	Marked out disabled persons' parking space and provide signage.	School more accessible for those with mobility issues.	√	X	x	Headteacher	
Entrances and Exits	Improve the ingress and egress around school.	The building is adapted to the needs of pupils as required. This includes : ramps, lifts, disabled toilets and changing facilities, markings on the stairs for visually impaired pupils.	School buildings will be more accessible for all including those with a vision impairment, physical disability and sensory processing needs.	√	X	X	SENDCO and Caretaker	
Classrooms and other learning spaces	Reduce the risk of sensory overload for pupils with sensory processing needs.	Complete sensory audits of learning spaces and make reasonable adjustments based on pupil cohorts.	Improved emotional regulation of children.	√	X	x	SENDCO and specialist teacher or therapist.	

Aim 3: Improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and other members of the school community

Category	Target	Action	Intended Outcome	Timeframe			Lead	Review
				2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027		
Communication	Provide written communication in	Consider additional needs of pupils, staff, families and	Written information is available in a format that is	√	X	x	Admin Team/SLT	

	alternative formats.	visitors and provide alternative formats such as braille, symbol supported text, translated texts etc. Exam access arrangements are in place for those pupils requiring a reader or modified test papers.	accessible to the reader.					
Communication	Improve verbal communication for those with a hearing impairment.	Provide a BSL interpreter and/or hearing assistance equipment as appropriate. Staff to complete deaf friendly schools training. Work with families and Teachers of the Deaf on the best ways to communicate with a child with a significant hearing loss.	Communication with someone who is deaf or hearing impaired is in their preferred communication style.	√	X	x		