



FAIRFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2024 – 2027

Approved by ¹	
Name:	Chris Steele
Position:	Headteacher
Signed:	C.Steele
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¹ The Governing Body are free to delegate approval of this document to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head Teacher

² This document should be reviewed every 3 years

REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	June 2024

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1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in several ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However, the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition.
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities are under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability, if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

2. Definition of disability

Under the Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment,
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).
- 'Normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

It should be noted that this definition is *not just regarding physical difficulties* but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition, there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled, but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

3. Reasonable adjustments

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is, then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

The Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable. It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities are required to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a

statement of SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

Under the Equality Act we do not have a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our accessibility planning.

4. Public sector equality duty (PSED)

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (section 149 of the Equality Act) came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty applies to public bodies (including schools) and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.

The PSED is supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties require public bodies to

- publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty at least annually; and
- set and publish measurable equality objectives, at least every four years.

All information must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access it and the published information must show that the public body had due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

These are generally described as the three aims of the Equality Duty. Our accessibility plan has been developed to help us to effectively meet our obligations under the PSED and ensure that users of our service who have a disability are not disadvantaged when accessing our curriculum, physical environment or the information which we provide.

5. Aims of the accessibility plan

We strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

In Fairfield Primary School, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum.
- Increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of schools/settings to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, **begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people** through specific targets. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Plan will be revisited prior to the end

of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

6. Key objectives

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework ([Click here to access](#)) which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - Setting suitable learning challenges.
 - Responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs.
 - Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

7. Contextual information (at time of writing)

Fairfield Primary School is a large, two-form entry primary school situated in Cockermouth, Cumbria and is part of the Learning for Life Trust. The number on roll is currently 452 pupils. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals (FSM) is approx. 8%, well below the national average.

14% of our pupils have special educational needs; there is a mix of gender. We have several vulnerable groups including those with special educational, learning and medical needs.

A high percentage of our pupils enter the school from our nursery, private nurseries or other settings other than the home. The remainder enter school direct from home at reception age. As a result, attainment and maturity is wide-ranging. To address this inequality, we have worked closely with pre-school settings building in regular visits by members of our staff. In the term prior to starting school in September, all children who had applied to the school for a place were offered visits to the school and stay and play sessions. This allowed them to settle into the school environment and allowed the EYFS staff to get to know the pupils, to make initial assessments and form relationships prior to the start of the new school year.

Our catchment area comprises primarily of the town of Cockermouth (although some children travel from neighbouring villages to be educated at Fairfield Primary School). There are sufficient amenities available locally. The immediate area is relatively prosperous, with many of our parents/guardians working in the education, nuclear and medical sectors. There are a small number of ethnic minority pupils. A percentage of our pupils come from outside our official catchment area. They are attracted to our school because of its reputation, extended facilities, enriched curriculum and opportunities. We have a Wraparound care facility which operates from 7.30am each morning and the same provision is available after-school operating until 6.00pm each evening. Over an average week, over 35% of the pupils use this popular facility.

When we are aware of pupils who are joining the school with disabilities, we arrange to meet both the pupil and the parents and involve professionals from the Local Authority and the Health Authority to ensure that any adjustments required to provision and/or the school building are made in readiness for the pupil starting school. The school has fully ramped access in all main outdoor areas and has lifts to upper floors for wheelchair users. Our reception area is accessible to disabled people. We have two access toilets on site, which also contain an adjustable changing bed for use by those pupils who need personal care whilst at school.

4% of our pupils have English as an additional language.

Information for parents and others is provided in written and verbal form. All information is offered in alternative formats on request.

8. Development of the plan

8.1 Information from pupil data and school audit

- The school has identified that we have, at the time of writing, **18** no. of students regarded as having a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act. These currently include students under the categories of hearing impaired, physical mobility problems and Autism.
- Our annual development plan considers the needs of our diverse student population as well as the needs of its wider community.

In order to ensure that our data is up to date and accurate we will:

- liaise with the Local Authority so as to identify and therefore plan a response to students with a disability well before they arrive;
- improve the information dissemination from our Learning Support facility;
- implement a system that allows parents to inform us if they themselves have a disability;
- identify early on in their school career any obstacles to the effective learning of disabled students;
- use all available data to inform the planning of individual student learning patterns;
- use information supplied via previous LA Asset Management/Accessibility Audits to assist us to develop an action plan to reduce obstacles for the school community.

9. Scope of the plan

9.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- To investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled students to access can be improved;
- To further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled students;
- To investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled students to learn including liaison with the LA Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Statementing and Provision Team.

We plan to increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are 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 off-site visits. It also covers the provision of specialist **aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

We aim to ensure fair and equal access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. This commitment includes all elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

We regularly review access to the curriculum for all disabled pupils although many adjustments to access will be dependent on individual needs and may be provided through the SEND framework. The accessibility strategies and plans will help to ensure that schools/settings are planning and preparing to respond to the particular needs of individual pupils.

Moving forwards, we plan to:

- consider of whole-school ways of increasing participation in activities such as after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities, as well as off-site visits, particularly for difficult-to-include pupil groups, such as those with physical or behavioural challenges;
- identify how classroom support arrangements, such as deployment of teaching assistants, provision of ICT, contribute to, and enhance learning opportunities;

- identify staff training needs in order to effectively meet the diverse abilities and disabilities of all pupils, including prospective pupils who may require manual handling, signing, personal hygiene support etc. has been identified and supported;

9.2 Improving the school's physical environment to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

- In consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the site.
- Improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas.
- Investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is required regardless of whether the school has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

With buildings dating back to 1884, the site requires careful consideration for those requiring additional access needs. We regularly review the site through our half termly review meetings and consider a wide range of environmental factors associated with potential site users.

As well as the site, we regularly consider the provision of a special pieces of equipment, auxiliary aids or extra assistance through the SEND framework.

9.3 Improving delivery of information that is provided in writing for disabled pupils

We will strive to:

- produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired students;
- investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site.

The school plans to improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information will be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

9.4 Financial planning and control

The Head teacher with Senior Management Team, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the School Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process. The objective is that over time School Accessibility Plan actions will be integrated into the School Development Plan.

We will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

10. Implementation

10.1 Management, coordination and implementation

Our Leadership Team will undertake a disability audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents (refer to Section 7.3).

As a result of the audit, we shall:

- produce action plans, with definite time scales for the implementation of the actions implicit in the plan;

- plan to provides workshops so staff can understand and buy into the Accessibility Plan and not see it as a bolt on;
- present the plan to the governing body for their approval;
- modify the plan based on the views of stakeholders;
- review the plan and the associated action plans to see if milestones are being met. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary every three years.

10.2 Monitoring

We recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

We monitor accessibility by reviewing:

- changes in physical accessibility of school buildings and the impact they have had;
- questionnaires, responses from stakeholders e.g. parents, pupils and staff, indicate increased confidence in the school's/setting's ability to promote access to educational opportunities for pupils with disabilities;
- improved levels of confidence in staff in reducing the obstacles to success for pupils with additional needs;
- recorded evidence that increased numbers of pupils with disabilities are actively participating in all areas of the school;
- recorded evidence that fewer pupils are being excluded from school opportunities as their needs are being more effectively addressed through the application of strategies and procedures;
- increased levels of achievement for pupils with disabilities;
- pupil responses; verbally, pictorially and written that indicate that they feel themselves to be included;
- Ofsted inspections that identify higher levels of educational inclusion.

10.3 The role of the LA in increasing accessibility

The Local authority support the school in achieving our successful implementation our accessibility plan (where relevant) to support the needs of pupils. This includes:

- providing training and awareness opportunities on issues regarding inclusion to staff, governors and parents and how this has been used in school to promote inclusion e.g. uptake of Dyslexia Friendly status, Inclusion Quality Mark, attendance on courses, use and adaptation of LA provided information, etc.;
- promoted collaboration through the provision of information aimed at sharing good practice;
- encouraged liaison between special and mainstream schools to share expertise and pupil placement;
- ensured that schools/settings are aware of support services that provide advice to schools/settings and staff;
- provided specialist help to identify ways forward in increasing the inclusion of all pupils;

10.4 Accessing the school's plan

The school's accessibility plan and policy is available through:

- presentation in a section on the school website open to all visitors to the site;
- available in paper format by request at the school office. This can be presented in accessible formats by request.

The school will achieve successful implementation of the accessibility plan with continued support in the areas of:

- providing training and awareness opportunities to staff, Governors and parents/carers on issues regarding equality and inclusion;
- providing targeted training for particular groups of pupils/staff;
- promoting collaboration through the provision of information and the sharing of good practice;

- encouraging liaison between other local schools/settings including special schools;
- seeking support/advice from outside the school, from services, other agencies and organisations;
- ensuring that the school is aware of all support services that provide advice to schools/settings and staff.

11. Related policies

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

- Curriculum details
- Equality Policy, Action Plan and Objectives
- Staff Training and Development Plan
- Governor Development Plan
- Health & Safety Policy and procedures
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy, Local Offer Response and Information Report
- Off-Site Visits Procedures
- School Behaviour Policy & procedures
- School Development Plan
- Complaints Procedure

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FAIRFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024 – 2027

IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement	Date Complete
Training for staff in the identification of and teaching children with ASD and other specific learning difficulties.	All staff attend appropriate training.	All staff are familiar with the criteria for identifying specific needs and how best to support these children in the classroom.	Autumn 2024	Children with ASD are successfully included in all aspects of school life.	
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils.	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases.	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils.	Spring 2025	Increase in access to the Curriculum	
Training for Awareness Raising of Disability Issues.	Provide training for governors, staff, pupils and parents. Discuss perception of issues with staff to determine the current status of school.	Whole school community aware of issues relating to Access.	Autumn 2025	Community will benefit by a more inclusive school and social environment	
Review TA deployment.	In review meetings with teaching assistants establish when they are available to support children each day that may be different to their current working hours.	Adult support is available during key times that individual children may need support i.e. lunchtimes, PE lessons, extra-curricular activities.	Reviewed Annually	Children who need individual adult support to participate in some activities have access to this support.	
All out-of-school and extra-curricular activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils.	Review all out-of-school and extra-curricular provision to ensure compliance with legislation.	All out-of-school and extra-curricular activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements.	Summer 2025	Increase in access to all school activities for all disabled pupils	
Development of a specific sensory area to enhance provision for pupils with additional sensory need.	Design and implement sensory room.	A dedicated sensory space for pupils with additional sensory need to engage with their bespoke curriculum in a more effective manner.	Summer 2026	Increase effective access to curriculum for pupils with additional need.	

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ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024 – 2027						
IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT						
No	Item	Activity	Timescale	Cost £	Responsibility	Date Complete
1	Safe pedestrian access to school site (including for visually impaired people).	Improved lighting in low light areas. Improved under-foot surfaces on KS2 site.	Spring 2025	£25,000	CS	
2	Staircases	Audit all staircases to ensure all have colour-contrasted stair nosings and handrails to both sides of staircases	Autumn 2025	-	CS	
3	Fire and emergency evacuation procedures to be in place for those with additional needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular training for staff in the use of evac procedures. ▪ Need to regularly review the escape strategy, management controls and staff training needed as appropriate. ▪ PEEPs to be developed for all pupils with additional needs including those using wheelchairs, those with mobility difficulties and hearing/visual impairments. ▪ General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs) to include any visitors with additional needs. ▪ Sign to be displayed at reception informing visitors that a scheme of assisted evacuation can be offered. 	Ongoing	-	H&S Team	
4	Ensure whole site is accessible for wheelchair users.	Install appropriate access to lower building and KS2 building to ensure access for wheelchair users. Install access lifts in KS2 to ensure wheelchair users can access all areas of KS2. Audit toilet areas to ensure an accessible toilet is available in all building areas	Autumn 2025	£50,000	CS	

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IMPROVING ACCESS TO WRITTEN INFORMATION

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement	Date Complete
Availability of written material in alternative formats.	The school will make itself aware of the services available through the LA for converting written information into alternative formats.	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes.	Ongoing	Delivery of information to disabled pupils improved.	
Survey parents/carers as to the quality of communication to seek their opinions as to how to improve.	Send out survey to parents regarding quality of communication.	School is more aware of the opinions of parents and acts on this.	Spring 2025	Parental opinion is surveyed and action taken appropriately.	
Raise the awareness of adults working at and for the school on the importance of good communications systems.	Arrange training courses.	Awareness of target group raised.	Spring 2025	School is more effective in meeting the needs of pupils.	
Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats.	Review all current school publications and promote the availability in different formats for those that require it.	All school information available for all.	Spring 2026	Delivery of school information to parents and the local community improved.	