Title and Description	Accessibility Plan 2026-2029

Date of last review	October 2026
Approved by	Standards Committee
To be reviewed by	Standards Committee
Responsibility	Deputy Head & SENDCO
Review period	Three yearly
Date of next review	October 2029

Accessibility Plan 2026 - 2029

Framwellgate School Durham: Ethos and Values Statement

Like all good schools, we're driven by our values above all else. We define these as:

Excellence - Everyone in our community will know and experience success

The most for those that need the most - We will meet the needs of all our learners

Known and valued - Everyone here will be celebrated for who they are and what they do

Collective endeavour - We will achieve success together

Joy - Everyone will know and create joy

These five values determine all that we do, and every part of the school flows from them. They set the direction and act as a compass to ensure we continue to grow and develop as a school in the way that we feel best supports all our students.

1.0 Introduction

The aims of this accessibility plan are to ensure that Framwellgate School Durham has high aspirations for all of its students including those with disabilities. The school will aim to provide an environment for them to participate and achieve in every aspect of the school life. The school also intends to increase accessibility for staff and members of the public with disabilities. This Accessibility Plan links with our Single Equality Scheme and our Policy on Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion.

We are committed to providing an environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, emotional or cultural needs. We also endeavour to challenge attitudes about disability by developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

As part of our duty we will examine the data we hold on our current students to identify students with disabilities who attend the school. We will also take into consideration any information that is made available about future students. For example, from either Primary schools or from the parents/carers of a prospective student with a disability that is likely to attend the school. Gathering such information is done as part of our routine transfer and induction processes.

Schools' white paper 2026 organises support into tiers: Targeted (evidence-based support within mainstream school), Targeted Plus (support with additional input from educational, health and care professionals via 'Experts at Hand' service and Specialist (for those children with the most complex needs through EHC plans).

In order to ensure that we take into consideration a wide range of views regarding accessibility issues in the school we will have due regard for the views of the staff, the students, parents/carers and other stakeholders. Parents/carers can express views at regular opportunities. Student engagement will be promoted.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. The Act ensures that Schools and Local authorities have to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils, in accordance with relevant health and safety standards.

Definition of disability according to the Equality Act 2010: A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on the ability to do normal daily activities. This includes; ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Cancer, Cerebral palsy, Cystic fibrosis, Diabetes, diagnosed eating disorders, Downs' syndrome, Dyslexia, Epilepsy, Facial disfigurement, Gross obesity, Hearing or visual impairment, HIV, Hydrocephalus, Incontinence, Learning difficulties, Mental health issues, Muscular dystrophy, Multiple sclerosis, Severe asthma, Sickle cell anaemia. If a person has been disabled in the past they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

2.0 Aims

The school's plan aims to clarify the school's commitment to improving accessibility. The plan also aims to promote a consistent approach to dealing with issues associated with improving accessibility, such as:

The overarching objective of this plan is to:
Develop an inclusive culture in which accessibility is considered in all aspects of school improvement planning, curriculum design, behaviour systems, enrichment provision and building development.

- Improving awareness of equality and inclusion
- Improving access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary
- Increasing access to the curriculum for students with a disability and expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that students with a disability are as equally prepared for life as the able-bodied students. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school (e.g. participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits). It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, where possible, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum
- Ensuring that students with disabilities are not treated any less favourably than other students and that reasonable adjustments are made to remove barriers to participation and achievement.

3.0 Implementation

The plan may involve issues such as increasing access to the curriculum, improving the physical environment, and/or providing information in different formats.

The Headteacher and Chief Operating Officer (COO), together with the Directors, will review the financial implications of the Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process.

The COO has responsibility for the co-ordination of the physical, financial and information access aspects of this plan. The SENDCo has the responsibility for the co-ordination of any aspects of the Accessibility Plan that relates to students with SEND. The COO will liaise with the SENDCo to recommend any physical improvements needed to the school building and grounds. The SENDCo will consider any training costs needed and will liaise with the member of SLT responsible for CPD.

4.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

This Plan will be reviewed in line with the annual cycle of school improvement planning. Established quality assurance and self-evaluation processes will be used to monitor the impact of the actions planned.

5.0 Accessibility Action Plan.

1. To improve the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum and our extra-curricular offer.

At Framwellgate School Durham a key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for students, and prospective students, with a disability.

Targets/Actions	Strategies	Timescale	Success Criteria
Continue to use the schools' assessment system to monitor the attainment and progress of SEND students and to help identify those working below the expected level to target appropriate interventions.	• SLT/SENDCo/Data manager to evaluate the data after each progress check and identify concerns; ensuring that CL are fully aware of the progress of SEND learners and target interventions to support them. • Director of safeguarding to be involved in transfers ensuring on-going support for any students with significant safeguarding issues.	From Sept 2026 ongoing From Sept 2026 ongoing	• Improved outcomes/progress for SEND learners. • Implementation of clear processes and procedures to safeguard these students
Introduction of NGRT assessments for all students to identify the current reading ages for all students; to help identify where this may be a barrier to accessing curriculum materials. Reading age/score data available to staff to inform their planning via the reading dashboard.	• All students to be assessed in Sept 26 and then re-test some students to identify progress/any concerns which emerge following interventions. • Reading ages to be shared with teachers on Class Charts and through the reading dashboard. Staff training to help teachers identify appropriate strategies and adjustments to make to best support these students.	Sept 2026 and annually for new cohorts Oct 2026 (repeated annually)	• Reading age data available for all students. Interventions can then be targeted appropriately. • Teachers have an awareness of student reading ages and promote opportunities in lessons to support reading development.
As our school profile is changing with significantly increased numbers of learners with more complex needs, ensure staff are trained	• SENDCo to have regular slot in staff briefing (weekly) and CPD (half termly) to update staff on student needs, reasonable adjustments and		• Monitoring of teaching reflects inclusive practices.

effectively with relevant updates/resources.	ensuring that the SEND lens is applied to all the work we do re: T&L. • Implement the mandatory SEND & inclusion training for all staff (Ambition Institute) • Use of the QA processes of departmental reviews to monitor provision for SEND students. SENDCo to carry out lesson drop-ins for specific students throughout the review. • Engage with external experts as necessary (e.g. visual & hearing impairment and ICT solutions) • Continue to make effective use of the AV1 robot tool to help provide the full lesson entitlement/experience for those students who's social, emotional needs mean they find accessing classrooms extremely challenging (anxiety/ASD) with the aim of re-integrating students back into lessons. • Personal Development programme to help promote student (and staff) understanding of disability through personal development lessons, assembly programme • Any disability related prejudice-driven incidents are logged centrally on C-POMS and responded to by nominated member of SLT.	From Sept 2026 From Sept 2027 Ongoing from Sept 2026 March 2024	• Profile of SEND learners is increased and staff are competent in dealing with individual needs. All staff (not just teaching staff) will be sufficiently trained and confident in supporting the needs of SEND pupils. Maintain staff CPD records for compliance. (100% completion) • Students who would otherwise be unable to access the full lesson and quality teaching, will now be able to. Improved attendance from extremely anxious students.

			• Increased understanding of diversity and development of tolerance. • Increased compassion and empathy from our student community towards each other.
Ensure curriculum is accessible to all including those with a physical disability	• Where a temporary (unexpected) physical disability means a student is unable to access upstairs classrooms, immediate room changes put into place to ensure they can access all of their lessons. • Additional training for SEND Support team where need arises e.g. EpiPen training, intimate care	Ongoing Ongoing	• Full access to the appropriate curriculum. • Staff confident in teaching students with physical disabilities including any who are wheelchair bound.
Access arrangements for examinations to meet individuals' needs. The identification, communicating to staff and monitoring of this to be maintained across the year to ensure that appropriate support is in place for all learners with needs/disabilities.	Assessment systems set up to identify all issues that may become a need for special consideration in exams. All students from Y9 upwards screened to identify those who may require extra time in exams. Staff training to ensure staff know what they should be looking out for and the referral processes when they identify a possible need and how to collect/share the necessary evidence for concessions. Ensure learners are aware of their entitlements and how best to use this (e.g. 25% extra time, rest breaks)	Ongoing	• All learners gain the access arrangements they are entitled to and this is reflected in 'normal' working practice and assessments as well as external exams. • Resources in place, e.g. tables accessible for wheelchair access for use in exams.
Ensure appropriate mental health support for SEND and other learners.	Staff training on dealing with student anxiety	As is appropriate Ongoing	Ongoing cases reviewed regularly.

	Regular meetings between SENDCo and pastoral team to review present cases. Continue to embed events/processes within our school calendar which support the mental health of our young people: -YAM team lead annual workshops (yr 9) -Mental Health Champions (Supported by the role of Emotional Wellbeing Worker)		Timely intervention/support in place.
Classrooms are optimally organised and appropriate additional equipment is provided to promote the participation and independence of all students and adults.	• Classrooms and other teaching spaces include furniture and specialist equipment to support the learning process in individual classes according to the needs identified. • Student voice is considered in identifying need. • SENDCo liaises with parents/carers and outside agencies to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach to meeting the students' needs.	Ongoing Ongoing and at key transition points Ongoing- SEND reviews	• All classrooms and teaching spaces are appropriate to the needs of students with SEND and of disabled staff (within the constraints of the building/campus*).
All educational visits to be accessible to all.	Information & guidance are available to staff on ensuring trips are accessible to all and measures put in place to ensure this is the case. Ensure each new venue is assessed and risk-assessment undertaken with previewing visit if appropriate (in line with trip protocols). Additional admin support put in place to help facilitate the process of visit-planning.	As required	All students in the school able to access the educational visits and take part in a range of extra-curricula activities on and off-site. (See Evolve database)
Prepare for implementing digital Individual Support Plans (ISP's) by 2028/29	• Staff training on creating and maintaining digital ISPs • Update current SEND monitoring systems to align with ISP requirements • Plan for the transition from our current assessment systems to ISP's.	Implementation Sept 29' Planning for the transition Sept 27-28	Successful establishment of digital Individual Support Plans for every child with SEND. These will capture the child's barriers to learning, day-to-day provision, reasonable adjustments and intended outcomes. They will be reviewed annually, involving parents/carers in

			discussions. Parents engaged in reviews.
To develop and publish our inclusion strategy	• The inclusion strategy will include detail of how resources are deployed to benefit SEND pupils. • Publish on website • Review Inclusion strategy and provision against the National Inclusion Standards.	Autumn term 26/27	Inclusion strategy shared and accessible to all stakeholders. This will align with the National Inclusion Standards (once published- expected by 2028)
Plan for an inclusion base	• Re-shape the Achievement Centre as an Inclusion base and consider the physical adaptations that may be needed	Timeline unclear but consideration as we move into new build (Sept 27')	
Plan for accessing the 'Experts at Hand' service	• Plan for the necessary adaptations to current systems. • Identify pupils who would benefit from specialist input • Attend training/networks to learn more how this will look and how best to access the support. • Establish referral processes • Coordinate with LA and integrated care boards.	Operational by 2028/29	SENDCo and inclusion team know how best to access this support for students and make effective use of this. Pupils will receive timely specialist support and in turn improved outcomes for targeted plus students.
Extra-curricula offer to be reviewed against the Enrichment framework (once published)	• Once the Enrichment framework has been published, use the data we have to review our current offer and consider the involvement of SEND students. • Assess whether there needs to be further changes made to remove financial barriers or physical barriers for some clubs/activities. • Monitor disabled students engagement in enrichment.	Once Enrichment Framework has been published	Engagement of SEND students in extra-curricula/enrichment is proportionate. Increased engagement as barriers removed.
Monitor attendance of disabled and SEND learners, identifying barriers and implementing targeted support where attendance	• Use attendance tracking systems to identify the attendance of this group of students. • Liaise with parents/carers to support attendance.	Ongoing	Attendance figures for this group of learners are in line with school expectations.

falls below expected levels.			

**It is important to recognise the fact that whilst this accessibility plan runs from 2026-2029, we will be moving into the new school building in Sept 27' which will have far better accessibility arrangements. The new building will be fully compliant with this accessibility plan and will ensure access to specialist classrooms and facilities for all learners.*

2. To improve access (physical environment).

Targets/Actions	**Strategies**	**Timescale**	**Success Criteria**
Annual audit of classrooms to check they are accessible, with no barriers.	• COO to organise systematic checking of classrooms for physical barriers e.g. furniture layout etc • Staff to be made fully aware of their responsibilities including feeding back concerns about access and any safety concerns • Audit to include accessibility for non-wheelchair users with a disability where this is relevant as identified by SENDCo (HI/VI, sensory needs, ASD and mental health needs).	Ongoing	• Physical access for learners, addressed in ongoing and timely manner. Issues of concern addressed promptly
Ensure new build includes: Dedicated inclusion base space Sensory rooms/low arousal spaces Full wheelchair accessibility throughout Appropriate lighting for visual impairment and sensory needs Accessible specialist facilities (science labs, DT, food technology)	• COO will ensure compliance with building regulations.	As required	New building exceeds accessibility requirements; including dedicated SEND facilities.
Accessible car park	• Reserved bays are to be maintained and available to eligible users at Reception areas, Sports Centre, and the Sjovoll Centre (these have been clearly designated and extended) • Speed ramps and 5 mph speed limit in place on campus. Minimal car access to site by parents/carers. (Security gate) • Additional disabled parking can be made available (e.g.	Ongoing	• Sufficient disabled parking

	adjacent to sports hall if required.)		
Accessible toilets	• To provide access to a unisex toilet for disabled students and staff across the site	In pastoral area, C Block, and in Sports Hall	• Disabled staff, student and visitors have access to toilet and washroom facilities
Ensure access to reception area to all.	• Maintain clear and unobstructed access to reception for all • Maintain an alternative low arousal area in the Achievement Centre, for those with sensory needs on the autism spectrum. • Secure building entry system ensures suitable entry for wheelchair users	Wheelchair access is through main reception doors, and have access to reception including lowered reception desk area	• Disabled parents, carers and visitors feel welcome
Improve signage and external access for visually impaired staff, students and visitors.	• Maintain signage where any evidence of worn or difficult to read signage occurs (recently replaced) • Ensure that all signage in the new build is clear for visually impaired staff, students and visitors, including Braille.	Ongoing	• Visually impaired people feel safe around the school
Ensure all disabled students can be supported safely during evacuation process.	• Maintain and review the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) in place for any staff and students with significant difficulties. • Develop the PEEP plans for students for the new school building.	Ongoing	• Any disabled staff and students are safe in the event of a fire or new 'lockdown' procedure
Ensure adequate lighting levels for all students who have visual impairment or are affected by sensory overload.	• The school and individual spaces are adequately lit at night and during the day, if required	Ongoing	• Visually impaired people feel safe around the school
Ensure accessibility of access to specialised equipment.	• Appropriate equipment, aids and adaptions purchased as needed	Ongoing and as required	• Hardware and software to meet the individual needs of students appropriate
Ensure students are using their hearing equipment in classrooms to ensure full accessibility to learning.	• Continue to seek support from LA Hearing Impairment team regarding the appropriate equipment when required	As required	• All students will be using their equipment in class. • Staff have received appropriate training

3. To improve provision of information.

Targets/Actions	Strategies	Timescale	Success Criteria
Improve communication with disabled students and other stakeholders: ensuring all written material is available in alternative formats.	• Regular verbal, email and face to face communication with parents of disabled students • 'Open door' communication policy, including email contact • Sign-posting parents to additional support • Continue to ensure website is clear, simple and easy to use for all stakeholders. (Website audited annually- recent audit (Oct 26) looked for accessibility) • All publications and website notes availability in alternative format on request	Ongoing	• Positive feedback from all stakeholders regarding information being available in a variety of formats appropriate to their needs. • Policy documents and website accessible to all.
Ensure all digital platforms are accessible	• Audit all digital communication tools (Class Charts, parent apps, Sparx, Seneca etc) • Ensure compatibility with screen readers and assistive technology • Provide training for parents on accessing digital information (through parent info evenings)	2026/27	• All digital platforms will meet accessibility standards. • Positive feedback from disabled parents/carers.