Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

October 2026 | Approved for publication

Safety • Belonging • Ambition • Hope

Removing barriers so every young person can participate, learn and prepare for adulthood.

Applies to: Misterton Learning Centre and the Wellington satellite Learning Centre, together with HTET-delivered or commissioned learning where accessibility responsibilities remain with the Trust.

Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust

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Document Governance

Document owner	Ben Howarth — Head of Provision (Operations, Safeguarding, Attendance and Behaviour); SENDCo/SENCO; operational health and safety lead
Executive sponsor	Trystan Williams — Chief Executive Officer / Accounting Officer
Supporting leads	Rich Williams — Head of Provision (Teaching, Learning, Achievement and Curriculum); Hannah Morris — Education Manager; Kate Sheehan — Office Manager, Governance Professional / Clerk to the Board and Health & Safety Adviser
Approval	HTET Trust Board
Status	Board Approved for Publication
Effective from	9th November 2026 (date approved by Board of Trustees)
Current statutory cycle	This October 2026 revision supports HTET through the remainder of the current prescribed cycle to 31 March 2027.
Next statutory cycle	HTET will formally refresh and reapprove the plan by 1 March 2027 for the three-year period 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2030.
Review	Implementation reviewed termly; formal plan kept under review and revised sooner where need, site arrangements, pupil profile, law/guidance, inspection evidence or significant incidents indicate.
Publication	Publish on the HTET website and link it clearly from the SEN Information Report / Accessibility Plan page. Paper or alternative-format copies available on request.

Contents

1. Aims and HTET commitment
2. Legislation, guidance and definitions
3. How accessibility works at HTET
4. Responsibilities and accountability
5. Accessibility action plan
6. Monitoring, evidence and review
7. Links with other HTET policies and documents
Appendix A — Site accessibility audit standard
Appendix B — Authoritative reference register

1. Aims and HTET commitment

Under Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010, the responsible body of a school must prepare, implement, keep under review and, where necessary, revise a written accessibility plan. HTET uses this plan to turn that duty into practical action across curriculum access, the physical environment and accessible information.

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in HTET's curriculum and wider educational offer.
- Improve the physical environment so disabled pupils can take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services.
- Improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils so that it is accessible within a reasonable time and in ways that take account of their needs and preferences.

HTET is an alternative provision free school for young people aged 11–18 with complex needs. Misterton Learning Centre opened in September 2024 for up to 15 pupils; the approved Wellington satellite Learning Centre is due to provide a further 15 places. The Trust's model is deliberately small, relational and therapeutic, with education, safeguarding and multidisciplinary input brought together around each young person.

Accessibility at HTET is therefore broader than ramps, printed materials or a single SEND process. It includes physical access, communication, sensory regulation, emotional safety, cognitive and literacy access, assistive technology, curriculum adaptation, assessment and examination access, safe participation in off-site and online learning, and access to preparation for adulthood. Barriers are considered from the pupil's starting point rather than waiting for failure or non-engagement.

HTET principle: personalise without limiting ambition. Understanding disability, trauma, mental ill health, disrupted education or communication needs must lead to better access and stronger support — never lower expectations.

The Trust's organisational commitment is to provide a profoundly personalised programme of at least 25+ hours for each pupil, shaped by need and placement arrangements. This is an HTET standard rather than a universal statutory minimum. Where online, off-site or commissioned provision forms part of a pupil's pathway, HTET will continue to oversee accessibility, safeguarding, curriculum quality, participation, SEND and the whole-child risk picture.

Although Schedule 10 focuses on disabled pupils, HTET will also make its engagement with parents, carers and visitors accessible under its wider equality duties. This includes disabled parents/carers, families affected by illness, and young carers where communication or attendance at meetings would otherwise be a barrier.

2. Legislation, guidance and definitions

This plan has been prepared for England and has been checked against the current authoritative position as at 3 October 2026. It distinguishes legal duties from guidance and HTET's own higher operational standards.

Source	Status	Relevance to this plan
Equality Act 2010 — sections 6, 20, 85, 88 and Schedule 10	Legislation	Defines disability, prohibits disability discrimination, requires reasonable adjustments and establishes the school accessibility-planning duty.
Disability Discrimination (Prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) (England) Regulations 2005	Regulations	Prescribes the three-year accessibility planning cycle in England, including arrangements for newly established schools.

Source	Status	Relevance to this plan
Children and Families Act 2014; SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years	Legislation + statutory guidance	Sets the wider SEND framework. Disability and SEND overlap but are not the same: a disabled pupil may or may not have SEN, and SEN status is not required before reasonable adjustments are considered.
DfE Equality Act 2010: advice for schools; DfE academy publication guidance	Departmental guidance	Explains school equality duties and confirms that academies must prepare and publish information about their accessibility plan.
EHRC Technical Guidance for Schools in England	Technical guidance	Detailed current Equality Act guidance. The EHRC's 2026 replacement consultation has closed; the existing guidance remains the operative published reference until superseded.
DfE Inclusive education estates, June 2026	Non-statutory guidance	Useful good-practice reference for inclusive estate assessment and adaptations, particularly for Wellington pre-opening and future works.

2.1 Disability and reasonable adjustments

For Equality Act purposes, a person is disabled where they have a physical or mental impairment with a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. "Substantial" means more than minor or trivial and "long-term" generally means that the effect has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months. The definition can include sensory impairments and long-term physical or mental health conditions.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory: HTET must think ahead about barriers disabled pupils may face, as well as responding to individual needs when they arise. For schools, the reasonable-adjustment duty applies to provisions, criteria and practices and to auxiliary aids and services. Physical-feature improvements are addressed through the separate Schedule 10 accessibility-planning duty.

No diagnosis, EHCP or formal SEN label is required before HTET considers a reasonable adjustment. Individual adjustments will be proportionate, evidence-informed and discussed with the pupil and family wherever appropriate. Decisions, including where an adjustment is not considered reasonable or a different effective adjustment is proposed, will be recorded with the rationale and review arrangements.

2.2 Publication and planning cycle

HTET will publish this plan on its website and make it available in alternative formats on request. The pupil Accessibility Plan is distinct from the website accessibility statement: both are required for different purposes and should be easy to locate and cross-reference.

Because HTET opened in September 2024, its first prescribed accessibility-plan period runs to the end of the national cycle on 31 March 2027. The Board will therefore refresh and reapprove the plan by 1 March 2027 for the next full prescribed period, 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2030. This October 2026 document contains immediate actions and a forward programme so work is not deferred until the cycle refresh.

3. How accessibility works at HTET

3.1 Entry, assessment and personalised planning

- Access barriers are considered from referral and pre-entry information gathering, without delaying any statutory duty to admit or provide education.
- The SENDCo coordinates SEND and reasonable-adjustment oversight, drawing on educational assessment, EHCP/PEP information where applicable, pupil and family voice, attendance history, safeguarding/risk information and multidisciplinary evidence.

- Where relevant, psychology, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, CAMHS and other professionals contribute to understanding communication, sensory, adaptive-functioning, mental-health and regulation needs while keeping professional accountabilities distinct.
- A pupil's one-page profile / learning journey should record the adjustments and access approaches staff need to know, with confidential health or clinical detail shared only on a lawful need-to-know basis.
- Plans are reviewed when needs, placement, timetable, health, communication, risk, transport or participation materially change.

3.2 Curriculum, teaching and participation

- Curriculum access is profoundly personalised but remains ambitious, purposeful and directed towards qualifications, literacy, personal development, preparation for adulthood and sustainable next steps.
- Teachers and Therapeutic Education Practitioners use appropriate scaffolding, visual structure, assistive technology, adapted resources, reading support, flexible pacing and assessment approaches without narrowing entitlement unnecessarily.
- Examination access arrangements are identified early, evidenced and applied consistently; the education team will maintain an up-to-date map for all relevant candidates.
- Personal visual timetables, predictable day structures and individual learning journeys are used where they reduce cognitive, communication or regulation barriers.
- Where live online or off-site learning is educationally appropriate, access is planned rather than assumed. Physical location, statutory attendance, educational participation and safeguarding are recorded separately.
- Transport disruption or changes in care placement are treated as access barriers requiring prompt multi-agency problem-solving and continuity planning; they are not treated as evidence that a pupil is unwilling to learn.

3.3 Physical and sensory access

HTET will not assume that a small therapeutic setting is automatically accessible. Each site will maintain a proportionate access audit covering arrival and drop-off, entrances and thresholds, circulation routes, teaching and therapy spaces, toilets/changing, furniture, lighting, acoustics, signage and wayfinding, sensory load, outdoor areas, emergency evacuation, assistive technology and access to specialist rooms or activities. Any feature not currently required by a pupil remains part of anticipatory planning for future pupils and visitors.

For Wellington, accessibility is a pre-opening readiness requirement. No pupil should begin on-site attendance until the Trust has checked that known access needs, safe evacuation, ICT/assistive technology, signage and any necessary reasonable operational adjustments are in place or supported by a clearly documented interim arrangement.

3.4 Accessible information and family engagement

- Core pupil information can be provided in formats such as large print, plain English, Easy Read, symbols/pictorial support, audio, video/captioned content or other formats appropriate to the person.
- Communication preferences are recorded and reviewed rather than relying on a single standard format.
- Digital documents should use meaningful headings, readable fonts and contrast, descriptive link text, sensible tables and image alternative text where appropriate.
- Parents/carers can request reasonable alternatives to in-person meetings, including telephone or video meetings and, where appropriate and safe, an alternative venue or home-based discussion.
- HTET will consider translation/interpreting and communication support where needed, while distinguishing language needs from disability-related access needs.

4. Responsibilities and accountability

Role	Named lead / body	Accessibility responsibility
Responsible body / governance	HTET Trust Board	Approves the plan; ensures it is implemented and kept under review; has regard to adequate resources; receives assurance on barriers, delivery and unresolved risks.
Executive accountability	Trystan Williams, CEO / Accounting Officer	Ensures executive ownership, resources, cross-Trust escalation and alignment with improvement planning and commissioning.
Operational / SEND lead	Ben Howarth, Head of Provision; SENDCo	Coordinates SEND, individual reasonable adjustments, attendance/access barriers, medical-condition implementation and operational inclusion; escalates significant barriers.
Curriculum lead	Rich Williams, Head of Provision – Teaching, Learning, Achievement and Curriculum	Ensures curriculum, teaching, assessment, qualifications and online/off-site learning are accessible and ambitious.
Education / pupil voice	Hannah Morris, Education Manager	Supports personalised planning, pupil voice, careers/preparation for adulthood and implementation across pupil programmes.
Premises / governance administration	Kate Sheehan, Governance Professional and Health & Safety Adviser	Coordinates site H&S/access-audit evidence, contractors/actions, governance records, publication controls and Board follow-up.
All staff and commissioned colleagues	All relevant adults	Implement agreed adjustments, identify barriers, record concerns, maintain confidentiality and escalate where access is not working. External provision does not remove HTET oversight.

5. Accessibility action plan

The action plan below combines immediate 2026–27 priorities with the forward programme for 2027–30. Timescales are internal delivery targets, not statements of additional statutory deadlines. Where a pupil needs an adjustment sooner, the individual reasonable-adjustment duty applies without waiting for the plan date.

Aim 1 — Increase access to the curriculum and wider educational offer

Current position / good practice	Objective and actions	Lead / support	Timescale	Evidence / success criteria
HTET already uses personalised educational and therapeutic planning. The next step is to make access needs and adjustments consistently visible in every pupil pathway.	Complete an accessibility/barrier screen at entry and after material change. Record agreed reasonable adjustments, communication/sensory strategies and review dates in the pupil's accessible one-page profile / learning journey. Ensure staff can locate the current version.	Ben Howarth Hannah Morris / MDT	Immediate; embedded by Dec 2026	100% of pupils with identified access needs have current, staff-visible adjustments; case sampling shows delivery and review, not just documentation.
Curriculum, reading, online learning, accreditation, enrichment and preparation for adulthood are personalised. Access can be affected by literacy, cognition, mental health, sensory or communication barriers.	Audit curriculum access by subject and pupil. Use adapted resources, assistive technology, visual timetables, structured routines, reading support and specialist advice. Review whether adaptations preserve breadth, ambition and progression.	Rich Williams Hannah Morris / TEPs	Termly from Autumn 2026	Pupil plans and work show appropriate adaptation; access barriers reduce; pupils participate in a broad, purposeful pathway from their starting points.
SIP review identified the need to map examination access arrangements and strengthen each young person's learning journey.	Maintain a live access-arrangements map for all relevant exam candidates; obtain evidence in good time; ensure mock/internal assessment practice reflects approved arrangements where appropriate.	Rich Williams Education team / Reading Lead	End of Term 1; ongoing	No candidate misses an evidenced access arrangement through late identification; arrangements are applied consistently and reviewed.
Some pupils may require live online, off-site or temporarily home-based education. Participation must not be confused with statutory attendance.	For each online/off-site element, specify purpose, supervision, safeguarding, accessibility, curriculum link, participation evidence and review. Maintain accurate attendance records separately. Do not use remote learning as a substitute for removing avoidable on-site access barriers.	Ben Howarth / Rich Williams Commissioned-provider leads	For every placement/programme; termly QA	Each external/online element has a clear plan and oversight; non-engagement triggers timely barrier analysis and safeguarding response.
Transport or care-placement changes can interrupt physical access even when a pupil remains willing to learn.	Escalate transport/placement barriers promptly with the responsible commissioner/LA and care partners. Put proportionate continuity arrangements in place while maintaining accurate location, attendance, participation and safeguarding records.	Ben Howarth Trystan Williams where escalation required	As barriers arise	Education disruption is minimised; unresolved system dependencies are recorded and escalated; participation data does not mask physical absence.

Aim 2 — Improve and maintain access to the physical and sensory environment

Current position / good practice	Objective and actions	Lead / support	Timescale	Evidence / success criteria
Misterton is an established therapeutic Learning Centre. Current documentation does not justify assuming every physical or sensory feature is accessible for every future pupil.	Complete and maintain a site accessibility audit covering arrival/drop-off, entrances, thresholds, routes, doors, furniture, toilets/changing, teaching/therapy rooms, lighting, acoustics, signage, sensory load, outdoor areas, emergency alarms and assistive technology. Prioritise actions by pupil need, safety, effectiveness and feasibility.	Kate Sheehan / Ben Howarth CEO for material resource decisions	Initial refresh by Dec 2026; annual review	Dated audit and prioritised action log are in place; barriers have owners, dates and escalation; completed works are verified in practice.
Wellington is the approved satellite Learning Centre and remains due to open in 2026.	Treat accessibility as a pre-opening gateway. Complete site access, sensory, ICT and emergency-evacuation checks; confirm known pupil-specific adjustments before first attendance; record any interim control and responsible owner.	Kate Sheehan / Ben Howarth Trystan Williams	Before pupil occupation	Pre-opening accessibility sign-off completed; known needs can be met safely; unresolved material barriers are escalated before placement decisions.
Emergency arrangements can create barriers for pupils with mobility, sensory, communication, cognition, anxiety or regulation needs.	Identify pupils, staff or regular visitors who need a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) or equivalent individual evacuation support. Practise and review arrangements proportionately, including off-site activities.	Ben Howarth / Kate Sheehan Martin Durnam for educational visits	On entry/change; termly check	Required plans are current and understood; drills/reviews identify and resolve access problems without compromising dignity or safety.
Wayfinding and sensory demands can affect independence and regulation.	Review internal and external signage for clarity, readable contrast, consistent naming, symbols/pictorial support where useful and avoidance of unnecessary sensory clutter. Use predictable zoning/quiet space where individual needs indicate.	Kate Sheehan Ben Howarth / pupil voice	By Feb 2027; then with site changes	Pupils can navigate key spaces with the level of independence appropriate to them; pupil feedback informs changes.

Aim 3 — Improve the accessibility and timeliness of information

Current position / good practice	Objective and actions	Lead / support	Timescale	Evidence / success criteria
HTET communicates through pupil plans, timetables, curriculum materials, meetings, digital systems and its public website. Information needs differ substantially between pupils.	Agree and record communication preferences and accessible-format requirements. Provide information in large print, plain English, Easy Read, symbols/pictorial formats, audio/video or other formats where needed, within a reasonable time.	Ben Howarth / Hannah Morris All staff	From entry; ongoing	Requests and preferences are recorded and met; pupil voice shows that key information is understood, not merely sent.
Digital accessibility must support both pupils and families.	Use accessible document practice for core public/pupil materials: meaningful headings, readable formatting, sufficient contrast, descriptive links, simple tables and image alternative text. Cross-link the statutory pupil Accessibility Plan and website Accessibility Statement.	Kate Sheehan Website / document owners	Core pages by Jan 2027; annual check	Core public documents pass a basic accessibility check; website routes are easy to find; identified digital barriers have action owners.
Some pupils need communication support or assistive technology to access teaching and information.	Use specialist advice where required, including SaLT/OT and other relevant professionals; provide and maintain auxiliary aids/software where reasonable; make contingency arrangements for essential equipment failure.	Ben Howarth / Rich Williams Relevant specialists	As need identified	Required aids/services are available and maintained; staff know how to use them; loss/failure does not unnecessarily stop learning.

Cross-cutting enablers — families, workforce, governance and resources

Current position / good practice	Objective and actions	Lead / support	Timescale	Evidence / success criteria
Disabled parents/carers, parents/carers affected by illness and young carers may face barriers to meetings, written communication or site access.	Ask what format/contact method works; provide reasonable alternatives such as phone/video meetings, accessible copies, interpretation/communication support or an alternative safe venue. Home-based meetings may be used where appropriate and risk assessed.	Hannah Morris / Ben Howarth Kate Sheehan	Ongoing	Family participation is not reduced by avoidable access barriers; feedback and complaints identify improvement themes.
Staff capability is essential to the quality of adjustments.	Include Equality Act disability duties, anticipatory reasonable adjustments and accessible communication in induction/annual training. Add role-specific development for assistive technology, communication, sensory needs, medical conditions and examination access as required.	Ben Howarth / Rich Williams Relevant specialists	Annual cycle; induction on appointment	Training records complete; staff sampling shows they understand how to identify, implement, record and escalate adjustments.
Small cohorts create a risk of over-identification when reporting accessibility data.	Monitor barriers, adjustment delivery, participation, complaints and pupil/family voice using proportionate aggregate reporting. Protect confidentiality and avoid publishing identifiable small-cohort information.	Trystan Williams / Ben Howarth DPO advice where needed	Termly Board assurance	Board receives useful evidence without unnecessary personal detail; recurring barriers produce actions and resource decisions.
Schedule 10 requires the responsible body to have regard to adequate resources for implementation.	Maintain a costed/prioritised accessibility action log where actions require capital work, specialist equipment or commissioned support. Escalate unresolved resource dependencies through CEO/CFO and Board decision routes.	Trystan Williams Rob Blowers / Trust Board	Termly; budget cycle	Material resource barriers are visible and decision-ready; accepted residual risk is explicit and time-limited where possible.
The next full prescribed planning cycle begins 1 April 2027.	Consult pupils, parents/carers, staff and Trustees on this plan's implementation and refresh the statutory plan for 2027–30. Incorporate evidence from site audits, SIP/QA, complaints, pupil voice and any new statutory guidance.	Ben Howarth / Kate Sheehan Trystan Williams / Trust Board	Draft by Feb 2027; approve by 1 Mar 2027	Board-approved 2027–30 plan published before the new cycle; previous actions are closed, carried forward or re-scoped with rationale.

6. Monitoring, evidence and review

The Board's role is to assure itself that the plan is being implemented and that barriers are reducing in practice. Completion of an action is not, on its own, evidence of improved accessibility. HTET will therefore consider both implementation and effect.

- Termly implementation review led by the SENDCo with curriculum, education, premises and governance leads.
- Pupil and family voice, including whether agreed adjustments actually help participation, understanding, safety and independence.
- Case sampling from referral/entry through to delivery and review of adjustments, including any delays or declined requests and the recorded rationale.
- Attendance and participation evidence considered separately so that online/off-site engagement does not obscure physical access barriers or safeguarding concerns.
- Curriculum participation, learning evidence and outcomes from starting points, including access to qualifications and preparation for adulthood.
- Site-audit actions, PEEPs, incidents/near misses and accessibility themes from health and safety, safeguarding and educational-visit reviews.
- Accessibility-related complaints, concerns and compliments, with themes and learning reported proportionately.
- Resource decisions and unresolved dependencies, including external estates, transport, health, social-care or commissioning issues.

Material accessibility risks that cannot be resolved within delegated authority will be escalated to the CEO and, where necessary, the Trust Board. Where a barrier depends on an external commissioner, landlord, local authority, health service or provider, HTET will record the dependency and continue to take reasonable steps within its own control rather than treating external ownership as a reason for inaction.

7. Links with other HTET policies and documents

This plan should be read alongside the current versions of the following. The list is intentionally broader than the minimum model plan because accessibility at HTET spans education, safeguarding, health, premises, participation and commissioned provision.

- SEN Information Report and SEND policy / procedures
- Equality information and objectives / Public Sector Equality Duty information
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy and attendance/participation procedures
- Curriculum, teaching, assessment and examination access-arrangements procedures
- Behaviour / relationships and anti-bullying policies
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and allergy-safety arrangements
- Health and Safety Policy, fire/emergency procedures and risk assessments
- Educational Visits / off-site activity procedures
- Admissions, referral, assessment and formulation arrangements
- Alternative provision / commissioned and online education assurance procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection, information sharing and records-retention arrangements
- Website Accessibility Statement and digital publication arrangements
- HTET Vision and Values, Trust Improvement Plan, SEF and current SIP/quality-assurance reports

Appendix A — Site accessibility audit standard

The following checklist is the minimum HTET site-audit lens. It is not a statement that every feature is currently present or required; it is the framework for identifying and prioritising barriers based on current and anticipated pupil need.

Audit area	HTET check
Arrival and external access	Drop-off/parking, route from boundary, gradients, surfaces, gates, lighting, weather exposure and safe handover.
Entrances and circulation	Thresholds, doors, widths, handles, corridors, stairs/changes of level, routes between key spaces and unobstructed circulation.
Teaching and therapy spaces	Furniture and layout, wheelchair/physical access, seating options, positioning, power/charging for equipment and access to specialist rooms.
Sensory environment	Lighting, glare, noise/acoustics, visual clutter, smell/temperature, quiet/regulation space and predictable zoning.
Toilets and personal care	Accessible toilet provision appropriate to identified need, privacy, dignity, alarms and changing/personal-care arrangements where required.
Signage and wayfinding	Consistent names, readable fonts/contrast, symbols/pictorial support where useful and clear emergency/visitor information.
Emergency evacuation	Alarm accessibility, PEEP needs, refuge/route considerations, staff support, drills and arrangements for visitors.
ICT and information access	Reliable connectivity, accessible devices/software, headphones/audio, display settings, printing formats and contingency for equipment failure.
Outdoor / enrichment access	Routes, surfaces, seating, activity access, transport arrangements and reasonable alternatives that preserve educational purpose.
Maintenance and change control	Accessibility considered before room moves, refurbishments, new furniture/equipment, signage changes or changes to site use.

Appendix B — Authoritative reference register

Authoritative sources checked for this draft on 3 October 2026. HTET should re-check these sources when the 2027–30 plan is approved and whenever relevant law or guidance changes.

- Equality Act 2010, Schedule 10 — Accessibility for disabled pupils
- Disability Discrimination (Prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) (England) Regulations 2005
- DfE — Equality Act 2010: advice for schools
- DfE / DHSC — SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years
- DfE — SEND: guide for schools and alternative provision settings
- DfE — What academies and further education colleges must or should publish online
- DfE — Inclusive education estates (June 2026)
- EHRC — Technical guidance for schools in England

Board approval record

Approved by	HTET Trust Board
Approval date	9th November 2026
Minute reference	6.1
Next formal approval	By 1 March 2027 (2027–30 cycle)