

Gosforth C of E Primary SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2016 – 2019

APPROVED BY:

Name:

Position:

Signed:

Date:

Review Date ²:

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
Version 1	Original	March 2012
Version 2	Front Cover ONLY updated to take account of revised Statutory Policy Guidance issued by the DfE	January 2013
Version 3	Reformatted only	February 2014
Version 4	Reformatted only	February 2015
Version 5	updated	May 2016

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	5
2.	DEFINITION OF DISABILITY.....	5
3.	REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS.....	6
4.	AIMS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN.....	7
5.	KEY OBJECTIVES.....	7
6.	CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION.....	8
7.	DEVELOPMENT.....	8
7.1	The Purpose and Direction of the School’s Plan: Vision and Values.....	8
7.2	Information from Pupil Data and School Audit.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
7.3	Views of those Consulted during the development of the Plan.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
8.	SCOPE OF THE PLAN.....	8
8.1	Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school/setting curriculum.....	8
8.2	Improving the physical environment of the school/setting to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.....	9
8.3	Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are disabled.....	9
8.4	Financial Planning and Control.....	9
9.	IMPLEMENTATION.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9.1	Management, Coordination and Implementation.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9.2	Monitoring.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9.3	The role of the LA in increasing accessibility.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9.4	Accessing the School’s Plan.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
10.	RELATED POLICIES.....	9
APPENDIX A(i)	-	Template Plan (Improving Access to the Curriculum)
APPENDIX A(ii)	-	Template Plan (Improving Physical Access)
APPENDIX A(iii)	-	Template Plan (Improving Access to Written Information)
APPENDIX B(i)	-	Example Completed Plan (Improving Access to the Curriculum)
APPENDIX B(ii)	-	Example Completed Plan (Improving Physical Access)
APPENDIX B(iii)	-	Example Completed Plan (Improving Access to Written Information)

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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 a number of 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 will be 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/setting must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school/setting 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/setting 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

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.

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.

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

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 the pupil faces in comparison to his 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.

There is as yet no clarity on what may be 'reasonable' although the Code of Practice will include factors that should be taken into account. 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 have 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/setting.

As in the previous legislation we are not under a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our Accessibility planning.

4. AIMS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The planning duties on schools/settings and Local Authorities are the same as the duties in the previous DDA. Schools/settings are required to have an Accessibility Plan detailing how they will improve access to the physical environment, increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils, and how they will improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. The LA is required to have an Access Strategy.

At Gosforth School we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school and 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/setting 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.

Furthermore, under our equality duties, we intend to improve the physical environment of the school/setting to enable any disabled person (pupil, parent/carer, employees or visitor) to access facilities and services and improve the availability of accessible information to any disabled person.

Compliance with the disability duty under the Equality Act is consistent with the school's aims and Single Equality Scheme, and the operation of the school's SEND policy.

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. 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 need to 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.

Gosforth School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school/setting are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school/setting community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils will be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

5. 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/setting 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 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.

6. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Gosforth School is a Church of England and is Voluntary Controlled. It has approximately 90 children on roll. We are a fully inclusive school and have 8 children on our SEN register. 3 of these children have health care plans. The school is set in a rural village location and the nearest town is approximately 10 miles away. Most of our children come from either the village itself or from nearby outlying communities which may be quite small. Some of our children come from out of catchment.

Our building is old and has had some extension work added on over the years. It has 5 classrooms and 2 yards and a good size field. It is enclosed by walling all the way around. We have a hall used for assemblies, PE and lunchtimes.

7. DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The Purpose and Direction of the School's Plan: Vision and Values

Gosforth School

- has high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life;
- is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled students in all aspects of school life;
- values the individual and the contribution they make to all aspects of school life;
- will strive to ensure that its disabled pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and teaching resources so as to develop fully in their education;
- acknowledges a commitment to embrace the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement;
- will continue to focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school;
- is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school 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;
- 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/setting community.

8. SCOPE OF THE PLAN

8.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school/setting 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.

The school/setting plans 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/setting 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/setting 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.

8.2 Improving the physical environment of the school/setting 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/setting 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/setting has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

8.3 Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are disabled

Gosforth School/Setting will strive to:

- produce all school/setting 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.

8.4 Financial Planning and Control

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

9. RELATED POLICIES

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

- Curriculum Policies
- Single Equality Scheme/Objectives
- Staff Training
- Health & Safety
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Educational Visits
- Whole School Behaviour
- School Development Plan
- Complaints Procedures

GOSFORTH SCHOOL/SETTING ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2015 - 2018

IMPROVING THE CURRICULUM ACCESS AT GOSFORTH SCHOOL/SETTING

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement
Training for identified staff in the identification of and teaching / supporting children with ASD	Identified staff to attend appropriate training as provided by external provider	Staff familiar & confident with criteria for identifying special needs and can support children through IEP within classroom improving access to learning	Summer 2016 Autumn 2016	
Training for all staff in supporting children with a hearing impairment	Specialist teacher to provide training on general understanding of the needs of a hearing impaired child	All staff have clear understanding of the needs of hearing impaired children and how to ensure curriculum is fully accessible to them	Autumn 2015	
Extra curricular planning ensures participation of all children in school regardless of need	Review activities on offer and ensure support can be offered through TA deployment	All children have access to extra curricular activities	Autumn 2015 and onwards	

GOSFORTH SCHOOL/SETTING ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2015 - 2018IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL ACCESS AT GOSFORTH SCHOOL/SETTING

AMP or AA Report Ref. (if relevant)	Item	Activity	Timescale	Cost £	Responsibility
	Parking for disabled members of the public attending school	Set up procedure to move minibus and allow disabled parking just outside main entrance – completed through communication with people attending school	Spring 2016	£0	R Baldwin
	Ramp access to and from infant department	Put ramp access in where stairs are currently down in to infant department	2018	£5000	BH&S committee
	Improve acoustics for hearing impaired children	Ensure classrooms carpeted and soft furnishings in place	On-going	£2000	SENCO
	Fire and emergency exit procedures to be stated clearly for those visitors with additional needs	Cards explaining procedures to be added to visitor's area where they sign in. Consideration of means of escape.	Autumn 2016	£0	BH&S committee

