

COGNITA



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL

Inspiring Young Minds

LITTLE DOWNSEND

ASHTED • LEATHERHEAD • EPSOM

Accessibility Plan

United Kingdom

2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1. We are committed to creating an inclusive, respectful and equitable environment where all members of our school community are valued and supported. This commitment underpins our approach to accessibility and informs the principles set out in this plan. This document outlines our Accessibility Plan as required by the Equality Act 2010. This plan applies to staff, pupils, parents and all users of the school site and services. The Act makes it unlawful for Cognita, which is the responsible body of a school, to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil or staff in relation to:
 - admissions;
 - the way we provide education for pupils;
 - the way we provide pupils access to any benefit, facility or service;
 - by excluding any pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 1.2. The Act outlines some protected characteristics (below) and we pay due regard to these:
 - Sex
 - Race
 - Disability
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy or maternity
- 1.3. This plan fulfils the requirements of the Independent School Standards.

2. Definition

- 2.1. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (UK), a person is defined as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

-*Substantial* is defined as more than minor or trivial.

-*Long-term* is defined as having lasted or likely to last for at least 12 months.

This definition includes individuals with sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight or hearing) and those with long-term health conditions, including but not limited to diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

3. Purpose

- 3.1. This Accessibility Plan outlines how we ensure that we are working to remove barriers to learning and access in our school. The plan is reviewed every three years and monitored annually to ensure progress is made against its objectives.
- 3.2. The school aims to treat all its pupils, staff and visitors fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind. This plan should be read alongside the school's SEND Policy and Equality and Diversity Policy
- 3.3. The school ensure all staff are trained in understanding equality and disability issues in line with the Equality Act 2010

4. Reasonable Adjustments

- 4.1. We are committed to ensuring that no aspect of school life places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage in comparison to their non-disabled peers. Where a potential disadvantage cannot be avoided, we take all reasonable steps to reduce or remove its impact.

- 4.2. When it is reasonable to do so, we provide auxiliary aids or services for a disabled pupil, when such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces compared to other non-disabled pupils.
- 4.3. Where an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEND system (i.e. via a Statement/EHC Plan) there should be no assumption that it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Any decision would be taken on the basis of the facts of an individual case, including cost implications.
- 4.4. There is no legal definition of auxiliary aids. We interpret the term to mean any or all of the following: helpful; providing support or assistance; and that these can be things or persons which help. We include hearing loops, adaptive keyboards, and special software.
- 4.5. Our SEND Policy defines what provision we make available including reasonable adjustments in our school. We will consider what is reasonable in the context of our school, given the circumstances of each individual case.
- 4.6. Where the auxiliary aid has a benefit to the rest of the child's life outside of school, it would be unreasonable for our school to make such provision; e.g. hearing aids.
- 4.7. We consider that effective and practicable adjustments for disabled pupils will involve little or no cost or disruption and will therefore be considered as reasonable. Where substantial adaptations are required which are not contained within our three-year accessibility plan, we reserve the right to deem these as unreasonable.
- 4.8. It is our aim to ensure that disabled pupils play as full a part as possible in school life and our accessibility plan and reasonable adjustments help support that aim. Where any adjustment would have a detrimental effect on other pupils, we would not consider it to be *reasonable*. For example, if a geography field trip were planned to involve climbing and a wheelchair user could not take part, we would carefully consider how the disabled pupil could participate viably.

5. Aspects of the Plan

- 5.1. Our Accessibility Plan focuses on the following areas:
 - Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
 - Improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

6. Responsibility

- 6.1. It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that the school has an Accessibility Plan which matches the needs of the school and to ensure that it is available on the school's website. All staff have a role in implementing the plan through inclusive practice and regular reflection on barriers to access within their areas of work.
- 6.2. It is the responsibility of the Proprietor (via the Director of Operations) to ensure that the plan is reviewed annually and is fit for purpose.

Accessibility Plan

Accessibility Plan

Actions to increase access to the curriculum and learning

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
As students arrive with additional needs funding should be sort (If criteria met) or be available to buy appropriate resources to meet needs	Ongoing	Head of Little Downsend/SEND Co	Pupils will have full access to the curriculum and continue to make progress
To identify and deliver training to staff to support the needs of learners with additional needs e.g. dyslexia, ASD, ADHD, speech and language needs	As required and inset if whole school need	Head of Little Downsend/SEND Co	Children with specific needs will have their needs meet and will thrive and make progress
Provide specific resources to support full access to the curriculum for children with identified needs including technology to support where needed	AS required	Head of Little Downsend/SEND Co IT support	Pupils will have full access to the curriculum and continue to make progress

Actions to improve the physical environment to enable those with disability to take better advantage of the education and facilities

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Stair lift and ramp for pupils with specific difficulties to access upstairs classrooms	To review in any major building work	Head of Little Downsend/ Facilities manager/maintenance team	Children can access curriculum beyond year groups on the lower floors
Toilet with accessibility	To review work when and if required	Head of Little Downsend/ Facilities manager/maintenance team	Children/adults have accessible toilets

Actions to improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
To continue to review accessibility of information to disabled staff, parents and visitors as specific needs arise	When required	Head of Little Downsend/HoS/ School secretary	Disabled staff, parents and visitors will have full access to information
Ensure pupils who require large print, different coloured paper and contrasts on the	As a child joins with dyslexia or	SENDCo	Pupils will have full access to the curriculum and make progress

Accessibility Plan

interactive white boards have access to these resources	sight impairment. On going		
To continue to use symbols for communication in our setting to enable all learning to access the curriculum and daily routines	Ongoing	SENDCo	Symbols for communication will be used in all classes to allow pupils to access the curriculum and support with emotional needs

Accessibility Plan

Ownership and consultation	
Document Sponsor	Director of Education Europe
Document Reviewer	Regional Leader of Inclusion and Head of H&S Europe
Consultation & Specialist Advice	
Document application and publication	
England	Yes
Wales	Yes
Spain	No
Switzerland	No
Italy	No
Greece	
Version control	
Current Review Date	September 2025
Next Review Date	September 2027
Related documentation	
Related documentation	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy Health and safety policy and related documentation Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy Equality Act 2010