

Accessibility Policy

Policy Number:	EDE/POL/010	Policy Owner Job Role	Quality Manager
Issue Number:	008	Ratified By	Quality Director
Issue Date:	01.07.26	Service Type:	Schools
		Applicable Services:	Education
Contributors	Rob Arrowsmith		
Mandatory Policy	Yes		
Relevant Regulations	- Equality Act 2010 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 - Part 3 (Welfare, Health and Safety), Part 5 (Premises and Accommodation), Part 6 (Provision of Information) - SEND Code of Practice (0–25) - Education (School Premises) Regulations 2012		
Note	This policy should not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

Table of Contents

Section	
1	Supporting Documents
2	Introduction
3	Aim & Scope
4	Abbreviations/Definitions
5	Policy Content
5.1	Improving Access to the Physical Environment
5.2	Increasing Access to the Curriculum
5.3	Improving Delivery of Written Information
5.4	Accessibility and Safeguarding
6	Responsibilities
7	Monitoring and Review
8	Equality Impact Statement
9	Version Control (where else is this policy located, ie. Circle, Nourish, Radar)
10	Appendices

1. Supporting Documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

2. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 mandates that all schools and local authorities develop and implement plans to improve accessibility for disabled pupils.

Since September 2002, schools, including independent schools, and local authorities have been required to develop accessibility strategies and plans.

New Ways School is committed to providing a fully accessible environment that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents/carers, and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional, or cultural needs.

We are dedicated to challenging attitudes towards disability and accessibility and fostering a culture of awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

New Ways School maintains individual accessibility plans (appendix A), reviewed and updated every three years, tailored to the needs of our pupils.

3. Aim/Scope

This policy aims to create and maintain an inclusive educational environment for the entire school community, promoting ongoing awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

The Equality Act (2010) defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a 'substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal, day to day activities.'

This includes sensory impairments (such as sight or hearing loss) and mental illnesses that are clinically recognised; for example, diagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions, including Autism, ADHD and SEMH needs where they impact access.

Not all disabled pupils have Special Educational Needs (SEN), and not all pupils with SEN have disabilities under this legislation. Many pupils may have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or an Individual Development Plan (IDP in Wales).

5. Policy Content

5.1 Improving Access to the Physical Environment

We commit to enhancing the physical environment of New Ways School, including visual, acoustic, and physical aspects, to meet the needs of disabled pupils.

Reasonable adjustments may include sensory adaptations, assistive technologies, and differentiated communication methods.

All new buildings comply with Building Regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations (2012) to ensure physical accessibility.

5.2 Increasing Access to the Curriculum

Access to the curriculum encompasses teaching and learning as well as extracurricular activities such as after-school clubs, leisure, sports, cultural events, and school visits.

We tailor accessibility planning to pupils with EHCPs and complex needs to ensure full participation.

5.3. Improving Delivery of Written Information

We ensure that written materials provided to pupils are available in formats suitable to their abilities and needs, delivered within reasonable timescales.

Local authorities and schools review and revise accessibility strategies and plans regularly, prioritising resources for effective implementation.

5.4 Accessibility and Safeguarding

Due to the strong link between accessibility and safeguarding, it is recognised that barriers to access can increase vulnerability, create attendance issues, lead to disengagement and increase the risk of exclusion.

New Ways School ensures that accessibility planning supports safeguarding by promoting engagement, inclusion and enables access to education.

6. Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring accessibility planning is implemented effectively and reviewed regularly.

The SENCo supports the identification of barriers to access and ensures that reasonable adjustments are made.

Senior leaders monitor accessibility improvements and ensure alignment with SEND.

All staff are responsible for implementing inclusive practice in their daily work.

7. Monitoring and Review

The school maintains a written Accessibility Plan in accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Progress is monitored through:

- Review of individual accessibility plans
- Feedback from pupils and parents/carers
- Analysis of attendance, engagement, and participation

Senior leaders report on accessibility to the governing body to ensure oversight and continuous improvement.

In accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the school maintains a written Accessibility Plan which sets out how access to education, the physical environment and information will be improved for disabled pupils over time. The plan is reviewed annually and updated whenever significant changes to provision, premises or pupil needs occur.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

To ensure a person-centred approach, the pupil voice and parental/carers input will support accessibility planning. If any individual or group believes they are disadvantaged by this policy, they should contact the Headteacher of the school. New Ways School and Keys Group will respond proactively to such concerns.

9. Version Control

This document can also be found in the following locations and should be amended in the following

Source	Link
Education Drive	#New Ways School and Corbett House/Policies both sites

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Accessibility Plan Template

Objective	Actions/Strategies	Responsible Person(s)	Timescale	Success Criteria
Improve physical accessibility	Conduct accessibility audit; implement adaptations (ramps, signage, lighting)	Site Manager, Head Teacher	Annually	All areas accessible to disabled pupils
Enhance curriculum access	Provide assistive technology; adapt teaching materials; staff training on inclusive practices	SENCO, Teaching Staff	Ongoing	Measurable improvements in engagement, attendance, behaviour incidents and progress.
Improve delivery of written information	Provide materials in accessible formats (large print, braille, digital); staff training on communication	SENCO, Admin Team	Ongoing	Pupils receive information in preferred formats
Review and update accessibility strategies	Annual review of accessibility plan and progress	Head Teacher, Governors	Annually	Updated plan reflecting current needs

Appendix B – Reasonable Adjustments Checklist

- Sensory adaptations (e.g., noise-cancelling headphones, tinted overlays)
- Assistive technology (e.g., speech-to-text software, adapted keyboards)
- Differentiated communication (e.g., simplified language, visual supports)
- Physical environment adjustments (e.g., ramps, handrails, accessible toilets)
- Flexible curriculum delivery (e.g., alternative assessments, adapted timetables)
- Staff awareness and training on individual needs
- Accessible formats for written materials (large print, braille, audio)
- Support from specialist services (e.g., occupational therapy, speech therapy)
- Emotional regulation support strategies
- Trauma informed approaches
- Access to Therapeutic Support

Appendix C – Accessibility Audit Tool

Area Reviewed	Accessibility Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Responsible Person	Review Date
Entrances and exits	School site: Side entrance with ramp access. A ramp is in place between the two buildings around the back. Corbett House site: Site all one level	If a young person requires, they can look at a ramp to the rear garden. (Currently, no young people attend who require this access.) Dual coded signage – a more communication-rich environment.	Look into examples of widget signage and or picture-rich signage.	HT	Ongoing
Corridors and pathways	School site and Corbett House site: Clear and accessible	Dual coded signage – a more communication-rich environment.		HT	Ongoing
Classrooms	School site and Corbett House site: All classrooms are available and accessible to wheelchair users Classrooms at Corbett House are designed with SEMH learners with higher levels of trauma and PDA profiles in mind to support regulation and therapeutic anchor points.	N/A		HT	Ongoing
Toilets and changing facilities	School site and Corbett House site: A toilet is available and accessible for wheelchair users	School site: No changing facilities unless you change in the toilet area. Should a young person require the		HT	Ongoing

Area Reviewed	Accessibility Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Responsible Person	Review Date
		disabled toilet space, the area will need to be cleared of cleaning supplies, as it is currently the staff-only toilet. (Currently, no young people attend who require this access.)			
Signage	School site and Corbett House site: Signage is clear and coloured. Practices to review takes place termly	Dual coded signage – a more communication-rich environment.	Look into examples of widget signage and or picture-rich signage.	HT	Ongoing
Lighting and acoustics	School site and Corbett House site: Bright and airy feel. Low echoes to avoid over-stimulation. Light covers available in some rooms	NA		HT	Ongoing
Emergency procedures	School site and Corbett House site: Signage is clear and coloured. Practices take place to monitor termly PEEPs in place or any pupils who require them with staff receiving training around this.	N/A		HT	Ongoing

Appendix D – Communication Support Protocol

- Identify pupils' and families' preferred communication methods.
- Provide written materials in accessible formats (large print, braille, audio, digital).
- Use visual supports and symbols where appropriate.
- Ensure staff are trained in communication needs and strategies.
- Review communication support regularly with pupils and families.
- Liaise with external specialists for communication aids and advice.

Appendix E – Equality Impact Assessment – New Ways School and Corbett House

Policy/Practice/Change Assessed		Date of Assessment	Assessor(s)
Introduction of the Virtual Classroom		19-08-26	Louise Reeks
Explicit work around Race including drama workshop and embedding of SMSC, Speak freely etc		19-08-26	Louise Reeks
Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions	
Age			
Disability	- To offer for those with a range of anxiety and mental health disabilities access to learning - To offer an introduction of the school and staff to reduce barriers - Increase in attendance - Increase in engagement - Decrease in anxiety related to school attendance and EBSNA.	External support gained from Governors, wider professional networks and internal partners in Keys. Additional support can be gained from these teams if further enhancements are required or action is needed. Pupils give insight into their own experiences of using the virtual classroom offer through reviews and pupil feedback surveys.	
Gender		The following are embedded to enhance understanding, increase knowledge and awareness: - PSHE delivery supports 1:1 emotional sessions - External speakers - Tutorial - Curriculum specific delivery Support from clinical teams School Council work on inclusion	

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions
Race/Ethnicity		The following are embedded to enhance understanding, increase knowledge and awareness: • PSHE delivery supports • 1:1 emotional sessions • External speakers • Tutorial • Curriculum specific delivery Support from clinical teams
Religion or Belief	The following are embedded to enhance understanding, increase knowledge and awareness: • PSHE delivery supports • 1:1 emotional sessions • External speakers • Tutorial • Curriculum specific delivery • Support from clinical teams	External support gained from Governors, professionals networks and internal partners in Keys Group, if further enhancements or concerns arise.
Sexual Orientation	The following are embedded to enhance understanding, increase knowledge and awareness: • PSHE delivery supports • 1:1 emotional sessions • External speakers • Tutorial • Curriculum specific delivery • Support from clinical teams	External support gained from Governors, professionals networks and internal partners in Keys Group, if further enhancements or concerns arise.
Pregnancy and Maternity	The following are embedded to enhance understanding, increase knowledge and awareness: • PSHE delivery supports • 1:1 emotional sessions • External speakers • Tutorial • Curriculum specific delivery • Support from clinical teams	External support gained from Governors, professionals networks and internal partners in Keys Group, if further enhancements or concerns arise.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The following are embedded to enhance understanding, increase knowledge and awareness:	External support gained from Governors, professionals networks and internal partners in Keys Group, if

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions
	• PSHE delivery supports • 1:1 emotional sessions • External speakers • Tutorial • Curriculum specific delivery • Support from clinical teams	further enhancements or concerns arise.
Gender Reassignment	The following are embedded to enhance understanding, increase knowledge and awareness: • PSHE delivery supports • 1:1 emotional sessions • External speakers • Tutorial • Curriculum specific delivery • Support from clinical teams	External support gained from Governors, professionals networks and internal partners in Keys Group, if further enhancements or concerns arise.

Summary and Recommendations:

Assessor Signature: Louise Reeks Date:19-08-26