

Accessibility Policy

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		Next Review Date	01/09/2028
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1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 (updated 2012) 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 must formulate accessibility strategies and plans to ensure inclusive environments.

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

2. Aim and Scope

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

3. Definitions and Abbreviations

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that 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, medically diagnosed Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

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).

4. Policy Content

4.1 Improving Access to the Physical Environment

We commit to enhancing the physical environment of New Ways, 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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. Responsibilities

The Headteacher, teaching staff, agency staff, and all personnel working within or supporting New Ways share responsibility for implementing this policy.

6. Training Requirements

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive induction training on this policy and ongoing professional development related to accessibility and inclusion.

7. Equality Impact

All staff and stakeholders must comply with this policy and demonstrate sensitivity and competence regarding diversity in race, faith, age, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

If any individual or group believes they are disadvantaged by this policy, they should contact their line manager. New Ways and Keys Group will respond proactively to such concerns.

Appendices – Procedures and Localisation of Policy

Appendix A – Accessibility Plan Template

Objective	Actions/Strategies	Responsible Person(s)	Timescale	Success Criteria
Improve physical/visual accessibility.	Conduct accessibility audit; implement adaptations (ramps, signage, lighting, warning or visual aids and markers)	Site Manager, Head Teacher	Ongoing	All areas are accessible to disabled pupils
Enhance curriculum access	Provide assistive technology; adapt teaching materials; staff training on inclusive practices	SENCO, Teaching Staff	Ongoing	Increased pupil engagement and progress
Improve the 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)

Appendix C – Accessibility Audit Tool

Area Reviewed	Accessibility Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Responsible Person	Review Date
Entrances and exits	<p>School Site: Side entrance with ramp access. A ramp is in place between the two buildings around the back.</p> <p>College Site: All ground floor access</p>	If a young person requires, they can look at a ramp to the rear garden. (Currently, no young people attend who require this access.)		HT	10.12.2026
Corridors and pathways	<p>School and College Site: Clear and accessible.</p>	N/A		HT	10.12.2026
Classrooms	<p>School and College Site: All classrooms are available and accessible to wheelchair users</p>	Should a restricted wheelchair user require adjustable surfaces and tables, they may be required. (Currently, no young people attend who require this access.)		HT	10.12.2026
Toilets and changing facilities	<p>School and College Site: A toilet is available and accessible for wheelchair users</p>	<p>No changing facilities unless you change in the toilet area.</p> <p>Should a young person require the disabled toilet space, the area will need to be cleared of cleaning supplies,</p>		HT	10.12.2026

Area Reviewed	Accessibility Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Responsible Person	Review Date
		<p>as it is currently the staff-only toilet.</p> <p>(Currently, no young people attend who require this access.)</p>			
Signage	<p>School and College Site:</p> <p>Signage uses colour and diagrams for exits.</p> <p>Toilets have access to diagrams</p>	<p>The main school sign is small and could be improved with a larger sign outside the school.</p>		HT	10.12.2026
Lighting and acoustics	<p>School and College Site:</p> <p>Bright and airy feel. Low echoes.</p>	N/A		HT	10.12.2026
Emergency procedures	<p>School and College Site:</p> <p>Signage is clear and coloured.</p> <p>Practices take place termly</p>	N/A		HT	10.12.2026

Appendix D – Communication Support Protocol

- Identify pupil's preferred communication methods and formats on admission.
- 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 Template

Policy/Practice/Change Assessed	Date of Assessment	Assessor(s)
<p>College and School Site:</p> <p>Introduction of the Virtual Classroom, within school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To offer for those with EBSA access to learning To offer an introduction of the school and staff to reduce barriers To offer an education that can be tailored to individuals needs 	30-05-25	Leanne Saunders
Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions
Age		
Disability	Positive due to ability to offer learning for this protected characteristic	
Gender	Positive due to ability to offer learning for this protected characteristic	
Race/Ethnicity	Positive due to ability to offer learning for this protected characteristic	
Religion or Belief	Positive due to ability to offer learning for this protected characteristic	
Sexual Orientation	Positive due to ability to offer learning for this protected characteristic	

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive due to ability to offer learning for this protected characteristic	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive due to ability to offer learning for this protected characteristic	

Summary and Recommendations:

Assessor Signature:  Date: 10-12-25