

GEORGE FENTHAM ENDOWED SCHOOL

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME and ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024



3 year period covered by the plan

March 2024 – March 2027

Co-ordinated by	Deb Purcell & Julie Gaughan
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To be reviewed by	Full Governing Body

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Introduction

Schools have had a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils: originally, under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA 1995); and, since October 2010, under the Equality Act 2010.

From September 2012, the reasonable adjustments duty for schools and education authorities also included a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils.

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) They have a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The school's Board of Governors has three key duties towards disabled children:

- Not to treat disabled children less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled children, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled children.

Under the Equality Act 2010 there is a requirement for public sector bodies, including schools, to promote equality for disabled people in every aspect of their work. The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies and which extends to all protected characteristics – race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and gender reassignment.

This combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011 and comprises three main elements.

Consequently, in carrying out their functions, therefore, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The way that George Fentham Endowed School meets these duties is set out in our Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. At George Fentham Endowed School the Plan will form part of the School Improvement Plan and will be monitored by the head teacher and evaluated by the relevant Governors' committee. The current Plan will be appended to this document.

The Plan must be reviewed every three years and approved by the Governing Body. This review process can be delegated to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Head.

Vision and values

At George Fentham Endowed School we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

George Fentham Endowed School is also committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, children and any others involved in the school community with any form of disability or protected characteristic, and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices or curriculum delivery. The School recognises it has a responsibility to meet the needs of all through promoting inclusion and recognising diversity. The school will not tolerate harassment of disabled children with any form of impairment, and will also consider the needs of children who are carers of disabled parents.

At George Fentham Endowed School we are committed to an inclusive curriculum and we aim to increase access to the school's facilities for all by:

- a) Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum, expanding and making reasonable adjustments to 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 such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
- b) Improving the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- c) Improving the delivery of information, which is normally issued in hard copy to pupils parents or carers who are not disabled, by extending the range of ways we make it available. Examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. We aim to provide this information available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.

Our Accessibility Plan is underpinned by the following features of the school:

- There is effective planning and liaison between appropriate school and support services working with individual pupils within school
- The Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO) has liaison time for agencies, support staff and families
- As a school we have high expectations of all pupils. We aim to establish a positive ethos within the school and staff. We aim to adopt a 'problem-solving' attitude in order to overcome barriers to learning for individuals
- We follow a whole-school positive behaviour management structure and reward scheme aimed at enhancing the self-esteem of all pupils
- We have a robust system in place for transition, transfers and integration of pupils. This includes gathering and sharing accurate information on the pupils' strengths, weaknesses and progress trends, together with strategies employed and evaluations of outcomes.

Management, coordination, implementation, monitoring and review

The School will consult with experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.

The Governors and Senior Leadership Team will work closely with the Local Authority and Diocese.

An effective School Accessibility Plan must be based upon sound data. At George Fentham Endowed School, planning therefore starts with information that is already held by the school in respect of two broad areas:

- information about the nature of the pupil population (present and future) and any disabled pupils for whom the school is planning;
- information about the nature of our school, its strengths and weaknesses in ensuring equal access for disabled pupils.

Pupil information might include a range of data:

- pupils already in the school and moving through it;
- the nature of the school's intake in the future, for example:
 - advance information about pupils with an Education Health Care Plan or Statement who may also be disabled;
 - other information, such as local/national information on trends in school population.
- the participation of disabled pupils in different aspects of school life;
- outcomes for disabled pupils

We need to consider whether:

- there are areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils might have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, science and technology for pupils with a visual impairment, humanities for pupils with learning difficulties;
- disability issues are reflected in the curriculum;
- disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extracurricular activities present particular challenges, for example: lunch and outdoor activity times for pupils with social/interaction impairments, after school clubs for pupils with physical impairments, school trips for pupils with medical needs;
- there are no parts of the school to which physically disabled pupils have limited or no access at the moment, or whether physical features of the school environment hamper access to the whole life of the school;
- access to information is planned, with a range of different formats available for disabled pupils;
- other issues affect the participation of disabled pupils, for example; bullying, peer relationships, policies on the administration of medicines and provision of personal care, or a lack of role models or images of disabled people within the school, in effect, all the school's policies and procedures, written and unwritten.

Careful consideration of these issues may indicate some clear priorities for the school's accessibility plan. Other issues may need to be addressed more immediately by making 'reasonable adjustments'.

There needs to be an ongoing audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses in working with disabled pupils.

Consultation

The School's Accessibility Plan has been informed by:

- the views and aspirations of disabled children and young people themselves;
- the views and aspirations of the parents of disabled pupils;
- the views and aspirations of other disabled people or voluntary organisations;
- Learning Support Services, Physical and Sensory Services;
- School Governor for SEN;
- School staff, teaching and non-teaching;
- The priorities of the local authority.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the progress of this plan will be undertaken through regular meetings of the Leadership and Management Team.

The plan will be reviewed and revised, at least on a bi-annual basis. Oversight of the monitoring will be undertaken by the Governing Body and the Leadership and Management Team.

Evaluation of the plan will be carried out in two ways:

- By conducting a formal audit of progress towards targets identified
- Through the collection of wider information relating to accessibility from pupils, parents, carers, The Local Authority, teachers and other relevant parties.

Accessibility Plan

The George Fentham Endowed School Accessibility Plan has been developed and drawn up based upon information supplied by the Local Authority, and consultations with pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school. Where appropriate, other outside agencies and specialists have also been consulted. The document will be used to advise other school planning documents and policies and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes. The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three year period ahead of the next review date.

Whole school training will recognize the need to continue raising awareness for staff and governors on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon our compliance with that duty.

George Fentham Endowed School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that 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 taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

The George Fentham Endowed School Accessibility Plan shows how, if required, access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions 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; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or **auxiliary aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve and maintain access to the **physical environment** of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

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

- Asset Management Plan
- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- National Curriculum Requirements
- Critical Incident Support Plan – EASEE Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Disability Equality Scheme
- School Improvement Plan
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Staff Professional Development

The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which remains the responsibility of the governing body. It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of this accessibility plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

Aims and Objectives

As highlighted in the School's Accessibility Plan our three main aims are:

- 1) Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability,
- 2) Improve and maintain access to the physical environment
- 3) Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors

Access to the Curriculum

In order that pupils with a disability or learning difficulty can access the curriculum, the school will strive to:

- Continue to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils.
- Continue to develop approaches to the differentiation of the curriculum to enable equal access for pupils with disabilities.
- Identify all pupils and known prospective pupils who face barriers to learning and full participation.
- Consider pupils' and prospective pupils' assessed needs and consider any reasonable adjustments which may be necessary to enable them to participate.
- Audit the approaches used when planning and delivering the curriculum to any disabled pupils.
- Audit staff training needs in relation to increasing participation in the curriculum of any disabled pupils.
- Continue developing resource banks detailing ideas and approaches which support increased participation of any disabled pupils in the curriculum.
- Audit pupil and prospective pupil needs in relation to the wider provision of school, including after school clubs, sporting and cultural activities and school trips.
- Seek to develop and share good practice in this area and access the opportunities provided by the LA and other schools to facilitate this process.

Access to the Physical Environment

In order that pupils and other people within the school, with a disability or learning difficulty can access the physical environment, the school will strive to:

- Ensure an access audit plan has been completed and incorporate the outcome into the School Improvement Plan.
- Seek to include minor building works or developments to improve accessibility, identified by the school, or through the access audit, into the School Improvement Plan.
- Continue to provide specialist aids/equipment to individual pupils whenever this is reasonable to do so.
- Consider on a planned basis, how to improve accessibility through reorganising or rearranging aspects of the school environment in the most cost effective way.

Access to the Delivery of Information

In order that pupils and other people within the school, with a disability or learning difficulty can access information, the school will strive to:

- Raise awareness amongst staff about the requirements to provide information in alternative formats if required.

- Maintain up-to-date information on pupils' needs for the provision of information in alternative formats and ensure it is shared amongst staff.
- Collect and share examples of good practice amongst staff.
- Review and audit the schools' approach to the provision of written information in general to establish if the format could be improved routinely and in general to improve accessibility.
- Seek specialist advice and support in those cases which lie beyond the school's immediate expertise.
- Maximise the use of ICT equipment in the delivery of information.

Our objectives are detailed in the Action Plan below

Current good practice

We aim to ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers. This is included in our EYFS Induction process. For parents and carers of children already at the school, opportunities are available to discuss any disability or health concerns with staff e.g. Parent Consultations.

Curriculum

There are areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils may have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, science and technology for pupils with a visual impairment, humanities for pupils with learning difficulties.

Physical Environment

Disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extra-curricular activities might present particular challenges, for example: lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction impairments, after-school clubs for pupils with physical impairments, school trips for pupils with medical needs. There are very few parts of the school to which physically disabled pupils have limited or no access at the moment.

Information

Different forms of communication are made available to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is planned, with a range of different formats available for disabled pupils, parents and staff.

Access Audit

The school is essentially a single storey building with wide corridors and several access points from outside. Nursery, KS1 and KS2 areas are all on the ground floor with wide door access to all rooms. The hall is on the ground floor and is accessible to all.

There is on-site car parking for staff and an adjacent Nursery car park. Dedicated parking is available . All entrances to the school are either flat or ramped and all have wide doors fitted. The main entrance features a secure lobby and has been fitted with a low reception hatch, this being fully accessible to wheelchair users. There are disabled toilet facilities available, one in the Foundation Stage, one outside the Hall. All these are fitted with a handrail and a pull emergency cord.

The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked.

Accessibility Action Plan

Access to the Curriculum			
Statement	Evidence	Action Required	Time Frame
All teachers and TAs have the necessary training to teach and support pupils with a range of disabilities	Within the team staff can support all children	Training given to all staff as needed	Ongoing
Classrooms are optimally organised and all appropriate additional equipment is provided to promote the participation and independence of all pupils and adults alike	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and specialist equipment to support the learning process in individual class bases	Maintain	Ongoing
Lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve i.e. are adapted and include work to be done by individuals, pairs, small groups and the whole class as appropriate	All work is adapted as appropriate and children have individual targets to work towards	Monitoring	Complete and ongoing
All pupils are encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities	Everyone is included in the curriculum	Maintain	Complete and ongoing
Staff recognise and plan for the additional time and effort needed by any disabled pupils e.g. lip reading by hearing impaired pupils, slow writing speed for pupils with dyslexia	All detailed in Provision Maps and Individual Targets, progress monitored regularly	Individual Targets are reviewed termly. Special Needs Register updated termly. Pupil Progress Meetings termly	Complete and ongoing
Ensure PE curriculum is accessible to all	Alternative exercises/provision during PE lessons to encourage inclusivity Create PE scheme includes adaptations for PI children	Plan appropriately	Ongoing
Use ICT software to support learning	Make sure software is installed where needed Provide hardware such as iPads and laptops to those children who would benefit	As required	Ongoing
School visits are accessible to all pupils, regardless of attainment or impairment	Ensure each new venue is vetted for appropriateness Specific risk assessments completed for individual children when necessary	Maintain policy	As required
All staff have high expectations of pupils	Yes- Targets set and monitored	Maintain ethos	Complete
All staff strive to remove barriers to learning and participation	Yes- Planning thoroughly	Maintain ethos	Complete

Children with hearing impairments have access to all teaching and learning	Children with hearing impairments use appropriate technology, to ensure they have access to all teaching and learning Staff have been appropriately trained to use required devices.	Maintain	Ongoing
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Access to the Physical Environment			
Statement	Evidence	Action Required	Time Frame
The layout of school allows access to all areas.	All areas can be accessed internally and externally.	Keep under review.	Ongoing
Pupils who use wheelchairs can move freely around school. There are no barriers to access caused by doorways, stairs and steps	An internal step in the main entrance area does prohibit access to the main reception and head teacher's office.	This has not caused any problems to date. If actions is required in the future then advice will be sought	Ongoing
Toilet facilities have appropriate measures for disabled use	There are a number of disabled toilets across the site	Maintain	Complete
Pathways around school are safe and well signed. Parking arrangements are logical and safe	Disabled parking provision needs to be reviewed.	Ongoing	Ongoing
Ensure all disabled pupils can be safely evacuated	Put in place a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for all pupils with difficulties	Currently in place for all pupils who require one. Write new ones as required.	Complete for current pupils.
Signs are uncomplicated and unambiguous	Clear signs in all areas	Maintain	Ongoing
All areas are well lit	All areas in school are well lit	Maintain	Ongoing
Furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately, e.g. height adjustable tables are available, low level sinks etc.	All furniture bought from local authority recommended sources. Adjustments made on an individual basis where necessary	Monitor and maintain equipment	Complete

Access to the Delivery of Information			
Statement	Evidence	Action Required	Time Frame
Staff are familiar with technology and practices to assist pupils, parents and carers with disabilities	All staff have received training on Dyslexia friendly practices as well as ASD & ADHD training. Children with hearing impairments use appropriate technology, to ensure they have access to information.	Ongoing	As and when necessary dependent upon pupils and families
Written information is delivered in an appropriate format	Suitably enlarged, clear print can be provided for pupils, parents or carers with a visual impairment interpreters can be provided for parents with hearing impairments	As required	As required
The school liaises with LA support services and other agencies to provide information in simple, clear language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils/parents and carers who may have difficulty with the standard printed format	Children with VI attend the school and resources are modified appropriately	Modify for individual pupils as and when necessary	Complete
The school ensures that both in lessons and parents meetings information is presented in a user-friendly way e.g. by reading aloud, using overhead projectors/PowerPoint presentations etc.	Yes, variety of presentation styles used to aid the presentation for all	Continue with current positive practice and ensure adaptations are made for individuals as and when necessary	Complete

Mrs S Kavanagh Chair of Governors

Mr T Beresford Governor

Mrs J Gaughan Head Teacher

March 2024