

Accessibility Policy

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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.

Highcroft 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.

Highcroft School 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 Highcroft 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.

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 Highcroft School 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. Highcroft School 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 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 practises	SENCO, Teaching Staff	Ongoing	Increased pupil engagement 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)

Appendix C – Accessibility Audit Tool

Area Reviewed	Accessibility Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Responsible Person	Review Date
Entrances and exits					
Corridors and pathways					
Classrooms					
Toilets and changing facilities					
Signage					
Lighting and acoustics					
Emergency procedures					



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)
Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact (Positive/Negative/None)	Mitigation or Enhancement Actions
Age		
Disability		
Gender		
Race/Ethnicity		
Religion or Belief		
Sexual Orientation		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		

Summary and Recommendations:

Assessor Signature: _ Date: