

COGNITA



Milbourne Lodge School
ad optima petenda

Accessibility Plan

United Kingdom

September 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.
- 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

Actions to increase access to the curriculum and learning

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Availability of written material in alternative formats using 1-2-1 devices.	Ongoing	SENCO/Deputy Head/ Inclusion Officer	Liaise with professional advisors Source publishers/text book providers who can provide material in alternative formats eg large print Liaise with specialist charities for assistance (eg RNIB) All above to lead to the school being able to provide written information in alternative formats
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum for pupils with physical/learning difficulties.	Training of staff for pupil with hearing loss	SENCO	Liaise with professional advisors Source publishers/text book providers who can provide material in alternative formats eg large print Liaise with specialist charities for assistance (eg RNIB) All above to lead to the school being able to provide written information in alternative formats
Planning for Class trips - investigation of venues with regards to accessibility – via pre visits, and ongoing communication with providers.	Ongoing	SENCO, EVC, Trip Leader	All trips are accessible and are reasonably adjusted to be inclusive for all students. Staffing ratios adjusted to accommodate children with increased need where necessary
Readers/assistants for Examinations.	As and when required	SENCO in liaison with Deputy Head	Improved access to examinations

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

Note: The school already has ramps/disabled toilet facilities with changing space/low level entry bell at main door entrance/basic disabled parking bay

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing to benefit any pupils with visual impairments and install window blinds.	Ongoing	Operations Manager	Physical accessibility of school increased.
Review of seating in classrooms and adapting lighting and equipment.	Ongoing	SENCO and Operations Manager	Physical accessibility of school increased
Lighting.	Ongoing	Operations Manager	Improved lighting to all site areas - classrooms/offices/corridors/landings.
Disabled parking signage improved	Autumn Term	Operations Manager	Physical accessibility of the school increased.

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

We will ensure the availability of written material in alternative formats when specifically requested, including the use of large print resources and the use of coloured paper. When required, readers and scribes are provided for examinations, and additional time is allowed for those who require additional support.

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Large print resources and use of coloured paper	Ongoing	SENCO	Appropriate resources available when these are requested.
Internal signage	Ongoing	SENCO to liaise with Operation Manager	Appropriate signage in place.
Support for pupil with hearing difficulties	Ongoing	SENCO	Appropriate signage in place.

Accessibility Plan

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Document Reviewer	Regional Leader of Inclusion and Head of H&S Europe
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