



The Gillford Centre

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2025 – 2028

Approved by ¹			
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Signed:			
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REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision/Review
1	Original	March 2012
2	Front Cover ONLY updated to take account of revised Statutory Policy Guidance issued by the DfE	January 2013
3	Reformatted only	February 2014
4	Reformatted only	February 2015
5	Reformatted only	May 2017
6	Very minor updates AND 'Date Complete' added to all Action Plans (Appendices)	September 2018
7	Reviewed – links checked	October 2019
9	Reviewed with minor restructuring and updated to include information relating to the Public Sector Equality Duty	September 2023
10	Reviewed – minor formatting changes, no change to content	September 2025

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[Appendix A\(i\)](#) Plan (Improving Access to the Curriculum)

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1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in several ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However, the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition.
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities are under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability, if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

2. Definition of disability

Under the Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

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

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).
- 'Normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

It should be noted that this definition is *not just regarding physical difficulties* but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition, there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled, but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

3. Reasonable adjustments

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is, then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

The Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable, however, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) provides further guidance in its publication [EHRC Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils](#). It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities are required to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a

statement of SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

Under the Equality Act we do not have a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our accessibility planning.

4. **Public sector equality duty (PSED)**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (section 149 of the Equality Act) came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty applies to public bodies (including schools) and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.

The PSED is supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties require public bodies to

- publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty at least annually; and
- set and publish measurable equality objectives, at least every four years.

All information must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access it and the published information must show that the public body had due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

These are generally described as the three aims of the Equality Duty. Our accessibility plan has been developed to help us to effectively meet our obligations under the PSED and ensure that users of our service who have a disability are not disadvantaged when accessing our curriculum, physical environment or the information which we provide.

5. **Aims of the accessibility plan**

We strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

In The Gillford Centre, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum.
- Increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of schools/settings to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, **begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people** through specific targets. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates, in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward

into subsequent plans. The Plan will be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

6. Key objectives

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which 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 challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework ([Click here to access](#)) which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - Setting suitable learning challenges.
 - Responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs.
 - Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

7. Contextual information

School to insert its own relevant information here to include for example:

- The Gillford Centre, Upperby Road, Carlisle, CA2 4JE.
- The Gillford Centre is a Pupil Referral Unit offering education to Primary and Secondary students and School 180, which is a second site for 40 pupils
- The Gillford Centre currently has 78 Students on roll (as at September 2025).
- The Gillford Centre building consists of single story buildings, two playgrounds and staff parking area. There are also two annexed classrooms, 2 standalone buildings and a classroom pod.
- School 180 is a purpose built building for 40 students that is single story, in addition it has 2 standalone classroom pods.

8. Development of the plan

8.1 Vision and values

Our School:

- Has high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life.
- Is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled students in all aspects of school life.
- Values the individual and the contribution they make to all aspects of school life.
- Will strive to ensure that its disabled pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and teaching resources so as to develop fully in their education.
- Acknowledges a commitment to embrace the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement.
- Will continue to focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school.
- Is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school community.

8.2 Information from pupil data and school audit

- The very nature of the core work of The Gillford Centre means that the school population is generally transient. Also because we cover all Key Stages 1-4 and HHTS the population is adapted to meet the needs of each group/Key Stage.

- The buildings are accessible for pupils with disability although in the past 15 years there has only been one youngster with a physical disability.
- The HHTS staff are very knowledgeable and skilled at working with those pupils who have significant medical/mental health issues.
- We also work with a growing number of pupils with a diagnosis of autism. Key starting points for the school's plan:
- Our annual development plan takes into account the needs of our diverse student population as well as the needs of its wider community.
- A significant number of students with a disability currently in feeder primary/secondary schools who may wish to come here have been identified through dialogue with the Local Authority agencies tasked with supporting those students in its area with disabilities.
- In order to ensure that our data is up to date and accurate we will:
- liaise with the Local Authority so as to identify and therefore plan a response to students with a disability well before they arrive;
- improve the information dissemination from our Learning Support facility;
- implement a system that allows parents to inform us if they themselves have a disability;
- identify early on in their school career any obstacles to the effective learning of disabled students;
- use all available data to inform the planning of individual student learning patterns;
- use information supplied via previous LA Asset Management/Accessibility Audits to assist us to develop an action plan to reduce obstacles for the school/setting community.

8.3 Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

We will:

- ensure the development of the plan involves coordination with the Local Authority in line with the LA Accessibility Strategy and ensure that we provide the best choices for students wanting to enrol here;
- consult the full management committee and the SEND link;
- consult staff including specifically SENCo, heads of department, safety committee;
- set up a structure to allow the views of students, both able and disabled to be considered;
- survey parents/carers to ascertain their views on our provision for disabled students and any developments they feel would be of use to the students and also offer parents alternative ways of answering the survey;
- involve outside agencies who already exist to assist disabled students in their education and future careers;
- ensure the views of ALL those consulted are taken into consideration and the plan modified where reasonable to meet the needs of stakeholders;

9. Scope of the plan

9.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- To investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled students to access can be improved;
- To further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled students;
- To investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled students to learn including liaison with the LA **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Statementing and Provision Team**.

We plan 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. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school/setting such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or off-site visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing

the curriculum. The school/setting will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

The Gillford Centre strives to help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

The Centre continually develops strategic responses to the varied behavioural needs of our students. Staff CPD ensures that we have the correct skill set to be able to meet the needs of students. We ensure that we have all the necessary systems in place to address absence and promote good attendance.

Those pupils with identified SEND have Individual Education Plans that are written with and shared by all teaching and support staff.

9.2 Improving the school's physical environment to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

- In consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the site.
- Improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas.
- Investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is required regardless of whether the school has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

9.3 Improving delivery of information that is provided in writing for disabled pupils

We will strive to:

- produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired students;
- investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site.

The school plans to improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information will be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

9.4 Financial planning and control

The Head teacher with Senior Management Team, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the School Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process. The objective is that over time School Accessibility Plan actions will be integrated into the School Development Plan.

We will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

10. Implementation

10.1 Management, coordination and implementation

Our Leadership Team will undertake a disability audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents (refer to Section 7.3).

As a result of the audit, we shall:

- *produce action plans, with definite time scales for the implementation of the actions implicit in the plan;*
- *plan to provide workshops so staff can understand and buy into the Accessibility Plan and not see it as a bolt on;*
- *present the plan to the governing body for their approval;*
- *modify the plan based on the views of stakeholders;*
- *review the plan and the associated action plans to see if milestones are being met. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary every three years.*

10.2 Monitoring

We recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

The Management Committee will be required to comment in their annual report to parents on the accessibility plan and identify any revisions as necessary. Evaluation that may be useful to judge success may include:

- success in meeting identified targets;
- changes in physical accessibility of school buildings;
- questionnaires, responses from stakeholders e.g. parents, pupils and staff, indicate increased confidence in the school's/setting's ability to promote access to educational opportunities for pupils with disabilities;
- improved levels of confidence in staff in reducing the obstacles to success for pupils with additional needs;
- recorded evidence that increased numbers of pupils with disabilities are actively participating in all areas of the school;
- recorded evidence that fewer pupils are being excluded from school opportunities as their needs are being more effectively addressed through the application of strategies and procedures;
- increased levels of achievement for pupils with disabilities;
- pupil responses; verbally, pictorially and written that indicate that they feel themselves to be included;
- Ofsted inspections that identify higher levels of educational inclusion.

10.3 The role of the LA in increasing accessibility

The Gillford Centre works closely with the Local Authority to support accessibility and inclusion across the school. As a Pupil Referral Unit, the Centre is funded through a set per-pupil funding model, which reflects the complex needs of the cohort. The Centre does not receive additional EHCP top-up funding, and therefore plans and delivers provision within its agreed funding arrangements.

The Local Authority has supported the Centre's accessibility work by:

- Providing guidance, advice, and training opportunities relating to inclusion, SEND, and safeguarding, which have been used to inform staff practice and whole-school systems where appropriate.
- Sharing information and guidance aimed at promoting inclusive practice and supporting schools in meeting statutory duties, including updates to policies, procedures, and expectations.

- Facilitating professional dialogue and collaboration between alternative provision, special schools, and mainstream settings, enabling the Centre to share expertise and contribute to wider inclusion discussions.
- Signposting support services and external agencies that can provide specialist advice to support pupils with additional needs and help the Centre identify appropriate strategies to promote inclusion.
- Providing advice relating to the physical environment, including accessibility considerations linked to refurbishment, maintenance, and capital works, where applicable.
- Advising on accessible communication, including how information can be made available in alternative formats to meet the needs of pupils, parents/carers, and visitors.

The Centre continues to use Local Authority guidance and support proportionately and in line with its funding arrangements, ensuring that accessibility and inclusion remain integral to school practice.

10.4 Accessing the school's plan

This will be done through:

- presentation in a section on the school website open to all visitors to the site;

We will ensure that the plan is available in different formats where requested.

The school will achieve successful implementation of the accessibility plan with continued support in the areas of:

- providing training and awareness opportunities to staff, The Management Committee and parents/carers on issues regarding equality and inclusion;
- providing targeted training for particular groups of pupils/staff;
- promoting collaboration through the provision of information and the sharing of good practice;
- encouraging liaison between other local schools/settings including special schools;
- seeking support/advice from outside the school, from services, other agencies and organisations;
- ensuring that the school is aware of all support services that provide advice to schools/settings and staff.

11. Related policies

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents

- Curriculum details
- Equality Policy, Action Plan and Objectives
- Staff Training and Development Plan
- Management Committee Training Records
- Health & Safety Policy and procedures
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy, Local Offer Response and Information Report
- Off-Site Visits Procedures
- School Behaviour Policy & procedures
- School Development Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Complaints Procedure

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<p style="text-align: center;">The Gillford Centre</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2025 – 2028</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM</p>					
Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement	Date Complete
Increase access to the curriculum through flexible and personalised learning approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ② Use personalised timetables and small-group teaching where appropriate ② Adapt curriculum delivery to meet pupils' SEMH and additional learning needs ② Review curriculum access regularly through pupil progress and behaviour reviews 	Pupils are better able to engage with learning and make progress across a broad and balanced curriculum.	Ongoing (2025–2028)	Improved engagement, attendance, and learning outcomes for pupils.	Ongoing
Ensure staff have the skills and confidence to support access to learning for all pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ② Provide ongoing CPD focused on inclusive teaching strategies and behaviour support ② Share effective practice through staff meetings and training sessions ② Use external guidance where appropriate to inform classroom practice 	Staff feel confident and consistent in supporting pupils to access learning.	Ongoing (2025–2028)	Increased staff confidence and consistent approaches across the Centre.	Ongoing

Reduce barriers to learning by ensuring appropriate support is in place at key times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Deploy staff flexibly to support pupils during lessons and transitions □ Review support arrangements regularly to reflect changing pupil needs □ Use internal systems to identify and respond quickly to barriers to engagement 	Pupils are supported effectively to remain in learning and access the curriculum.	Ongoing (2025–2028)	Reduced disruption to learning and increased participation in lessons.	Ongoing

The Gillford Centre						
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2025 – 2028						
IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT						
An Asset Management Plan/Access Audit was carried out by James Nichols, September 2025, and a number of recommendations made:						
AMP or AA Report Ref. (if relevant)	Item	Activity	Timescale	Cost £	Responsibility	Date Complete
	Furniture and fittings	Ensure accessibility is considered when purchasing or replacing furniture and fittings, including seating, desks, storage, and classroom layout.	Ongoing (2025–2028)	Within existing budgets	Headteacher / Business Manager	Ongoing
	Internal circulation routes	Regularly review corridors, classrooms, and communal spaces to ensure they are free from unnecessary obstructions and allow safe movement for all users.	Reviewed annually	Nil	Senior Leadership Team	Ongoing
	Toilet and welfare facilities	Ensure welfare facilities remain accessible and suitable for pupils and visitors with additional physical or medical needs, making reasonable adjustments where required.	As required	Within existing maintenance budget	Business Manager	Ongoing
	Learning environments	Review lighting, noise levels, and classroom environments to ensure they support pupils with sensory or additional needs, implementing adjustments where reasonably practicable.	Ongoing (2025–2028)	Within existing budgets	Senior Leadership Team	Ongoing
	Building maintenance and refurbishment	Ensure accessibility considerations are included in all planned maintenance, refurbishment, and capital works, in line with LA guidance.	As required	Subject to LA approval and funding	Headteacher	Ongoing

<p style="text-align: center;">The Gillford Centre</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2025 – 2028</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMPROVING ACCESS TO WRITTEN INFORMATION</p>					
Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement	Date Complete
Ensure written information is available in alternative formats when required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Identify and signpost available support for converting written information into alternative formats ☒ Provide large print, simplified text, or digital formats on request ☒ Review requests on an individual basis 	Pupils, parents/carers, and visitors can access information in a format that meets their needs.	Ongoing (2025–2028)	Improved access to information for all users.	Ongoing
Improve accessibility of school communications for pupils and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Review key documents (letters, policies, timetables) to ensure clear layout and accessible language ☒ Use digital platforms where appropriate to support access ☒ Promote availability of alternative formats to parents/carers 	School communications are clearer and more accessible to all.	Reviewed annually (2025–2028)	Positive feedback from pupils, parents/carers, and staff.	Ongoing
Increase staff awareness of accessible written communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Share guidance on accessible formatting and clear written communication 	Staff are confident in producing accessible written information.	Ongoing (2025–2028)	More consistent and accessible communication across the Centre.	Ongoing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Provide brief updates or reminders through staff meetings or CPD□ Encourage consistent approaches across the Centre				

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