



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

LONGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

CARE • GROW • SHINE

Policy owner	Headteacher and SENCO
Responsible body	Governing Body
Applies to	Pupils and prospective pupils; and, where relevant, access arrangements affecting parents, carers, staff and visitors
Linked statutory document	The school's separate Accessibility Plan
Review arrangements	Reviewed regularly and sooner following changes to law, guidance, provision, identified need or significant accessibility concern

1. Purpose and commitment

Longton Primary School and Nursery is committed to ensuring that disabled pupils can access education, benefits, facilities and services as fully as reasonably possible. We aim to identify and remove barriers before they disadvantage a child and to make reasonable adjustments in response to individual need.

This policy provides the permanent framework for accessibility. The separate Accessibility Plan contains the school's live improvement actions across curriculum access, the physical environment and accessible information.

Our approach reflects CARE through respect, support and togetherness; GROW through choice, opportunity and imagination; and SHINE through challenge, achievement and celebration.

2. Legal and guidance framework

This policy is informed by the current versions of the Equality Act 2010, including the disability discrimination provisions and reasonable adjustment duty; Schedule 10 accessibility planning duties; the Public Sector Equality Duty; the Children and Families Act 2014; the SEND Code of Practice; DfE Equality Act advice for schools; DfE guidance for governing boards on SEN and disability; current statutory safeguarding guidance; and Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance for schools.

Where legislation or statutory guidance changes, the current requirement takes precedence over wording in this policy.

3. Definition of disability

Under the Equality Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial. 'Long-term' generally means that the effect has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least 12 months or for the rest of the person's life.

Disability is not the same as special educational need. Some disabled pupils have SEN and some do not. Some pupils with SEN are disabled and some are not. The school considers each pupil's circumstances individually.

4. Our legal duties

The school will not unlawfully discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil because of disability. The school will make reasonable adjustments where a disabled pupil would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

The reasonable adjustment duty is anticipatory. This means the school should think ahead about barriers that disabled pupils may face rather than waiting until a pupil is disadvantaged.

For pupils, the reasonable adjustment duty includes reasonable changes to provisions, criteria and practices and the provision of auxiliary aids and services. Physical alterations are addressed through the school's accessibility planning duty.

5. The Accessibility Plan

The Governing Body maintains a written Accessibility Plan. The plan is separate from this policy and sets out practical, time-bound actions. It is published on the school website and kept under review.

The plan addresses the three statutory areas:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment to increase disabled pupils' access to education, benefits, facilities and services; and
- improving the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils.

6. Identifying barriers and need

Accessibility is considered through everyday practice, individual assessment and whole-school review. The school does not rely only on a diagnosis or formal label before considering support.

Information may come from the pupil, parents or carers, previous settings, the SENCO, class staff, healthcare professionals, therapists, educational psychologists, social care, attendance and safeguarding information, risk assessments, complaints, incidents, site reviews and pupil voice.

The school will consider barriers that may be physical, sensory, communication-related, cognitive, emotional, organisational, digital or attitudinal.

7. Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are decided case by case. The school will consider the disadvantage, the effectiveness of the proposed adjustment, practicability, health and safety, cost and resources, available support, the interests of other pupils and whether another adjustment would achieve the same purpose.

Examples may include changes to routines, seating, teaching methods, communication, sensory environment, transitions, behaviour support, homework, uniform arrangements, trips, clubs, assessment, equipment, timetables or access to particular spaces.

Adjustments should be recorded where this supports consistency. They should be reviewed for impact and changed when they are not working.

8. Curriculum access

The school will work to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum and wider school life.

Teachers are responsible for high-quality teaching that anticipates common barriers and adapts teaching appropriately. The SENCO supports staff to understand individual needs and effective provision.

- adapted teaching, resources and communication;
- access to appropriate aids, equipment and assistive technology;
- reasonable adjustments to assessment and classroom routines;
- inclusive access to PE, outdoor learning, educational visits, clubs and enrichment;
- planning for sensory, regulation, mobility, communication and medical needs.

9. Physical environment

The school will work over time to improve the physical environment so disabled pupils can take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services.

Accessibility will be considered when rooms are reorganised, equipment is purchased, works are planned and the use of the site changes. The school will consider routes, entrances, thresholds, doors, lighting, acoustics, signage, toilets and changing arrangements, seating, playgrounds, emergency evacuation and access to specialist or quieter spaces.

Where a building feature cannot be changed immediately, the school will consider reasonable alternative arrangements and include longer-term action in the Accessibility Plan where appropriate.

10. Accessible information and communication

The school will work to improve the availability of information for disabled pupils in formats that meet their needs. This may include large print, simplified or symbol-supported text, visual timetables, alternative digital formats, audio, adapted layout, assistive technology or other communication support.

Accessible information needs will be considered early and information should be provided within a reasonable time. The school will also consider reasonable communication adjustments for disabled parents and carers so they can participate in their child's education.

11. Admissions and prospective pupils

Disabled pupils and prospective pupils will not be treated less favourably because of disability. The school will consider reasonable adjustments during admission, transition and induction.

Families are encouraged to share relevant information early so that safe and effective arrangements can be planned. A lack of diagnosis will not, by itself, prevent consideration of reasonable adjustment.

12. Attendance, behaviour and exclusions

Disability-related need will be considered when applying attendance, behaviour and disciplinary procedures. The school will consider whether a pupil's disability has contributed to behaviour or difficulty and whether reasonable adjustments are required.

This does not mean that all behaviour linked to disability is without consequence. It means decisions will be lawful, individual, proportionate and informed by safeguarding, SEND and equality duties.

13. Trips, clubs and wider school life

Disabled pupils should be able to participate in educational visits, performances, clubs, wraparound provision and other opportunities as fully as reasonably possible.

Planning will begin early, involve the pupil and family where appropriate, and consider transport, staffing, communication, medication, personal care, sensory needs, fatigue, mobility and emergency arrangements. A pupil will not be excluded from an activity simply because planning is more complex.

14. Medical needs, personal care and dignity

Accessibility arrangements will take account of medical needs, intimate or personal care, toileting, eating and drinking, mobility and fatigue. Support will preserve dignity, privacy, safety and participation.

Relevant staff will have the information and training they need. Individual plans and risk assessments will be used where appropriate.

15. Emergency evacuation

Emergency procedures will consider disabled pupils and others who may need assistance. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans or other individual arrangements will be used where necessary.

Plans will identify practical support, routes, equipment and staff responsibilities and will be reviewed following drills, changes in need or changes to the site.

16. Digital accessibility and assistive technology

Digital systems, online learning, documents and communication should be accessible as far as reasonably possible. Staff will consider readable layouts, captions, keyboard access, screen-reader compatibility, contrast, font size and alternative formats where relevant.

Assistive technology and auxiliary aids will be considered where they help remove substantial disadvantage. Staff will be supported to use agreed equipment effectively.

17. Consultation and pupil voice

Disabled pupils and their parents or carers have important knowledge about barriers and effective support. The school will listen to their views when planning individual adjustments and when reviewing wider accessibility.

Consultation will be proportionate to age, communication needs and the decision being made. Pupils should be able to say what helps, what does not help and what makes participation difficult.

18. Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring compliance with equality and accessibility planning duties, approving and monitoring the Accessibility Plan, considering resource implications and providing support and challenge.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring accessibility is considered in strategic and operational decisions and ensuring concerns are acted upon.

The SENCO coordinates advice about SEND and disability, supports staff, contributes to accessibility review and works with pupils, families and professionals.

All staff are responsible for identifying barriers, making agreed adjustments, seeking advice when needed and avoiding assumptions about what a disabled pupil can or cannot do.

Site, administrative and support staff contribute to accessible premises, information, systems and routines.

19. Procurement and change

Accessibility should be considered before significant purchases, building works, changes to systems, curriculum resources or new digital services are agreed. Considering accessibility at the start is usually more effective than correcting barriers later.

20. Staff training and awareness

Staff development will reflect the needs of pupils and the school. This may include disability equality, reasonable adjustments, communication, sensory needs, assistive technology, medical needs, personal care, evacuation or specific conditions.

Training should lead to improved practice. Leaders will use observation, discussion, pupil voice, incidents and review of provision to check whether arrangements are effective.

21. Safeguarding

Disabled children may face additional barriers to recognising or reporting abuse. Staff will consider communication needs, dependency on adults, intimate care, online access, peer relationships and the possibility that signs of abuse may be wrongly attributed to disability.

Safeguarding concerns must be reported through the school's safeguarding procedures without delay. Accessibility needs will be considered when helping a child communicate or participate in safeguarding processes.

22. Complaints and concerns

Accessibility concerns should be raised promptly with the class teacher, SENCO or Headteacher so that barriers can be understood and addressed. Formal complaints will be handled under the school's Complaints Policy.

The school will make reasonable adjustments to its complaints process where needed. Safeguarding concerns will not be delayed by the complaints process.

23. Monitoring and review

The school will monitor accessibility through review of the Accessibility Plan, pupil and parent voice, SEND information, attendance, participation, incidents, complaints, site checks and governor oversight.

The policy will be reviewed regularly and sooner where there is a significant change in law or guidance, school provision, the site or identified need.

24. Related documents

This policy should be read alongside the separate Accessibility Plan; SEND Policy and SEND Information Report; Equality Information and Objectives; Race Equality Policy; Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Behaviour Policy; Attendance Policy; Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions arrangements; Intimate Care arrangements; Health and Safety Policy; Educational Visits procedures; Emergency and evacuation arrangements; Online Safety Policy; Data Protection arrangements; and Complaints Policy.

Appendix 1: Accessibility decision prompts

- ☐ What is the barrier or substantial disadvantage?
- ☐ What does the pupil say would help?
- ☐ What do parents/carers and relevant professionals advise?

- ☐ What adjustment has been considered?
- ☐ Is it likely to remove or reduce the disadvantage?
- ☐ Is an auxiliary aid or service required?
- ☐ Are there health, safety, safeguarding or dignity considerations?
- ☐ Who will implement the adjustment?
- ☐ How will staff know what to do?
- ☐ When will impact be reviewed?
- ☐ Does this reveal a wider barrier that should be added to the Accessibility Plan?

Appendix 2: Annual accessibility assurance prompts

- ☐ The separate Accessibility Plan is current, published and progressing.
- ☐ Curriculum participation has been reviewed.
- ☐ The physical environment and site changes have been considered.
- ☐ Accessible information needs have been reviewed.
- ☐ Pupil and parent voice has informed review.
- ☐ Individual reasonable adjustments are understood and effective.
- ☐ Trips, clubs and wraparound provision are accessible.
- ☐ Emergency evacuation arrangements reflect current need.
- ☐ Digital accessibility and assistive technology have been considered.
- ☐ Complaints, incidents and attendance patterns have been checked for accessibility issues.
- ☐ Governors have received assurance and outstanding actions have owners and completion evidence.