**Highfield Hall Primary School**



**Disability Equality and Access Plan**

**2023 - 2026**

Highfield Hall Primary School welcomes its general responsibilities under The Equality Act (2010). This legislation replaced all previous equality legislation.

This document sets out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

At Highfield Hall we aim to provide a happy, calm and safe school where everyone feels valued and respected. A school which celebrates achievement and recognizes success and has high expectations for all.

We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for pupils, staff and all those with disabilities, receiving services from the school. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life. Our admissions policy does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities. The achievement of pupils with disabilities will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. We will not tolerate harassment of people with disabilities with any form of impairment. This school uses the ‘social model’ of disability, as the basis for its work to improve equality for and tackle discrimination against disabled people. This model says that it is the world and society that creates barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled.

# Definition of Disability

Under the Equality Act of 2010 a person has a disability if they has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

**'a physical or mental impairment'** includes sensory impairments; impairments relating to mental functioning, including learning disabilities; and long term health conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis

**'substantial'** means more than minor or trivial.

**'long-term'** means an impairment that has lasted at least 12 months, or is likely to last 12 months or for the rest of the person’s life

**'normal day-to-day activities'** cover the following categories: 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 the risk of physical danger.

Someone with an impairment may be receiving medical or other treatment which alleviates or removes the effects of that impairment (but not the impairment itself). In such cases the treatment should be disregarded and the impairment is taken to have the effect it would have had without the treatment.

Some people are automatically deemed to have a disability covered by the Act – those with HIV, cancer, MS and severe disfigurements.

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. However, it should be noted that disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

# Aims and Objectives

* We aim to be an inclusive school actively seeking to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils
* We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups
* We will ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils to benefit from the education our school provides
* We will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his/her disability
* We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff or parent with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage
* We will do our best to anticipate the needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities before s/he joins the school.
* We will consult with, seek and value the contributions of disabled pupils, parents, staff and the wider community who already use the school or intend to do so in the future.
* We aim to continue to improve the physical environment for pupils, staff, parents and the wider community.

We endeavour to improve provision for disabled pupils and staff by developing the physical environment of the school, within the limits of the resources available. Where necessary, we will try to improve the following:

* movement around the building, e.g. by adaptations, such as improved colour schemes, for people with impaired sight
* accommodation within the building, by maintaining toilets for disabled pupils, hoists and stair lifts
* furniture, adapted for the needs of the disabled pupil in consultation with occupational therapy
* information and communication technology, by selecting appropriate hardware and software
* signage, by putting it in clear print

We also seek to continually improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

**The Curriculum**

Disabilities can limit the extent to which children are able to participate in the curriculum, and can impede the delivery of information. The school will take great care to ensure that the needs of disabled pupils are clearly identified and that potential barriers to learning are removed.

The teaching staff, support staff, Head Teacher and SENCO will ensure that they are aware of potential barriers to learning for both individual and groups of pupils and as far as possible take the necessary measures required to eradicate these. On-going training will be provided to help staff develop their knowledge and expertise in ensuring good provision for disabled pupils, alongside consultation with pupils and parents.

We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We plan our out-of-school activities and school trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.

We use language that does not offend, and we make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language.

We seek to ensure that our library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities.

The school will liaise with specialists to support individual pupils. Among these specialists are the following: physiotherapists, educational psychologists, speech therapists, doctors, the school nurse, social workers, and the staff of the voluntary and statutory agencies. We benefit from LA advice, and its provision through the Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired services.

# Staffing

When advertising posts, or interviewing applicants, or deciding on appointments, the governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures, and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.

All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training, and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.

We ask all staff with disabilities to identify any barriers that affect them and how we can plan to overcome them.

# Health and Safety

Members of staff follow the school procedures both for the storage and for the administration of medicines to pupils.

We have procedures for when blood or other bodily substances have to be cleared away.

Clear care plans are made (in consultation with parents and the school nurse) and are strictly adhered to for pupils and staff with medical needs such as serious allergies.

The school has members of staff qualified in giving first-aid treatment, and the emergency services will be called, should they be required.

The school has stringent working policies in place for safeguarding and health and safety, and all staff are aware of their legal obligation to ensure a safe and healthy environment for both staff and pupils. When necessary risk assessments are undertaken and individual accessibility plans are put in place. We ensure that disability is never a reason to exclude someone from trips and residential visits.

# Policy into Practice

The governing body is responsible for the school's duty not to discriminate.

A named governor and a designated member of staff – Dr Bywaters (Head Teacher)jointly discharge the responsibility of ensuring that we meet our obligation not to discriminate.

The Head Teacher/SENCO will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception.

All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents/carers or staff with disabilities.

Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues, so that we can work towards resolving them.

# Monitoring and Reviewing

We have high expectations of all our pupils. We monitor a range of data to make sure that all pupils are making the best progress possible, and that no groups of pupils are underachieving.

We monitor admissions, attainment and exclusions.

The governing body has a named Dianne McCollum with responsibility for matters of disability discrimination. It is this governor's responsibility to keep the governing body informed of any new regulations, and to ensure that the school regularly reviews its processes and procedures.

The Head Teacher implements the school's disability non- discrimination policy on a day-to-day basis, and ensures that all staff are aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them. The Head Teacher reports to governors annually on matters regarding disability discrimination.

However, due to the nature of the policy and the fact that the needs of disabled people within the school will not always remain static, it will be necessary to constantly monitor the School’s provision for disabled pupils and adults and appropriate adjustments made as necessary to this document.

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with other school policies and documents, including:

The Asset Management Plan, Critical Incident Management Plan, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Special Educational Needs Policy, School Improvement Plan.

An Access Audit will inform the Accessibility Plan before it is reviewed and will be carried out by the Head Teacher and members of the Governing body.

**Findings of the Access Audit**

The school has three entrances to the grounds, all are accessible to people with disabilities. There is a no-drive policy in the school grounds, exceptions are made for people with disabilities. The main school building is arranged on several levels access for wheelchair users is limited as a result. There are disabled toilets in the main block and the infant block and disabled changing facilities in the swimming pool. It is now possible to access the swimming pool from pool height, improving access for people with disabilities. The swimming pool cover currently blocks easy access around the pool. There is a stair lift down to the hall. There is a stair lift on the back stairs however this only gives access to two upstairs classrooms; this is also currently not in service.

This Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document in the Department for Education’s guidance to schools. It must be monitored regularly and reviewed every three years once it is approved by the Governing Body.

**Spring 2023**

**Next review Spring 2026**