



*What I learn today, prepares me for tomorrow.*

## Accessibility Plan

Policy Location:	Written:	Review Due:	Person Responsible:
Staff Share -> Policy Library	September 2024	September 2029	Mark Phillips, Headteacher Sarah Dickson & Martin Gray Deputy Headteachers All staff

## **Introduction:**

The purpose of this plan is to show how Barndale House School intends over time to increase the accessibility of our school for disabled pupils (all of our pupils), staff, parents/carers and visitors.

## **Legal Background**

This Accessibility Plan is drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting of progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act.

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

You can read more about substantial and long term effects [here](#).

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and these are also published on the school website.

## **Objectives**

The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a physical disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as any other pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equality Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this focus is on improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

## **Contextual Information**

The school building is as accessible as it can be given the restrictions of the site and the age of the buildings, and has accessible facilities, including ramps and adaptations, quiet spaces and 24 hour provision for pupils who board at the school.

The school supports children with a wide range of disabilities. All of our pupils have EHCPs.

Appropriate training has been provided for staff and all First Aid certificates are kept up to date. The school has a current and compliant policy for managing medical conditions in school.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually. What follows are three specific action plans describing how the school will address the priorities identified.

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified by:

- £ SLT
- £ SENDCo
- £ DEI Lead for Northumberland schools
- £ Governors

We welcome and will consider any suggestions and practical improvements that are suggested to us by disabled service users and their families.

### **Increasing access to the curriculum for disabled pupils**

Improving teaching and learning lies at the heart of our approach. Through self-review and Continuous Professional Development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote appropriate and engaging teaching and learning for all children.

#### **Preparing for adulthood**

Our main objective for the three years of the cycle is to continue to develop the curriculum so that it prepares all of our pupils the skills, independence and confidence they need to have independence and choices in their adult lives.

Some of the areas we plan to continue to develop are:

**Role models:** A balanced workforce of adults with diverse interests to help develop and inspire young people.

**Qualification pathways:** DfE, Arts Award and a broad range of qualifications which lead pupils towards achieving life goals.

**Family confidence:** A family support worker to help work on adjustments, misconceptions and barriers to participation or learning.

**Science weeks:** Focus on science and scientists as real careers; breaking down misconceptions and misunderstandings

**Relationship building:** Between pupils and Northumberland college, Northumberland Skills, apprenticeships to help pupils picture stepping over the threshold from school into FE.

**Building confidence and social capital:** Through activities such as: volunteering as a first step to have a taste of employment, visits to farms and agricultural employers (John Deere, for example), horse-riding clubs, working in our own horsebox pop up cafe, working in our on-site vehicle workshop, participating in Roots and Shoots at Alnwick Garden.

**Preparing transitions into work:** Through partnerships with NHS Choices, Alnwick gardens, AzkoNobel, Quotient, Newcastle University gardens, staff from Northumberland's Preparation for Adulthood Team, Adult Social care and Alnwick Railway among many others. We recognise that this can be a daunting transition for many families, but we are committed to presenting a broad range of possibilities to our pupils.

**Independent travel:** Working with travel partners to ensure that pupils have the confidence and experience to travel independently as they approach post 16 options.

### **Improving access to the physical environment of the school**

Our main site is split into two blocks; one of which has residential rooms. Several of the classrooms are in a Victorian building on the site. The school lacks areas for indoor and outdoor play and sports, which impacts on the curriculum and the physical wellbeing of the pupils. We make the necessary adaptations for the children who attend school to access facilities and move safely around the site. Some adaptations, such as the conversion of the garage to an automotive workshop correspond to priority 1: preparing for adulthood. We keep resource provision under constant review. The school's improvement planning process is the

vehicle for considering such needs on an annual basis. A major development for the school is the creation of a satellite site in Amble, due to open in 2025.

#### **Changing perceptions and understanding of enabling environments and SEND**

We recognise, as the only specialist school in our area of the county, that we have a role to fulfil in broadening understanding and perceptions in EYFS and mainstream school settings about creating and developing enabling environments.

We strive to ensure that partners we support understand the importance of the school environment adapting to meet the needs of the pupils, and not the inverse.

Our values reflect this; our school no longer has a behaviour policy; our environments provide opportunities for pupils to self-regulate and prepare to learn and feel safe.

Over the 3 years of this plan's cycle, we will have the opportunity to extend the school environment to a new site in the Coquet Partnership in Amble. The new area of the school will be adaptive to pupils' needs in ways that we are unable to achieve on the main site; there will be a room for food technology, sports facilities, a group room for bespoke self-regulation opportunities, each classroom will have an individual toilet.

The ways in which we develop and use the new facilities will be one of our main objectives for this aspect of the accessibility plan over the next three years

#### **Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils**

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable timeframe. The school will continuously develop awareness of agencies and sources of materials to be able to make information more accessible as required.

#### **Minimal language and visual simplicity**

We have learned that the best way to improve access to written information in school is to condense and distil language to a concise, simplified message and make it visually striking.

We have increasing number of examples in school of policies and messages that we share in this way; our key information, such as our self-regulation strategy should be available in a format which fits on a page and be simple and easily understood by adults and pupils alike.

We will continue to develop key documents, strategies and information in this format, as we continue to develop our role as a centre for excellence in SEND.

## Appendix 1:

Making printed information accessible.

Resources and guidance:

[Accessible Communication Formats](#) (Government guidance)

[Creating accessible documents factsheet](#) (Abilitynet)

[Abilities and assistive technology](#) (UK Association for Accessible Formats)

[The Sensory Trust information sheet on clear and large print](#)

[Mencap accessibility standard](#)

[Dyslexia Style Guide](#) (British Dyslexia Association)

[Communication friendly environments](#) (from the Communication Trust)

[Custom eyes](#) Schools and individuals can join the scheme which can make (at RRP) large print tailor made books which include:

- picture books
- fiction
- non-fiction
- Oxford Reading Tree
- GCSE and A Level English texts and textbooks
- revision guides for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4

[Northumberland County Blind Association](#) undertake commissions to transcribe documentation to Braille.

[Easy Read UK](#) can convert documents to Easy Read format

[Sensory environment checklist](#) A guide to help consider the different sensory responses to an environment that some people may experience.