



# NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME SCHOOL

## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2023-2026

### Policy Statement

### Accessibility

The School has an Accessibility Plan which provides for Pupils with Disabilities, including recognising three Key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act.

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

Adjustments which the school deems helpful to a pupil but not reasonable for the school to undertake within the normal school fees might include:

- Provision of a laptop/special software for general school use.

### Examples of adjustments not considered reasonable.

Adjustments which are not reasonable and not available might include (non-exhaustive):

- Admission to the Senior School without passing the Y7 Entrance Examination.
- Provision of a separate curriculum which places undue burden on school staff.
- Provision of support workers in lessons in the Senior School.
- Patterns of behaviour which undermines the education of other children

### Disability Policy Review and Planning

1. Physical Access and reasonable adjustments. The Governing Body at Newcastle under Lyme School notes its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and will use best endeavours to

make reasonable adjustments, subject to limitations of building design and finance, to improve accessibility to its buildings and facilities in respect of those persons with a physical or mental disability as defined under the Act.

2. The Governing Body will review its SEND Policy and Accessibility Planning through the Employment and Compliance Committee. The remit of the committee includes:

(i) Review of the school's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled or have Special Educational Needs (SEND). The School's SEND and EAL policies should be read in conjunction with this plan. (ii) Making recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future. (iii) Preparation of the School's Accessibility Plan. (iv) Reviewing such plans and policies as necessary. A summary of our Accessibility planning in curricular, estate and information terms is attached.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME SCHOOL

# **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2023-2026**

This policy relates to all children at Newcastle-under-Lyme School, including those in the Junior School and the EYFS. This policy is published to parents and prospective parents on the School's website and it is available upon request to parents and prospective parents.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Equality Act 2010 (Para 3(1) and (2)) imposes a duty on the school to produce an accessibility plan.

An accessibility plan is a plan for:

- A. increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum,
- B. improving the physical environment of the school for the purposes of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school, and
- C. improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

The Governing Body is ultimately responsible for ensuring the proper implementation of the plan through its Employment and Compliance Committee will review this accessibility plan at least annually. However, on a day-to-day basis the Governors have delegated to the Head the responsibility of ensuring the contents of this Plan are implemented as far as is practically reasonable, as well as the responsibility of ensuring that this Plan is communicated to all members of staff, and that those required to undertake training are provided with sufficient time and encouragement to do so.

## SECTION A: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum

We aim to look to enhancing the accessibility of our curriculum further for disabled pupils by the following over the next three years, 2023-2026:

Target	Strategies	Progress Updates
Ensure there is adequate capacity within the Learning Support team and provision to meet the needs of pupils within the SEND department with focus on input of SENCO and TAs in the department operating at Prep and Seniors.	Assess hours of support needed and specialist skills pupils require and compare to specialist staffing accessible through regular discussions with department and SMT links.	September 2023: an additional HLTA LSA was added into the school learning support team. Monitor input.  Enhance one school approach towards SEND with SENCO contributing to school wide approach and staff deployment.  Next review: 2023-24
Ensure TAs have specialist knowledge and skills in mental health to ensure we have capacity and skills to support pupil needs.	Evaluate mental health support needs across school and monitor via SENCO and SMT assessment.	New HLTA employed September 2023 has additional goal of helping further raise mental health input due to perceived need.  HLTA employed to develop mental health expertise promoted and is being ELSA trained 2023-24.  TA employed in Reception with Forest School and Nursery/ EYFS qualifications to also extend capacity.  Next review: 2023-24

Ensure examination access arrangements are sufficient to meet pupils' needs and do any opportunities exist to enhance these?	SEN Lead and Deputy Head Academic to review examination access and support arrangements in school to determine any needs or opportunities for potential uptake.	<p>Summer 2022 analysis of durability and robustness of SEND examination software. Amendments made were evaluated with further refinements in Summer 2023.</p> <p>Review in Summer 2023 suggested examination software operated very smoothly for candidates. This will continue to be applied in 2023-24.</p> <p>Next review: Spring 2024 to ensure software remains appropriate to pupil need ahead of external S24 examinations.</p>
Ensure opportunities exist to further modify the staffing of our Learning Support team to further enhance support and access? (Incorporate the new SEN Lead's ideas and objectives.)	Assistant Head Academic, Deputy Head Academic, Head of Prep and new SEN Lead to explore effectiveness of support and access arrangements to create next phase of development plan for the department.	Enhanced deployment of Prep TAs and training being implemented in 2023-24.
To implement seating plans universally in Seniors as a way to further promote consistency in SEND approaches and identification in school.	Common seating plans to aid identification and access of SEND pupils.	Implemented September 2023.
To ensure performance data is used to analyse GCSE and A level outcomes for equal progress and achievement between pupils of all abilities and learning traits.	SENCO to assist AHT Teaching and Learning and Deputy Head Academic	2023-24
To ensure there is a high level of awareness on neurodiverse needs in school	Utilise We Thrive to promote this theme across school.	2023-24

**SECTION B: Improving the physical environment of the school for the purposes of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school**

Issue	Strategies	Timings
To ensure access to L-Block is adequate for pupils with disability: this building is built into a slope and has 3 levels. It is possible to access the dining room and most of the level above this in a wheelchair, including the Margaret Powell library which is used occasionally for functions. However, movement between floors involves use of stairs due to the age and layout of the building.	<p>One solution would be to install stair lifts to the internal stairways but this capital expenditure would be expensive and needs evaluation.</p> <p>Careful deployment of classes via the timetable has proven effective at supporting students with disability.</p>	<p>New Estates Plan includes Moody Project to explore rear entrance to new Moody Building to aid access. This is being explored and delivered between 2023-2025.</p> <p>Next review: Summer 2024</p>
To assess whether it is practical to develop access to the upper floor of A-Block for disabled pupils: Steps or stairs need to be negotiated to reach most rooms.	<p>One solution would be to install a lift (should a suitable site be identified) but this capital expenditure would be challenging.</p> <p>Our preferred strategy is to continue to accommodate wheelchair access for a pupil by adjusting the rooms timetabled for that pupil to ensure only accessible rooms are used. This has proved helpful in past scenarios and experience.</p>	<p>Review access in masterplanning of estate and as part of estates planning cycle.</p> <p><b>Preferred strategy as of September 2023 remains adjusting the timetables should this be necessary as B block, Sixth Form and A Block and L Block have very good ground floor disability access.</b></p>
To assess whether enhancements to Q-Block are practical to enable disabled access – changing	One solution would be to provide an access ramp to the external entrance for the lower floor. This can be done	<b>No plans as of current Accessibility Plan review – to be reviewed and</b>

rooms, are on two floors with external stairs and several steps to the lower floor.	relatively speedily if ever required, and need will be reviewed accordingly.	<b>evaluated by Summer Term 2024 as new estates masterplan and estate works unfolds implicating Q Block.</b>
<p>M Block (not currently in use)</p> <p>This building has 2 floors and is linked to the Sixth Form Block. There is level access to the ground floor areas for storage and the upper floor is currently of use.</p>	Possibility that demolition may create more outdoor hard playground space which may be more easily used by pupils encountering challenges of negotiating estate and finding accessible outdoor space.	<p>Review in Spring 2022 determined the demolition of M Block will occur in Summer 2024.</p> <p>Aim to also create accessible hard surface outdoor play space for children.</p> <p>Review: Summer 2024</p>
<p>Sixth Form Centre</p> <p>To assess whether upper floor, and lower floor, access in the Sixth Form is practical to assist disabled pupils. This building is built into a slope and has three levels, including a semi basement. There is level access to the main ground floor area but stairs lead to both the upper floor and the basement area.</p>	One solution would be to provide stair lifts to internal stairways, should the opportunity arise.	No plans as of Summer 2023 to relocate Sixth Form but rear access to building is to be explored as M Block demolished and enhanced disability access further considered.
<p>Barratt Building (Art, Home Economics, Textiles)</p> <p>To ensure this building provides adequate access to all curricular areas in Art and Design, including the consideration of changes to physical access and building design. This building is on 2 floors</p>	Our solution would be to try and install an external lift, but consider this to be unreasonable on cost grounds at present	No plans as of current review. As above, the deployment of estate spaces is being reviewed Summer 2024 as part of strategic planning work on campus.

and whilst it has level external access at the lower level rooms, they are accessed via narrow corridors and there is only one steep central staircase leading to a cramped upper landing.		
Ensure new gated access systems around campus provide good access for a physically disabled pupil or teacher or parent.	Possible consideration of lower key pads to enable a physically disabled member of the community.	To be reviewed by September 2024.
To implement a new Shape of the Day, which provides the embedded benefit of reduced movement to aid pupils with mobility issues.	Less transit points and periods of movement can assist pupils with mobility constraints as well as providing other benefits.	Implemented September 2023.



## SECTION C: Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled

Strategies being reviewed/implemented and considered for introduction to further enhance information access 2022-2025:

Issue	Strategies	Timings
To improve and ensure educational materials and school administration are accessible to pupils who are short-sighted or who possess sight related conditions.	Review of opportunities to enhance this through technology, school's VLE and management information systems with new SENCO and Assistant Head.	2023-24
To ensure the opportunities presented by mobile devices in terms of classroom use to extend information access to the curriculum and beyond. Would greater laptop usage assist pupils?	Consider whether enabling access to one to one mobile devices in prep in key stage 2 would assist.	2023-24
To improve accessibility for hearing impaired pupils. Are there opportunities to sue these for greater pupil access of curricular and other information?	Evaluate whether any pupil's needs in school would benefit from the introduction of hearing loop technology.  SENCO to assist with new Assistant Head	2023-24
To ensure extracurricular activities information is accessible to all pupils	Review how co-curricular programmes are accessed by SEND pupils across Prep and Seniors to identify any possible or reduced participation or access.	2023-24

	Integrate new disabled access into new sports facilities for 2022-23. Completed 2022-23, with new toilet access too.	Building opening completed with disabled access enhanced in 2022-23 to sports halls, fitness rooms, and pool. All access will relate to car parking and drop-off collection.
Ensure the selection of One-Drive is the best platform to share information with students with disabilities or support needs.	Review use of One-drive and liaise with staff and pupils on this platform and others.  Review by SENCO and new Assistant Head	By Summer Term 2024
Ensure Ekka's Wood is accessible by all pupils with disabilities, to ensure engagement with Prep Adventures and other outdoor education work meets with our goals.	Undertake visit and review site development with Head of Outdoor Education, Head of Preparatory School and others as appropriate and skilled to determine access meets with approval, or on modifications needed.	By Summer 2024.

Policy reviewed by SMT: September 2023  
Policy reviewed by Governors: September 2023  
Next review due: September 2024