



## **Accessibility Plan**

Yew Tree Farm School  
Bredgar and Wormshill Light Railway  
Swanton Street  
Sittingbourne  
ME9 8AT

Date - 23/01/24

Reviewed by - Edwina Grix

Next review date - 23/01/27

# Accessibility Plan

## Introduction

This document has been created with reference to the following guidance and legislation, all of which should be referred to in relation to decisions made as a result of learner or other accessibility issues to sites, resources, activities, and information.

1. Equality Act 2010
2. United Nations convention on Disability Rights

It's against the law for a school or other education provider to treat disabled learners unfavourably.

This includes:

- direct discrimination, for example refusing admission to a learner because of disability
- indirect discrimination, for example only providing application forms in one format that may not be accessible
- discrimination arising from a disability, for example a disabled learner is prevented from going outside at break time because it takes too long to get there
- harassment, for example a member of staff shouts at a disabled learner for not paying attention when the learner's disability stops them from easily concentrating
- victimisation, for example suspending a disabled learner because they've complained about harassment

## Reasonable adjustments

An education provider has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to make sure disabled learners are not discriminated against. These changes could include providing extra support and aids (like specialist staff or equipment).

As a school we are committed to providing accessibility options to those who require additional support to access facilities and we are committed in particular to the following:

- 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 the able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities 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 schools 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 covers 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 hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

As an independent special school, we are aware of the importance of inclusivity and accessibility for all. However, we are also aware that we provide an alternative service to mainstream schooling and that this

requires access to the outdoor environment over rough terrain and within farm settings, all of which pose unique and particular accessibility issues that require consideration.

### **Site Accessibility**

The Yew Tree Farm School site is subject to an accessibility plan to improve access for users with disabilities. However, due to the nature of the provision there will always exist some accessibility issues that cannot be overcome. There are good parking facilities with a gravel car park and gravel track onto the farm. Upon entering the farm the ground is grass and sloped. Subject to weather conditions the ground can be very muddy and access can vary, but is suitable for those equipped with proper footwear. Parts of the site are woodland and the terrain is unlevel. The site is not suitable for wheelchair users.

The toilet on site does not conform to disabled accessibility and there is a step to get into it. There is however a public disabled toilet at the adjoining site of the railway which has level access.

Access to the medical room is via uneven steps. To access the buildings and storage areas around the farm the steps are rough and uneven.

Despite the difficulties that our site creates, we are committed to providing accessibility to all wherever possible and to not seeing physical disability as a barrier to learning outdoors.

### **Accessibility to written materials**

Yew Tree Farm School recognises that there is a need amongst some learners to access information in alternative formats to writing; whilst for some this can be as simple as changing the colour of the paper, for others this will require something more involved. As a learning community we are committed to providing good links with parents/carers and referring agencies to help with the transition into our learning community. When this occurs, we will look closely at the needs of the learners and provide alternatives to written information where necessary. This could be in the form of: verbal instructions; use of video and audio equipment or specialist support such as signing where required.

We are committed to looking at these options on an individual basis and do not believe that one solution will work for everyone.

Alternative formats to written information can also be made available, if necessary, to those seeking information in relation to Yew Tree Farm School on behalf of a learner. Where it is necessary to provide information to learners or those applying on behalf of learners in another language this should be requested. Yew Tree Farm School is supportive of those learners for whom English is an additional language and will both alter materials for admissions, policy and procedure to better aid understanding, and also will help with learner support throughout a family's engagement to ensure that access to education is as comprehensive as possible.

### **Responsibility, implementation, review and revision:**

The Head Teacher is the lead for the Accessibility Plan.

Teaching Staff will contribute toward aspects of curriculum access.

It may not be feasible to undertake all of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility Plan for the ongoing period.

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all governors' committees will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010.

The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through the Leadership Team.

An Access Audit was carried out by the Headteacher, Education Coordinator and Curriculum lead in July 2023.

**Recommendations were made as follows:**

**Action Plan A – Improving Physical Access:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility and Resources</b>
Toilet facilities	New toilet block to be built with level access	To be completed by Sep 24	medium	Site manager Building costs
Access to disabled toilet at railway	Ensure groundwork is maintained. Wood chipping on muddy areas in the winter months. Regular checks of graveled pathways. Site manager to update jobs list weekly if anything needs doing.	Weekly	medium	Site manager
Medical room access	Steps are a little steep. Yellow paint to be painted on steps.	To be reviewed sep 23	medium	Site manager
Entrance to animal enclosures	Large footfalls can make the ground overly muddy. Some gates are more challenging to shut. Students and anyone with mobility issues to always be chaperoned around the farm. Site manager to review to ensure muddy areas are wood chipped and not dangerous.	Ongoing as required	medium	Site manager to review ground All staff to ensure students are not entering animal enclosures unaccompanied
Pathways around the farm	Ensure groundwork is maintained. Wood chipping on muddy areas in the winter months. Removal of large debris and fallen branches in the copse. Site manager to update jobs list weekly if anything needs doing.	Weekly	medium	Site manager
Access to the canopy	The canopy is accessed over a gravel pathway. Ensure a solid covering of gravel so the ground does not get muddy or	Daily	medium	Site manager

	slippery. Remove debris and level out the surface.			
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### Action Plan B – Improving Curriculum Access:

Item	Recommendation	Timescale	Priority	Responsibility and Resources
Differentiation in teaching	Curriculum plan to be monitored and adapted as needed. SLT to monitor quality of differentiation and provision through observations, evidence monitoring and planning	Termly	High	SLT
All learner to access all lessons	Difficulties with gross and fine motor skills, attention and focus and processing information. Use of support aids, sensory breaks, present information in a range of formats and regular review of the curriculum.	Ongoing as required	High	All staff Monitored by SLT
Staff training in supporting pupils with SEND – focus on key areas of need within the ASC, ADHD Trauma and Attachment	Comprehensive training programme established and delivered to all staff. Identify gaps in knowledge and seek external advice if necessary	Ongoing as required	High	CPD for all staff
PE lessons adapted to ensure participation	Curriculum plan reviewed to include all learners. Expectations and outcomes modified to ensure success.	Ongoing as required	High	All staff Monitored by SLT
Celebrate and highlight students achievements and key events such Children in Need, Invictus, Paralympics	Celebration assemblies to take place. Changing community perception of people with special needs.	Ongoing as required	Medium	All staff

### Action Plan C – Improving the Delivery of Written Information and home, school communication:

Item	Recommendation	Timescale	Priority	Responsibility and Resources
The parents of disabled students may not be aware of how best to support the learning of their child	Strong links with school and home. SENDCo to meet with parents and discuss their concerns to devise a medical	Ongoing as required	Medium	SENDCo

	care plan or action plan			
Availability of written material in alternative formats when requested	The school will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into different formats	Ongoing	As required	Office manager
Review documentation on website to check accessibility for parents with English as an Additional Language	The school will review formats publicised on school website – particularly for new parents to the school, in order to ensure accessibility for parents with English as an additional language	Ongoing	As required	Office manager
Review use of widget symbols to support pupils and parents/carers with low reading ability	Deliver staff training on widget. Monitor use of visuals in classrooms. Review use of widget symbols on website	Sep 24	low	All staff