



## **Hilltop First School and Foundation Stage**

### **Accessibility Policy 2026**

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| <b>Document author</b> | <b>LB</b>             |
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# Accessibility Policy

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## **1. Introduction**

The Equality Act 2010, streamlines and strengthens legal protections for disabled students. Under this legislation, school governing bodies hold strict statutory duties to ensure equality of opportunity. Specifically, schools must adhere to three core obligations:

Direct and indirect protection: Governing bodies must not treat disabled pupils less favourably, protecting them from direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, and discrimination arising from disability.

Reasonable adjustments duty: Schools must take proactive, reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids and services so disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to their peers.

Accessibility planning duty: Schools must maintain and implement a written accessibility plan to progressively increase physical access to premises, improve curriculum delivery, and provide accessible information.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of Hilltop First School to increase access to education for pupils with disabilities in the required areas:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum
- To improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can take advantage of education, facilities and associated services
- To improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. See Appendix 1 for a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

Date of Plan: September 2026 - to be reviewed annually

## **2. Definition of Disability:**

Disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010.

'A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

## **3. The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values**

At Hilltop First School we are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve success and experience a sense of belonging within the school community. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. Hilltop First School promotes the individuality of all our pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

The school aims to be an inclusive. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children.

#### **4. Priorities in the school's plan**

We take advice on support needed for children with disabilities and work with experts to ensure they have the support necessary ***to fully include them in the life of the school***. This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of Hilltop First School to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA thus increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum. This includes:

- teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in breakfast club, after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits
- ensuring that school environment continues to allow disabled pupils to take advantage of education and associated services, including the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education
- improving the learning resources available to pupils whose special educational needs or disabilities limit their access to resources used by other pupils. Examples might include specialist seating, enlarged or adapted resources, printed worksheets, visual resources, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of the pupils' needs and the preferred format of pupils and parents and be made available within a reasonable timeframe.

The action plan ensures that:

- The school draws on the expertise of external agencies to provide specialist advice and support.
- The SENCO has an overview of the needs of disabled pupils across Hilltop First School.
- There is appropriate deployment and training of learning in support staff
- Successful practice is shared within the school
- Disabled pupils have access to extra-curricular activities

#### **5. Contextual Information**

Hilltop is a first school catering for children between the ages of 4 and 9. We are a one form entry school with the exception of Year 4 which has two smaller classes. Our mainstream classes include pupils with a range of physical and learning disabilities or additional needs, both diagnosed and undiagnosed. Our SEND Unit caters for up to 12 children with more complex Speech, Language and Communication needs which may or may not sit alongside autism.

#### **Physical layout of the school**

The school is a predominantly single storey 1950s building on multiple levels with a modern two storey extension.

The Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms, SEND Unit and one of the Key Stage 2 classrooms are located in the lower level of the school which is accessible internally by short flights of steps with handrails or a lift. All of these classrooms have step free access from the outdoors. The other two Key Stage 2 classrooms are located on the second storey level accessed by flights of stairs with handrails or a lift. Key Stage 1 classes are accessible internally by a short flight of steps with a handrail or single step outdoor access. An outdoor accessibility ramp is in place in one of these classrooms.

The offices, staffroom, library, intervention rooms and breakfast/after school club room are on the main level. There are toilets located in each level of the school building. The disabled access toilet is located near the offices. One toilet cubical within each key stage has a handrail to support access.

The school hall, located on the main level, is accessible via double doors. It is used as an assembly hall and dining area.

The main entrance to the school is level with the outside. All lower level and main level classrooms are accessible directly from the outdoors. The playground areas are fully accessible for those with mobility difficulties and wheelchair users, with a wide slope providing an alternative to the stairs which do not have permanent handrails. All indoor and outdoor stairs edges highlighted with a yellow strip to support visibility of the stair edge.

An on-site parking space is available if required by a family with children who have a disability. Any member of staff with mobility restrictions would be allocated a conveniently located dedicated parking space. Other visitors to the school who have Local Authority issued Blue Badges may park with prior agreement just outside the school gates.

## **6. Link Documents**

This Accessibility Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Risk assessment policy
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report / SEND Inclusion Strategy
- SEND policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Children with Health Needs who cannot attend School Policy
- RBWM Inclusion Charter

## 7. Accessibility Plan

### a. Increasing access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum

Improving teaching and learning for all is a priority of the school. Through self-review and continuous professional development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote excellent teaching and learning for all children. We aim to meet every child's needs through inclusive classes of pupils with a range of level of prior attainment and rates of progress.

It is a core value of Hilltop First School that all children are enabled to participate fully in the broader life of the school. Consequently, all children are permitted to attend age relevant after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and educational visits. The only exception would be if a child had breached school rules, where deprivation of club attendance may be used as a suitable short-term sanction and to ensure the safety of others.

| To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum<br>Our aim is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |           |                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                              |
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| Target/Issue                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Strategy/Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | When      | Who                                    | Resources                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Expected Outcome                                                                                                             |
| SEND and Medical Information including additional needs of children is clear and up to date.                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure SEND provision map remains accurate and up to date</li> <li>Ensure Medical details and Individual Health Care plans are up-to-date and that key staff are aware and feel confident implementing them.</li> <li>Meet with parents of new pupils and pupils whose care plans/documentation needs updating.</li> </ul> | Sept 2026 | SENCo<br>Inclusion Lead<br>Office team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual pupil medical and SEND support plans</li> <li>Risk Assessments</li> <li>Pupil de-escalation plans</li> </ul>                                                         | SEND and Medical needs information will be up to date<br>Teachers and TAs are made aware of needs of children in their class |
| Effective communication with key stakeholders to ensure high quality transitions.                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone calls with previous or next settings</li> <li>Visits to previous settings for key pupils</li> <li>Meetings with new parents of pupils with EHCPs to promote open honest positive and supportive relationships with parents</li> <li>SENDCo and inclusion lead build network with other local schools</li> </ul>      | ongoing   | SENCo<br>Inclusion Lead                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up-to-date EHCPs</li> <li>Additional information provided by parents</li> <li>Teacher/SENDCo time</li> <li>Personalised transition booklets for new dandelion pupils</li> </ul> | Pupils experience positive transition into and on from Hilltop.                                                              |

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| Training for staff on increasing access to the curriculum for all pupils and removing potential barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing cycle of staff training so that previously introduced initiatives are revisited and embedded</li> <li>• external training from outside agencies- Autism support team, Speech and language, EP and OT</li> <li>• Staff meetings address inclusive practice and review implementation of our agreed <i>universal offer</i></li> <li>• Whole school engagement in <i>Walkthru Project</i> to support high quality <i>adaptive teaching</i></li> <li>• Ongoing offer of Level 3 TA apprenticeship for all new TAs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | ongoing | SENCo<br>Inclusion Lead<br>KS Leads<br>Apprentice mentors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff meetings</li> <li>• TA training</li> <li>• Instructional coaching schedule</li> <li>• Training from external agencies</li> </ul> | <p>Staff show increased confidence in adapting the curriculum</p> <p>TA deployment within lessons is highly effective</p> <p>All pupil participate fully in the curriculum and experience success.</p> |
| Appropriate use of specialised equipment to benefit individual pupils                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit of equipment and system of monitoring where it has been allocated</li> <li>• Personalised planning; SEN support plans</li> <li>• Coloured background on IWB and on teaching materials where necessary</li> <li>• Paper resources are printed with the correct size font and contrast to support pupils with visual impairment</li> <li>• Coloured reading rulers</li> <li>• Adapted seating</li> <li>• Classrooms furniture arranged so as to allow use of mobility walker</li> <li>• Use of wobble cushions, weighted lap pads, fidget toys, chews</li> <li>• Triangular Ergonomic Pelikan pencils</li> <li>• Sloping boards</li> <li>• Access to Calibre audio for pupils with additional needs which impact on reading</li> <li>• Access to RNIB app for pupils with visual impairment</li> <li>• Dual coding throughout the curriculum – Widget</li> <li>• Consistent vertical visual timetable across all classes – Widget</li> <li>• Use of technology to support writing</li> </ul> <p><i>** All specialist resources must be monitored for effectiveness and reviewed regularly.</i></p> | ongoing | SENDCo                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff time to monitor allocation of resources</li> <li>• Cost of new resources</li> <li>• Staff training</li> </ul>                    | <p>Pupils with SEND have access to appropriate equipment and resources which reduce barriers and support learning across the curriculum</p>                                                            |

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| Use of appropriate assessment tools for pupils working at a pre-key stage level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baseline assessment for every child within first term of starting in Dandelion Unit</li> <li>Ongoing target setting and progress tracking using Cherry Orchard Tool</li> <li>Input from external professionals each term (OT SaLT)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                     | ongoing | Inclusion lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of Tapestry (Cherry Orchard)</li> <li>Staff time for observation entry</li> <li>Cost of private SaLT &amp; OT input each term</li> </ul> | Consistent approach for target setting and measuring and celebration progress for children working significantly below the national curriculum. |
| Some pupils are not yet toilet trained or able to use the toilet independently. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where necessary, pupils have personal Intimate Care Plans in place</li> <li>Staff have training in implementing agreed plans</li> <li>Plans are in place to ensure hygienic disposal of waste</li> <li>Appropriate physical adaptations to toilets – see below</li> </ul>                                                                                         | ongoing | Inclusion lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time to create and share plans</li> <li>Cost of resources (wipes, nappy bags)</li> </ul>                                                | Pupils are given safe, sensitive and dignified toileting support                                                                                |
| Appropriate use of intervention to ensure positive impact on pupil progress     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategies are tracked for impact and effectiveness</li> <li>Out of class interventions are used minimally and teachers consider what the child is missing in the main classroom</li> <li>Implementation of Pitt Stop strategy</li> <li>1:1 and group SEMH support: Nurture/ELSA/Drawing &amp; Talking</li> <li>Precision teaching (evidence informed)</li> </ul> | ongoing | SENCo          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TA training</li> <li>Cost of resources required to deliver interventions</li> </ul>                                                           | Progress and attainment of all children is good.                                                                                                |
| All children see themselves in the curriculum and associated resources          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources will reflect the needs profile of pupils.</li> <li>Teachers will make a conscious effort to show images and tell the stories of a variety of people with additional needs within their classroom practice.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                   | ongoing | All staff      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of books for use in classrooms and the library</li> </ul>                                                                                | All children experience a sense of belonging and can identify with characters in stories, historical figures and illustrations.                 |

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| Ensure that all school educational visits & residential visits are appropriate and accessible for pupils with learning or physical disabilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advance visits – ensure physical accessibility for pupils with mobility difficulties</li> <li>Risk assessments</li> <li>Additional adults</li> <li>Planning with parents / carers</li> </ul> | Ongoing | Headteacher<br>SENCO<br>Team Leaders<br>OVC | Staff costs<br>Training costs<br>Modified resources | School trips & residential visits are accessible for all pupils. |
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## b. Improving access to the physical environment of the school

| Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                   |                                             |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                       |
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| Target/Issue                                                                                                                                     | Strategy/Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | When                              | Who                                         | Resources                                                                                                                             | Expected Outcome                                                                                      |
| Ensure all disabled pupils can be safely evacuated in the event of an emergency                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for all key pupils</li> <li>Regular practise drills to ensure staff feel confident in following PEEP</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Sept 2026 termly                  | SENCo Inclusion Lead                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time to create and update PEPPS</li> </ul>                                               | All pupils to be safe in event of evacuation                                                          |
| Ensure pupils with mobility difficulties are considered when planning classroom allocation for learning and wider school activities              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key pupils to be primarily based in lower-level classrooms and adults to move between classrooms to reduce need for pupils to relocate for lessons</li> <li>Access ramp between playground and classroom is in place</li> <li>Lift key is easily accessible for key adults</li> <li>Key adults are trained to safely assist pupils with reduced mobility</li> <li>Adaptive seating is available in classrooms and dining hall</li> <li>Classrooms and hallways are kept clear with wide walkways to accommodate mobility aids.</li> <li>External input from OT and Physio</li> </ul> | Ongoing<br>(Training Autumn 2026) | SENCo Inclusion Lead                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of Manual Handling training for staff</li> <li>Cost of toilet adaptations</li> </ul>      | Reduced need for pupils with mobility difficulties to move unnecessarily within the school day.       |
| Some pupils need additional support in accessing the toilet independent                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets are fitted with appropriate accessibility support (handrails, steps, child seats)</li> <li>Key adults are trained to safely assist pupils with reduced mobility</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ongoing                           | Inclusion lead                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time to create and share plans</li> <li>Cost of resources (wipes, nappy bags)</li> </ul> | Pupils are given safe, sensitive and dignified toileting support                                      |
| Ensure that all school educational visits & residential visits are appropriate and accessible for pupils with learning or physical disabilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advance visits – ensure physical accessibility for pupils with mobility difficulties</li> <li>Where external sites are considered inappropriate for the needs of a particular cohort of children, an alternative trip or visit will be found</li> <li>Ensure key pupils are included in risk assessments</li> <li>Appropriate adult: child ratio to meet needs of pupils with additional needs</li> <li>Planning with parents / carers</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                    | Ongoing                           | Headteacher<br>SENCO<br>Team Leaders<br>OVC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff costs</li> <li>Training costs</li> <li>Modified resources</li> </ul>                     | All children are able to access all trips during their time at Hilltop.                               |
| To make effective use of the Sensory (Space) Room within the mainstream setting                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils to use the Space Room regularly to support regulation</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | ongoing                           | All classroom staff                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance of projector light</li> </ul>                                                      | Pupils know where they can go to regulate themselves. Children will be calmer and ready for learning. |

|                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                |                                           |                                                         |                                                               |
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| <p>The school is aware of the access needs of disabled pupils, staff, governors, parent/carers and visitors</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create access plans for individual disabled pupils as part of the EHCP process when required – including accommodating drop off and pick up of pupils with mobility difficulties</li> <li>• Temporary handrail installed on the playground flight of stairs for family events</li> <li>• Be aware of staff, governors and parents access needs and meet as appropriate</li> <li>• Through questions and discussions find out the access needs of parents/carers</li> <li>• Consider access needs during recruitment process</li> </ul> | <p>ongoing</p> | <p>SENCo<br/>Admin team<br/>caretaker</p> | <p>Costs of new or additional adaptations as needed</p> | <p>The school meets the needs of those with disabilities.</p> |
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**c. Improve the access and delivery of written information**

| To improve the delivery of information for disabled pupils and parents                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |         |                                           |                                          |                                                                                                                      |
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| What                                                                                       | How                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | When    | Who                                       | Resources                                | Expected Outcome                                                                                                     |
| Review information to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible.                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information and letters in clear print in “simple” English</li> <li>• School office will support and help parents to access information and complete school forms</li> <li>• Ensure website and all document accessible via the school website can be accessed by the visually impaired</li> <li>• Provide printed information for parents/carers who cannot access online documents</li> <li>• Consult Sensory Consortium for further advice or guidance</li> </ul> | ongoing | Admin team                                | Office team time                         | All parents will be able to be aware of what is happening at school via the website and weekly communication emails. |
| Ensure written materials are available in alternative formats                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure office staff are able to use google translate to translate any written letters and newsletters and ensure parents know this is available.</li> <li>• Ensure parents with visual impairments can access policies through enlarged printed copies or assistive reading technology</li> <li>• Invite parents in who may need support completing forms.</li> </ul>                                                                                                        | ongoing | Admin team                                | Office team time                         | All parents have access to appropriate information.                                                                  |
| Dual Coding to be used across the curriculum to reduce cognitive load and support learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widget symbols are used to make classroom resources – word mats, vocabulary lists, visual timetables, social stories, labels etc</li> <li>• Images support language processing as well as visual or reading difficulties</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | ongoing | SENCo<br>Inclusion lead<br>Class teachers | Cost of Widget licence<br>Printing costs | All staff are aware of needs of the pupils in their class and seek to reduce barriers.                               |