

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY 2023/2026



At Woodbridge Junior School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Woodbridge Junior School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Scope:

Woodbridge is committed to complying with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) by:

- Maximising accessibility to the Schools's services and activities for staff, students, visitors and prospective staff and students with disabilities, and to ensure that no-one is treated less favourably on the ground of disability.
- Developing a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose a disability, should they wish to do so, and to discuss reasonable adjustments in order to promote equal participation in the Schools's services and activities. In adherence to the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998), such information shall be passed on only with consent and where there is a legitimate reason to do so.
- Reviewing, monitoring and revising, as appropriate, all Schools systems, procedures, facilities, services and buildings in compliance with the DDA and SENDA in addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA), which includes the right not to be denied access to education.
- Creating, maintaining and disseminating information about services, support and facilities available for staff, students, visitors and prospective staff and students with disabilities.

For the purpose of this Policy, the term 'disability' has the same meaning as that given in the DDA and SENDA:

'A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

This includes, but is not limited to: sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental illness, clinically recognised severe disfigurements, cancer, HIV/Aids, progressive conditions even at an early stage, conditions which are characterised by a number of cumulative effects, such as pain or fatigue, and a past history of disability.

Key Objective

To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the Schools community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

Principles

- Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the School's aims and equal opportunities policy and the operation of the School's SEN policy.

- The School recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):
 - Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions and provision of education and associated services.
 - Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably.
To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.
 - In performing their duties, Governors and staff will have regard to relevant good practice including the Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice (2002);

- The School recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality;

- The School provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum 2000 framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - Setting suitable learning challenges.
 - Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs.
 - Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Methodology

This section outlines the principle means which the Schools uses to achieve the key objective above:

Education and related activities

The School aims to provide access to a full, rich, broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. It will seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts in ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through appropriate classroom organisation, support and curriculum options.

Teachers and other staff will receive the necessary specialist training to teach and support pupils who are disabled as the need arises.

Provision of information

The School will make full use of local services including the local education team, in addition to those provided through the LA, for providing information normally provided in writing by the Schools in alternative formats such as Braille, audio tape, large print or through ICT when required or requested.

Physical environment

The School recognises the very personal needs of individuals and will endeavour to meet these as the need arises. The School will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises such as changes to access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes; and will ensure the provision of accessible facilities and fittings.

Strategies

- **Curriculum** –Woodbridge actively promotes positive attitudes to all individuals regardless of race, gender, disability or age through all that we do but specifically through the delivery of the PSHE curriculum.
- **Inspections** - regular inspections of the premises are in place, which include consideration of any matters that are detrimental to health and safety. This will include any accessibility deterioration.
- **Building Works** – as building work and developments of the site are undertaken accessibility will always be considered. This is in line with Derbyshire County Council's policy that any additions to the Schools buildings must be fully accessible for students and adults with physical disability or sensory impairment.
- **Anticipation** – consultation is in place with other schools to ensure that individual students with particular needs are identified sufficiently early to enable actions, as far as they can be, to be put in place.

Physical Planning

Stairs

The School has no stairs.

Lighting

Existing classrooms do not always meet the standard required for those with visual impairment. Where refurbishment work is planned lighting is replaced as part of the work wherever possible.

Doors

Generally some door widths are large enough to accommodate wheelchair users however swings doors to facilitate fire prevention may be hazardous. It is not possible to enable wider access to wheelchair users without major rebuilding of the existing Schools building and this level of capital investment would be the responsibility of Derbyshire County Council.

Corridors

Generally corridors are wide enough to safely accommodate wheel chair users.

Toilet Facilities

Disabled toilet facilities are available within the first aid room area.

Travel Arrangements

There are two disabled parking space allocated in the main car park.

Equipment

Some specialised equipment is available within the Schools but as this is specific to individual need cost makes it inappropriate to hold stocks of such equipment. The Schools will obtain appropriate equipment as required this may include:

- Special desks/chairs
- Computer equipment/software
- Science and technology equipment

Audits

3-year period covered by the scheme: 2023-2026

Introduction

Duties under Part 5A of the DDA require the governing body to:

- **promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to; and**
- **prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties.**

This scheme and the accompanying action plans set out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Duties in Part 4 of the DDA require the governing body to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways:

- **increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;**
- **improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;**
- **improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.**

This scheme incorporates the school's plans to increase access to education for disabled pupils and all school users.

1: Starting points

1.1: The purpose and direction of the school's scheme

The General Duty

- **promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;**
- **eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;**
- **eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;**
- **promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;**
- **encourage participation by disabled people in public life;**
- **take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.**

Our visions and values are a starting point for our Disability Equality scheme:-

- 1. Disabled people using the school will be treated with the respect and consideration that we would expect for everyone.**

2. We will consider the needs of all school users when planning how to move the school forward.

3. We aim to improve the physical environment of the school to meet the needs of all school users.

4. We aim to improve the provision of information for disabled children and young people.

1.2: Involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents

Involving disabled people is a requirement of a scheme and brings real benefits in terms of;

- **Providing insights into the barriers faced by disabled pupils, staff and parents**
- **Developing expertise in identifying ways to overcome these barriers**
- **Improving working relationships between schools and disabled pupils, staff and parents.**

1.3: Information gathering

Woodbridge Junior School defines Disability in line with the current definitions in the Disability Discriminations Act (DDA). This means that in this school we define Disability as:

‘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.’

Definition of the terms:

- **‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairments;**
- **‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness;**
- **‘substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’; and**
- **‘long-term’ is defined as 12 months or more.**

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

- **mobility;**
- **manual dexterity;**
- **physical co-ordination;**

- **continence;**
- **ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;**
- **speech, hearing or eyesight;**
- **memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;**
- **perception of risk of physical danger.**

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

In our school the following adjustments are made to support school users who have a disability:

- a) Differentiation and support for pupils with additional needs.**
- b) Teaching methodology is adapted to meet learning styles.**
- c) The fabric of the building has been adapted to provide easier access.**

Information Gathering Process for all schools users.

We have gathered information from a number of sources.

- **We have surveyed all current pupils, parents, carers and users of the school to gain their views on current provision and future aspirations.**
- **We have discussed the issues with all feeder schools/ nursery providers in the area.**
- **We have jointly discussed access with other local schools and produced details of other local provision.**

The information is needed to allow the school to plan for the future so that the needs of the local disabled community as school users can be anticipated under the planning duty and met for all users. The information is used in such a way that individuals will be unidentifiable and therefore confidentiality is maintained.

In our school we look on the issue of someone not being able to access something because of a disability as being a problem with what is provided, not the person using the facility or accessing the provision, we would encourage people to make their needs known to us so that we can ensure that they do have full access.

We recognise that this is our first Disability Equality Scheme and that we need, as one of the priorities for the action plan to look at how we can keep this information up to date and involve members of the disabled community in the ongoing life of the plan. This will improve the quality of the information available when the plan is reviewed in three years time.

We take advice from the County HR Department about issues relating to recruitment and retention of staff who may have disabilities.

We have reflected on the respective responsibilities of the school and the local authority and we have ensured that we are able to collect information on new staff through the recruitment process by following the County Council's agreed guidelines for recruitment and by rigorously applying equal opportunities.

We have discussed the need to have information on disability with current staff and will collect this information by completing and collating staff questionnaires. No areas of need, that required reasonable adjustment, were recorded by staff previously we will update when policy is reviewed.

The achievements of disabled pupils.

Information about disabled pupils which is already available to the school comes from pupil admission forms and via data held in the schools Arbor/Provision Map

We subscribe to the Every Child Matters Agenda and the achievements of those pupils that have been identified as disabled will be analysed in the same way that we monitor in terms of gender or ethnicity so as to ensure that our systems and provision allows each pupil to achieve to their best.

The achievements of disabled pupils

We have analysed the achievements of our disabled pupils against the same success criteria we use for all our pupils including:

- end of key stage outcomes;
- comparative progress measured by the optional SATs;
- achievements in extra-curricular activities; and
- broader outcomes such as those set out in *Every Child Matters*.

From this analysis we have seen that children who have additional need are performing well with the level of support and reasonable adjustment that we already provide.

Information on disabled parents, carers and others using the school.

Schools are not required, under the specific duty, to gather information on other disabled people using their services, such as disabled parents and carers of children at the school, or disabled members of the community attending school events. However, the general duty still applies to these groups and, if schools are able to collect such information, they will be in a better position to show how they are promoting disability equality for disabled people using the school. To meet this need we intend:

- **ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers. It will be helpful if such communications emphasise the range of adjustments that can be made;**
- **for parents and carers of children already at the school, collect information on disability as part of a survey of parents' views, or in conjunction with a letter home about a parents' evening.**

1.4: Impact assessment

Impact assessment is a systematic approach to the analysis of the effects of a policy, practice or procedure for disabled pupils, staff and parents.

The main mechanism by which our school will assess the impact of their current policies will be by bringing together:

- **the issues identified through the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents; and**
- **the information that the school holds on the disabled pupils, staff and parents.**

Over the lifetime of the scheme we will assess the impact of on disabled people of our current policies. We will involve disabled people in prioritising what is to be looked at first. Impact assessment will be incorporated into the school's planned review and revision of existing policies and into the process of developing new policies.

2: Identifying the main priorities for your school's scheme and deciding your actions.

The priorities for the school's scheme have been set in the light of:

- **an examination of the information that the school has gathered; and**
- **the messages that the school has heard from the disabled pupils, staff and parents who have been involved in the development of the scheme.**

Priorities identified are about:

- **Improving identification about what parents/carers, staff, pupils and other school users feel their needs are.**
- **Improving the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents.**
- **Improving information for all school users.**
- **Ensuring that all involved in the running and management of the school are aware of their responsibilities in terms of the DES.**
- **Ensuring that all alterations to the school are discussed with the Area Surveyor so that building work is in line with current DDA legislation.**
- **Ensuring all planning and provision considers all stakeholders in our school community.**

The actions we will take to promote equality of opportunity will address the six elements of the general duty:

1. Promoting equality of opportunity

We are working proactively to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils at policy and whole school level, as well as for individual pupils, through this we promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils and to secure their participation in every aspect of school life.

We have incorporated priorities from our accessibility plan into the scheme.

These are:

- **The maintenance programme and buildings surveys will identify and attempt to rectify any issues which may disadvantage users.**

2. Eliminating discrimination,

We are working proactively to eliminate discrimination, for example:

- **by awareness raising and staff training;**
- **by keeping a watchful eye on the impact of policies;**
- **reviewing and adjusting policies;**
- **raising expectations;**
- **improving communication.**

3. Eliminating harassment

We are working proactively to eliminate harassment.

We will;

- **raise awareness amongst staff and pupils of disability-related harassment;**
- **understand the nature and prevalence of bullying and harassment;**
- **recognise and address bullying and harassment;**
- **involve pupils themselves in combating bullying;**
- **ensure that disability-related harassment of disabled staff, parents, carers and other users of the school is identified and addressed.**
- **Ensure that policies and practices are rigorously applied.**

4. Promoting positive attitudes

We are working proactively to promote positive attitudes to disability, for example:

- **by staff modelling respectful attitudes to disabled pupils, staff and parents;**
- **through positive images in school books and other materials.**

5. Encouraging participation in public life

Disabled pupils, staff and parents are encouraged to participate in school life:

- **they see their disabled peers included and succeeding in the life of the school;**
- **disabled pupils, staff and parents are aware that they have the opportunity to be represented in senior, responsible and representative roles;**
- **there are positive images of disabled people participating.**

6. Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

We will ensure that the policies of the school and the climate of the school is designed to meet disabled pupils needs. These needs will be met by establishing a rich and vibrant curriculum, through reasonable adjustment and through ensuring that the school building is designed to promote accessibility.

3: Making it happen

In order to make the scheme happen the Governing Body will produce an action plan that will be reviewed annually. The DES will be reviewed at the end of three years in 2011.

3.1: Implementation

In order to ensure that the scheme is effectively implemented we will ensure that:

- **the scheme is supported by a detailed action plan; and**
- **the action plan is incorporated into a framework that has the oversight of the governing body, and that progress is checked.**

The action plan will show:

- **clear allocation of lead responsibility;**
- **clear allocation of resources;**
- **an indication of expected outcomes or performance criteria;**
- **clear timescales;**
- **a specified date and process for review.**

Evaluation

We will evaluate the effectiveness of this scheme and reflect this evaluation in our discussions.

3.2: Publication

The school's scheme can be published as part of our planning and policy documents. Copies will be made available to anyone requesting them.

3.3: Reporting

We will report periodically in Governors meetings and we will report on:

- the progress we have made on our action plan; and
- the effect of what we have done.

3.4: Reviewing and revising the scheme

As part of the review of the scheme, we will:

- **revisit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the scheme; and**
- **re-examine the information to see if actions that the school has taken have affected opportunities and outcomes for disabled pupils, staff and parents.**

The review of the scheme will inform its revision: how the school sets new priorities and new action plans for the next scheme. This process will again:

- **involve disabled pupils, staff and parents; and**
- **be based on information that the school has gathered.**

Reviewed in September 2023

