

MERESIDE C OF E PRIMARY ACADEMY



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2026-2027

School Accessibility Plan



1. Introduction

Mereside C of E Primary Academy is committed to providing an inclusive education in which every pupil is able to participate fully in school life, make progress and achieve their potential.

The Academy recognises that disabled pupils may experience barriers to accessing education, the physical environment, information, activities, facilities and services. The Academy will take proactive and reasonable steps to identify and remove or reduce such barriers.

This Accessibility Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, particularly Section 85 (discrimination against pupils in schools), Section 20 and Schedule 13 (reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils), and Section 88 and Schedule 10 (accessibility plans for disabled pupils).

The Academy will also have regard to the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, and relevant statutory guidance concerning the inclusion and participation of children and young people with SEND.

This plan should be read alongside the Academy's SEND Policy / SEN Information Report, Equality Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Educational Visits Policy, Accessibility and/or ICT policies, admissions arrangements, and curriculum and teaching and learning policies.

2. Definition of disability

For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Disability can include, amongst other things, physical impairments, sensory impairments, long-term health conditions and mental health conditions where the statutory definition is met.

The Academy will not assume that a pupil needs to have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), receive SEN Support or have a formally diagnosed condition in order to consider whether reasonable adjustments are required.



3. Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments

The Academy acknowledges its duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

This is an anticipatory duty. The Academy will therefore consider in advance the barriers that disabled pupils may experience and take reasonable steps to prevent disabled pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Reasonable adjustments may include adapting teaching and learning approaches; classroom organisation; additional adult support; auxiliary aids or specialist equipment; assessment arrangements; communication methods; school routines; educational visits and extracurricular activities; uniform requirements; and sensory, communication or mobility support.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis and will take account of the pupil's needs, the effectiveness and practicability of the adjustment, available resources, health and safety and other relevant circumstances.

The Academy will not charge disabled pupils or their parents for the provision of a reasonable adjustment.

Reasonable adjustments will be reviewed when a pupil's circumstances change and as part of the Academy's ongoing monitoring.

4. Purpose of the Accessibility Plan

The purpose of this plan is to set out how Mereside C of E Primary Academy will improve accessibility for disabled pupils over the period 2026–2029.

The plan focuses on the three areas required by Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010:

A. Curriculum accessibility – increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the Academy's curriculum.

B. Physical accessibility – improving the physical environment of the Academy to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can access education, facilities and services.

C. Information accessibility – improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils in formats that are accessible to them.

5. Our vision for accessibility

Mereside C of E Primary Academy is committed to establishing equality and inclusion for all pupils, parents, carers, staff and other users of the Academy.

This reflects the Academy's existing ethos: "a happy, caring school built on Christian Values, which helps us all to live, learn and grow together..." and its commitment to recognising and valuing uniqueness.

Accessibility is therefore viewed not simply as a matter of compliance, but as an integral part of the Academy's commitment to inclusion, belonging, achievement and participation.

6. Consultation and involvement

When developing and reviewing accessibility arrangements, the Academy will seek and take account of the views of disabled pupils; pupils with SEND; parents and carers; staff; governors; the SENDCo; and relevant external professionals and specialist services.

The Academy will seek to understand what barriers pupils experience and which adjustments they find effective, rather than relying solely on diagnosis or category of need.

The Academy will particularly ensure that pupils and parents are given accessible information and appropriate opportunities to contribute to decisions affecting them.

7. Safeguarding and accessibility

Accessibility arrangements will be considered alongside safeguarding. The Academy will ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at additional safeguarding risk because they cannot access emergency information, evacuation procedures, safeguarding disclosures, communication with trusted adults, online safety information, reporting mechanisms, or whole-school safeguarding activities.

Individual emergency evacuation arrangements will be reviewed where necessary.

8. SEND and accessibility

Accessibility planning will complement, rather than replace, the Academy's duties under the SEND framework.

The Academy will ensure that SEN Support is reviewed through the graduated approach; reasonable adjustments are considered separately where disability creates substantial disadvantage; EHCP provision is implemented where applicable; pupils and parents are involved in decisions; specialist advice is sought where appropriate; transition arrangements identify accessibility requirements; and reasonable adjustments continue to be considered even where a pupil already receives SEN Support or has an EHCP.

9. Monitoring and review

The Governing Body will monitor implementation of this plan through the appropriate committee structure.

The plan will be monitored throughout the academic year; reviewed formally at least annually; updated when significant changes in pupil need, legislation, buildings or provision occur; and reviewed and renewed as part of the three-year accessibility planning cycle.

The Academy will maintain evidence of implementation, including accessibility audits, reasonable-adjustment records, staff training, pupil and parent feedback, site improvement records, relevant complaints or incidents, and monitoring of participation and progress.

10. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body / Academy Trust: Ensure the Accessibility Plan is prepared, implemented, resourced and reviewed; monitor progress; and ensure accessibility is considered within capital works and strategic planning.

Headteacher: Lead implementation; ensure accessibility is incorporated into whole-school improvement planning; and ensure staff understand their responsibilities.

SENDCo: Coordinate identification of accessibility needs; advise staff regarding reasonable adjustments; liaise with pupils, parents and external professionals; and monitor individual adjustments and specialist provision.

Teachers and support staff: Identify barriers to learning and participation; implement reasonable adjustments; review effectiveness; and seek advice where necessary.

Site / Buildings Team: Maintain accessible facilities and equipment; address physical barriers; and ensure accessibility is considered in premises development.

Pupils and parents/carers: Contribute views about barriers and effective adjustments and raise concerns where arrangements are not effective.

11. Review of legislation and guidance

This plan will be reviewed against changes to relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

The Academy will particularly monitor developments relating to the Equality Act 2010; Children and Families Act 2014; SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years; Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education; and relevant Department for Education guidance.

The Government published proposals for further SEND reform in February 2026. These reforms should not be treated as current law unless and until they become legislation or statutory guidance. The Academy should monitor the implementation timetable and update this plan when relevant reforms take effect.

The EHRC also published proposed updated technical guidance for schools in 2026. Proposed wording should not be described as settled law while it remains subject to consultation.