



## Holywell Village First School Accessibility Plan

3-year period covered by the plan: 2026-2029.

The priorities set below are to be achieved within the timescale of this reporting cycle.

### Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001/10 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- 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.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act.

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The government's definition of disability and long-term adverse effects can be read in full [here](#).

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and these are also published on the school website.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils (and those with a learning difference) in the three areas required by the planning duties:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (and those with a learning difference) can participate in the school **curriculum**;
- improving the **environment** of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils (and those with a learning difference) can take advantage of education and associated services;

- improving the delivery to disabled pupils (and those with a learning difference) of any **information which is provided in writing**.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. What follows are our action plans showing how the school will address the key, new priorities identified in the plan and how we will address them.

### **Vision and Values**

We know that we can best achieve our aims by working in close partnership with families. We feel that the school is at the heart of the local community, and we strive to maintain and develop as many links as possible with people and services around us.

At the present time, the challenge for us is to continue to improve levels of attainment and quality of provision for every child and to provide a school which works in partnership with and is accountable to the community it serves. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. This policy helps to ensure that this happens for all the children in our school. Inclusion takes into account a child's protected characteristics, disability (and those with a learning difference) and vulnerability.

### **Developing the plan: consultation**

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for the school were identified by:

- The Governing Body
- Head Teacher (in consultation with children, parents and carers)
- SENDCos
- Schools' DEI lead from Northumberland County Council

### **Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (and those with a learning difference) can access the school curriculum**

#### **Transition points, differentiation and self-regulation.**

With the support of the High Incidence Needs Team (HINT), NHS Speech and Language Team and the Be You Team, we have accessed valuable support to ensure that staff are equipped to facilitate sensory processing techniques, have autism awareness and offer Speech and Language interventions to help children regulate and access the curriculum.

Therapeutic interventions are intended to help children with learning disabilities (and those with a learning difference) to self-regulate and be able to learn. The core expectation is that every child is known and understood by the key people they encounter each day. A team approach to nurture and ELSAs (Emotional Literacy

Support Assistants) offer pupils a range of adults with whom they can share any concerns, worries or barriers to their learning, access or provision.

### **Parental Support**

We recognise that one of the best ways to ensure the success of the support we give a child with a disability (and those with a learning difference) in school is to support parents/carers to establish the same principles at home and to understand the strategies that are evidence-based.

#### **Over the three years of this plan, we will:**

Provide disabled pupils (and those with a learning difference) and those with additional needs, a suitably trained and appropriate key person as a support and guide.

Establish and develop parental drop-ins with the multi-agency teams which support our school, which will enable parents/carers to learn more about skills such as managing challenging behaviour, setting boundaries, using now and next boards.

Refer any pupils who require a higher level of support to other agencies e.g. Sensory Processing Service, Be You, Early Help or the Disabled Children's Team.

Host regular formal and informal meetings with parents/carers to share best practice across the setting and the home environment.

#### **Strategies to enhance inclusion:**

We have hosted workshops for parents in school from the 'Be You Team' (Primary Mental Health) about managing emotions and worry in their child. 'Soft starts', 'soft end of day' arrangements and key person approach has been adopted to support children experiencing anxiety or separation issues when coming to or leaving school.

The 'Talkabout' intervention is utilised with targeted pupils to develop good social relationships, especially for children who have low self-esteem, struggle to read social cues and have issues with social and emotional aspects of learning.

The 'Zones of Regulation' approach is used across school as a Quality First Teaching approach. Pupils with more bespoke Social Emotional and Mental Health needs have individual interventions to create and implement a Zones of Regulation toolkit to support their emotion regulation both in and out of school.

#### **Over the three years of this plan, we will**

Revise current interventions and strategies and explore any new approaches to improve inclusion for all vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.

Consult with our partners e.g. NHS and the HINT team to establish the very best practice and refine our work in light of these consultations.

### **Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils (and those with a learning**

**difference) can take advantage of education and associated services:**

### **School environment challenges**

An aging wooden building that was built in 1938 is no longer fit for purpose. This poses challenges around accessibility for pupils with needs. Space is extremely limited and there is little room for small group work, 1-1 support or 'cool-down' areas. Staff often need to share such spaces which can pose a challenge when supporting high-needs pupils.

### **Over the three years of this plan, we will:**

Establish some new, inclusive learning spaces, including SEND adaptations.

Continue to build on the good practice we have established such as providing sensory circuits and a sensory area.

### **Improving the delivery to disabled pupils (and those with a learning difference) of information that is provided in written formats.**

We offer children a range of strategies and practical support in school, for example, coloured overlays/reading rulers for ADHD and Dyslexia; Coloured overlays and reading rulers reduce the perceptual distortions of text that children sometimes describe. They enable some children to read text more fluently and with less discomfort and fewer headaches.

Now and Next boards provide a visual prompt to help children to move on from one activity to another or to prepare them for what will happen next.

**Visual Timetables:** A visual timetable, timeline or visual activity schedule is a way of supporting a child to predict what will happen next. Visual timetables can help children who: struggle to understand what is being said, find it difficult processing spoken information, have poor auditory memories (difficulty listening and remembering information they have heard), have reduced understanding of time and the passing of time, have increased anxiety related to change, or moving from one activity to another.

### **Over the three years of this plan, we will**

Introduce best communication practice emerging from the training and initiatives being implemented in school.

- **Dyslexia:** Use multisensory approaches to teaching literacy, such as incorporating visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic activities. Provide explicit instruction in phonics and phonological awareness using established programmes such as Sound Linkage.

- **ADHD:** Minimize distractions in the learning environment and break down tasks into smaller chunks. Use visual timers and checklists to help students stay focused.
- **Auditory Processing Disorder:** Provide clear and concise instructions. Use visual aids and repeat key information. Reduce background noise in the classroom.

We will continue to collaborate with High and Low Incidence Needs Teams and Early Help to ensure that children have access to technology, therapies and aids to learning that make the written word more accessible.

## **Appendix 1: Useful resources**

Making printed information accessible.

Resources and guidance: [Accessible Communication Formats](#) (Government guidance)

[Creating accessible documents](#) factsheet (Abilitynet)

[Abilities and assistive technology](#) (UK Association for Accessible Formats)

[The Sensory Trust information sheet on clear and large print](#)

[Dyslexia Style Guide](#) (British Dyslexia Association)

[What Works?](#) (A database of evidence based resources for professionals from the Communication Trust)

[Custom eyes](#) Schools and individuals can join the scheme which can reprint (at RRP) large print tailor made books which include:

- picture books
- fiction
- non-fiction
- Oxford Reading Tree
- GCSE and A Level English texts and textbooks
- revision guides for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4

[Northumberland County Blind Association](#) undertake commissions to transcribe documentation to Braille.

[Easy Read UK](#) can convert documents to Easy Read format.