



**Lowther Endowed SCHOOL**

# **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**2023 – 2026**

**Head teacher  
Carla Weild**

**Chair of Governors  
Kieran Barr**

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C Weild'.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kieran Barr'.

Date: January 2023

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**This plan will be reviewed every three years, or as and when necessary**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities will be under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEN.

As in previous legislation a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

## 2. DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

### **Progressive conditions considered to be a disability**

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

### **Conditions that are specifically excluded**

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

It should be noted that this definition is *not just regarding physical difficulties* but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- 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

## **3. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS**

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage the pupil faces in comparison to his non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

There is as yet no clarity on what may be 'reasonable' although the Code of Practice will include factors that should be taken into account. It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEN route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing special educational needs statement provisions, under which Local Authorities have to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not

have a statement of SEN (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

As in the previous legislation we are not under a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our Accessibility planning.

## 4. AIMS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The planning duties on schools and Local Authorities are the same as the duties in the previous DDA. Schools are required to have an Accessibility Plan detailing how they will improve access to the physical environment, increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils, and how they will improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. The LA is required to have an Access Strategy.

In **Lowther Endowed** School, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum, increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Furthermore, under our equality duties, we intend to improve the physical environment of the school to enable any disabled person (pupil, parent/carer, employees or visitor) to access facilities and services and improve the availability of accessible information to any disabled person.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, **begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people** through specific targets.

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

Compliance with the disability duty under the Equality Act is consistent with the school's aims and Single Equality Scheme, and the operation of the school's Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy.

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Plan will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

**Lowther Endowed** School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

## 5. KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework ([Click here to access](#)) which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
  - setting suitable learning challenges;
  - responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs;
  - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

## 6. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Lowther Endowed is a smaller than average size primary school. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very small. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with no pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.

## 7. DEVELOPMENT

### 7.1 The Purpose and Direction of the School's Plan: Vision and Values

**Lowther Endowed School:**

- has high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life;
- is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled students in all aspects of school life;
- values the individual and the contribution they make to all aspects of school life;
- will strive to ensure that its disabled pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and teaching resources so as to develop fully in their education;
- acknowledges a commitment to embrace the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement;
- will continue to focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school;
- is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school community.

### 7.2 Information from Pupil Data and School Audit

- **55 children**
- ***The School has good access and is all on one level.***
- **6 Pupils with SEND at Lowther Endowed School**

Lowther Endowed School aims to identify, as soon as possible, and provide Special Educational support for pupils, that is “additional to and different from” that provided within the differentiated curriculum. We recognise the 4 main areas of SEN:

- Communication and interaction needs;
- Cognition and Learning needs;
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties;
- Sensory / Physical needs.

The purpose of early identification is to plan what action our school needs to take in order to support an individual child, not fit that pupil into a specific SEN category.

We use the following methods to identify pupils who require additional support or adjustments to allow full curriculum access:

- Consultations with parents / carers, teachers, external agencies and / or the pupil’s previous school / Nursery setting to identify children with additional needs and gather up to date information and advice;
  - Normal teaching cycle of Plan, Teach, Assess, Evaluate cycle;
  - Regular monitoring of Whole School Tracking of attainment to identify any pupil who is not making expected progress in a particular area so that additional support can be introduced;
  - Discussions between class teacher(s), SENCO and parents where necessary to consider the needs of the whole child.
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- *As at the start of the academic year 2022/23, the school has identified 4 students with known medical needs such as: epilepsy, hay fever and mild asthma. Our annual development plan takes into account the needs of our diverse student population as well as the needs of its wider community.*
  - *0 student with a disability currently in feeder nursery/primary schools who may wish to come here have been identified through dialogue with the Local Authority agencies tasked with supporting those students in its area with disabilities.*

*In order to ensure that our data is up to date and accurate we will:*

- *liaise with the Local Authority so as to identify and therefore plan a response to students with a disability well before they arrive;*
- *improve the information dissemination from our Learning Support Facility;*
- *implement a system that allows parents to inform us if they themselves have a disability;*
- *identify early on in their school career any obstacles to the effective learning of disabled students;*
- *use all available data to inform the planning of individual student learning patterns;*
- *use information supplied via previous LA Asset management/Accessibility Audits to assist us to develop an action plan to reduce obstacles for the school community.*

## 7.3 Views of those Consulted during the development of the Plan

Lowther Endowed School will:

- ensure the development of the plan involves coordination with the Local Authority in line with the LA Accessibility Strategy and ensure that Lowther Endowed School provides the best choices for students wanting to enrol here;
- SEND and Safeguarding governors / finance & environment committee
- consult staff including specifically SENCo.
- set up a structure to allow the views of students, both able and disabled to be taken into account;(Schools Council)
- survey parents/carers to ascertain their views on our provision for disabled students and any developments they feel would be of use to the students and also offer parents alternative ways of answering the survey;
- involve outside agencies who already exist to assist disabled students in their education and future careers;(EHA)
- ensure the views of ALL those consulted are taken into consideration and the plan modified where reasonable to meet the needs of stakeholders;

## 8. SCOPE OF THE PLAN

### 8.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- to investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled students to access can be improved;
- to further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled students;
- to investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled students to learn including liaison with the LA Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Statementing and Provision Team.

The school plans to increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist **aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. The school will continue to 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. They will also seek appropriate staff training and development when needs arise and any pupils with SEND join Lowther School. This responsibility will be jointly held by Carla Weild (head teacher) and Toinette Thomas (SENDCO). It will be overseen by Alice Vince (SEN Governor).

School will use a risk assessment approach to ensure all pupils can participate in any after school/cultural activities including off-site visits when they arise.

In class, the use of Teaching Assistants and computing equipment will be used to support any children with SEN and/or disabilities (whether permanent or temporary) to support them with physically and academically being able to access the curriculum/school life as fully as possible.

We will use our ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) trained member of staff to run any nurture groups or one to one support as the need arises.

As with all SEND needs, liaison and effective communication and relationships with outside agencies will help enable enhanced support and access to the curriculum.

School will look for opportunities to ensure that disabled members of the school community are seen in a positive light, and where possible positive role models of adults with disabilities will be used to



encourage success and achievement (such as Nat Pattinson, wheelchair basketball and Stuart Robinson, wheelchair rugby coaches will attend school for activities and motivational assemblies with the children.

Parents and carers are constantly reminded through newsletters and visits, that they are an important partner in their child's education.

## 8.2 Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

- in consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the site;
- improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas;
- investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

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,. This is required regardless of whether the school has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

The school is on one level and so accessible to all. Parking is in front of the school building and we have a accessible disabled toilet.

Computing equipment would be sought for anyone who requires it as well as specialist desks/chairs or portable aids.

## 8.3 Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are disabled

Lowther Endowed **School will strive to:**

- produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired students;
- investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site.

The school plans to improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

When needed, the headteacher will

- Inform readers that school published material is available in a selection of formats identifying how they can access this provision if requested.
- Identify how the readability of information provided by the school website is monitored to ensure accessibility to a wide range of diverse needs and abilities.
- Identify how textbooks and other pupil information is selected and provided to meet a diversity of pupil need.
- Ensure the monitoring of effectiveness of adult support to enhance the opportunities for pupils/parents who have difficulties in accessing information.

## 8.4 Financial Planning and Control

The Head teacher, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the School Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process. The objective is that over time School Accessibility Plan actions will be integrated into the School Development Plan.

**Lowther Endowed School** will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

## 9. IMPLEMENTATION

### 9.1 Management, Coordination and Implementation

**Lowther Endowed School** will undertake a disability audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents (refer to Section 7.3).

As a result of the audit, we shall:

- produce action plans, with definite time scales for the implementation of the actions implicit in the plan;
- plans to provides workshops so staff can understand and buy into the Accessibility Plan and not see it as a bolt on;
- present the plan to the governing body for their approval;
- modify the plan based on the views of stakeholders;
- review the plan and the associated action plans to see if milestones are being met. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary on an annual basis. A new Accessibility Plan will be drawn up every three years.

### 9.2 Monitoring

**Lowther Endowed School** recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning

Governors will be required to comment in a report to parents on the accessibility plan and identify any revisions as necessary.

- changes in physical accessibility of school buildings;
- questionnaires, responses from stakeholders e.g. parents, pupils and staff, indicate increased confidence in the schools ability to promote access to educational opportunities for pupils with disabilities;
- improved levels of confidence in staff in reducing the obstacles to success for pupils with additional needs;
- recorded evidence that increased numbers of pupils with disabilities are actively participating in all areas of the school;
- recorded evidence that fewer pupils are being excluded from school opportunities as their needs are being more effectively addressed through the application of strategies and procedures;
- increased levels of achievement for pupils with disabilities;
- pupil responses; verbally, pictorially and written that indicate that they feel themselves to be included;

### 9.3 The role of the LA in increasing accessibility

*Governors may wish to comment a report to parents on the impact the County Council has had upon supporting the school to achieve successful implementation of their accessibility plan (where relevant).*

### 9.4 Accessing the School's Plan

- Raising awareness of font size and page layouts will support pupils with visual impairments.

- Auditing the school library to ensure the availability of large font and easy read texts will improve access if necessary.
- Auditing signage around the school to ensure that is accessible to all is a valuable exercise.
- Auditing the use of, and methods of displaying materials around the school.

This will be done through:

- presentation in a section on the school website open to all visitors to the site;
- mention in the head teacher's newsletter of the availability of the plan.

We will ensure that the plan is available in different formats where requested.

The school will achieve successful implementation of the accessibility plan with continued support in the areas of:

- providing training and awareness opportunities to staff, Governors and parents/carers on issues regarding **equality and inclusion**, as available;
- providing targeted training for particular groups of pupils/staff;
- promoting collaboration through the provision of information and the sharing of good practice;
- encouraging liaison between other local schools including special schools;
- seeking support/advice from outside the school, from services, other agencies and organisations;
- ensuring that **Lowther Endowed School** is aware of all support services that provide advice to schools and staff.

## 10. RELATED POLICIES

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum Policies
- Single Equality Scheme, Policy/Objectives
- Staff Training and Development Plan
- Health & Safety
- Inclusion
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Educational Visits
- Whole School Behaviour
- School Development Plan
- Complaints Procedures

## **LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2023 - 2026**

### **IMPROVING THE CURRICULUM ACCESS AT LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL**

<b>Target</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
All out-of-school and extra-curricular activities are planned to ensure the participation and independence of all pupils	Review all out-of-school and extra –curricular provision to ensure compliance with legislation.	All out-of school and extra-curricular activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment	On going	All children will always have access to all activities
Classrooms are organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in an individual class bases.	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils	On going	All children will always have access to all parts of the national curriculum
Training for awareness raising of Disability (as required) including through the Cluster SEND training	Provide training for governors, staff, pupils and parents. Discuss perception of issues with staff.	Whole school community aware of issues relating to Access.	Review annually	Society will benefit by a more inclusive school and social environment
To continue to monitor and if necessary improve the access to all parts of the School	Review the layout of the building and access arrangements (where necessary)	All adults will be able to access all areas of the school, including visitors to the school	Review annually	Parents will feel included in their child's education Visitors will be able to safely access the school.

## LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

### IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL ACCESS AT LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL

An Asset Management Plan was carried out by \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ July 2017 \_\_\_\_\_ and a number of recommendations made:

AMP Report Ref. (if relevant)	Item	Activity	Timescale	Cost £	Responsibility

## **LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2023 - 2026**

### **IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF WRITTEN INFORMATION AT LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL**

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>ACHIEVEMENT</b>
Availability of written materials in alternative formats as required	The school will make itself aware of how to convert written information into alternative formats	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required (and different languages if required)	Ongoing	Delivery of information to disabled pupils and/or disabled adults or adults with SEN available.
Make available school information for parents in alternative formats	Review all current publications and promote the availability of different formats	All school information is available for all.	Ongoing	All information is available to all.
The school continues with using electronic methods of reporting to parents BUT will provide other methods if parents are unable to access these.	Electronic methods of reporting are explored	The school has explored electronic reporting methods and is knowledgeable about best practice.	Ongoing	Text and e-mail used to correspond with parents and carers







