



YORK HOUSE

Accessibility Policy

Reviewed September 2026

This Policy applies to all sections of York House School, including EYFS

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Review Date	September 2026
Reviewed By	Bursar
Next Review Date	September 2027
Committee Owner	Board

Please see the Policy Review Matrix for the next review date

Signed by:

Jon Gray

Headmaster

Date: September 2026

Signed by

H. Egan

Chair of Governors

Date: September 2026

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) places a legal requirement on all schools to increase accessibility for disabled pupils. ISI Inspectors are required to certify that an Independent School has discharged its duty under the legislation. All schools are required to produce a written Accessibility Plan. This policy also takes into account Schedule 10 of the 2010 Equality Act.

Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'.

The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

The Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a person with a disability.

Direct discrimination

An education provider must not treat a pupil less favourably simply because of their disability. For instance, they cannot refuse admission to applicants because they have a disability.

Indirect discrimination

An education provider must not do something for all pupils which would have a negative effect on students with a disability, unless they have a genuine reason.

Discrimination arising from a disability

An education provider must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability. For example, they cannot stop a pupil with a disability going outside at break time because it takes them too long to get there.

Harassment

Education providers must not harass pupils because of their disability.

York House School's Commitment

We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment that 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, including those surrounding disability and accessibility, and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

Our commitment to equality for those with a disability will be demonstrated through:

- Fostering respect for all groups and individuals, within the context of Human Rights and dignity.
- Promoting positive non-discriminatory behaviour.
- Ensuring appropriate support and inclusion for individuals with a disability within the school.
- Promotion of opportunities for children to reach their full potential.
- Ensuring representation of a wider range of diversity within our curriculum and school community.
- Encouraging links with the wider community. We recognise that it is the responsibility of every member of our school community to ensure that this ethos is actively and consistently reflected in practice. We will systematically assess, evaluate and constantly review the impact of our school policies and practice on the life, attitudes and achievement of all groups and individuals amongst our pupils and staff.

To achieve this, we will ensure that:

- Ongoing training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination continues to inform understanding and attitudes on this matter.
- All staff have the necessary training to teach and support pupils with a disability.
- All children are fully engaged within the learning environment of the classroom.
- All members of the community have equal opportunities to access the school premises and relevant information.
- Curriculum Leadership Team alongside Heads of Departments ensure access to their own subject area, ensuring learning is both accessible and equitable for all.
- All new building works conform to accessibility guidelines as we continue to develop the physical school environment to make it accessible and able to meet the needs of all pupils, staff and visitors to the school.
- All pupils, regardless of their needs, will have access to the curriculum and every aspect of school life. The curriculum will be adapted appropriately to support and remove barriers to meet the needs of all our pupils so that they can achieve their very best.
- Allocated Governors to both SEND and Inclusion regularly review accessibility to our school provision and curriculum. Governors' committees continue to ensure the needs of all pupils are met.
- Information about our Accessibility plan will be published on the website and be made available in the school office.

Supporting Staff Disabilities

The governing board also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and have delegated to the Headteacher the responsibility to provide appropriate support and provision for employees with disabilities, to ensure that they are able to carry out their work effectively without barriers wherever possible.

Accessibility Plan

York House School's Accessibility Plan has been drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements from the Equality Act 2010, specified in Schedule 10, which relates to disability:

Accessibility Strategies: Local authorities must write and implement strategies to improve school access for disabled children.

Plans: Independent schools and governing bodies must prepare, publish, and keep written accessibility plans under review.

Curriculum Access: Plans must boost how disabled pupils take part in the school curriculum.

Physical Environment: Schools must improve their physical spaces to better support disabled students and staff.

Information Delivery: Schools must improve how they deliver written and verbal information to disabled pupils in accessible formats.

Contents of the Accessibility Plan

We are required to plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled people to the school curriculum. 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.
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils.

This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents'.

- Improving the delivery of the school curriculum to those with learning difficulties by providing class, individual and group provision maps.

Accessibility Audit

The audit will take place at the end of each cycle and will cover the following three areas:

1. Access to the curriculum – the governing board will assess the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum on an equal basis with their peers.
2. Access to the physical environment – the governing board will assess the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the physical environment on an equal basis with their peers.
3. Access to information – the governing board will assess the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access information on an equal basis with their peers.

The audit will consider all kinds of disabilities and impairments, including, but not limited to, the following: ambulatory disabilities, dexterity disabilities, visual disabilities, auditory disabilities and comprehension.

Aims of the Accessibility Plan

A person has a disability if they have a cognitive, physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (See Accessibility Policy for full definition.)

This plan aims to:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum and everyday school life.
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities.

The governing board also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and will:

- Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
- Provide appropriate support and provision for employees with disabilities to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
- Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

The plan will be resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised in consultation with:

- The Headmaster and other relevant members of staff
- Governors
- Pupils' parents
- External partners

This plan covers a rolling three-year period and will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to consider the changing needs of the school and its pupils. The plan is also reviewed where the school has undergone a refurbishment.

Resources will be allocated to the implementation of the plan from annual budgets according to the timescales given.

The following action plan has been devised to identify potential problem areas and where possible indicate a short, medium or long-term solution.

Action plan

- The findings from the audit will be used to identify short-, medium- and long-term actions to address specific gaps and improve access.
- All actions will be carried out in a reasonable timeframe, and after taking into account pupils' disabilities and the preferences of their parents.

Aim	Comments	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Time scale
To make all indoor teaching and learning environments accessible to all pupils and staff.	History room and Latin room are on the first floor in a listed building.	Classes moved to the ground floor, when necessary, via revised timetabling plan.	Head of academic	2 years
		Plan to install lift during Phase 2 of build.	Head\Bursar	No current date for Phase 2.
	Art room is accessed via a flight of stairs on the first floor.	Classes moved to the ground floor, when necessary, via revised timetabling plan.	Head of academic	1 year
	Visual Impairment adaptations to be made to all environments	Improvements to be made by the site team following specialist recommendations, starting with areas with highest impact.	Site team	Ongoing
		Resources to be specially adapted to the needs of individual pupils with VI, according to specialists.	LST Subject teachers	Ongoing
All make all areas of the main building used by staff accessible.	Main building: toilets, kitchen, dining room, all currently accessed via side entrance and back door.	Consider provision of moveable ramps to facilitate entry via front entrance	H&S Committee	2-3 years
A range of communication strategies are used to help non-verbal and partially verbal pupils.	Staff can use Makaton to communicate with nonverbal or partially verbal children	Makaton CPD for LST and support staff.	LST	2 years
	Visual cues to be used alongside words to support independence	Use a symbol-based system such as Widgit to support communication.		
All pupils able to access all areas of the curriculum.	Resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum.	LST and class teacher to review required pupil support on a termly basis.	LST Subject teachers	Review termly Ongoing
To make York House School a welcoming environment to all families and visitors regardless of ability or disability.	School to invite parents and carers who have a disability or impairment of some kind to inform the office so that we can provide individual support for them.	Office staff to include in their correspondence to parents the following statement: If there are any adjustments the school can make to support you accessing the information/event then please let the school office know.'	School office	Ongoing