



## **THE HERMITAGE SCHOOLS**

### **Inspire, Learn, Achieve**

#### **Disability Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan**

|                     |                                 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Person Responsible  | Local Governing Committee (LGC) |
| Date Adopted        | July 2010                       |
| Date of last review | Autumn Term 2025                |
| Date of next review | Autumn Term 2028                |

#### **Introduction**

At The Hermitage Schools, we are aware that we have a general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Our Disability Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan supports the schools' Equality Policy and outlines how we will fulfil this duty, including a set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bonded targets in the form of an action plan.

#### **School's Duty**

The LGC has a duty to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the schools or may wish to.
- Produce and publish a Disability and Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan to show how they will meet these duties.

The LGC is required to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in three ways, by:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the schools 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.

#### **Aims and Values in relation to equality of provision**

At The Hermitage Schools, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunities for staff, pupils and all those receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability. The achievement of all pupils and students will be monitored on the basis of disability and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will aim to provide our pupils with a firm foundation, which will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless

of disability. We will seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against pupils and staff by adhering to our duties as an employer under the legislation.

- At The Hermitage Schools, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- The Hermitage Schools aim to identify and remove barriers to disabled pupils in every area of school life.
- The Hermitage Schools have high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate in all aspects of school life.
- At The Hermitage Schools, our commitment to equal opportunities is driven by the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement. Therefore, the schools:
  - Set suitable learning challenges.
  - Respond to pupils' diverse learning needs.
  - Overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.
- At The Hermitage Schools, we will work actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Disability Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan links to other specific policies and action plans that the schools produce including our Equality Policy and the School Development Plan.
- The Disability Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and connected with the school so that each person knows what is expected of them. Promoting disability and equality and raising the achievement of disabled pupils is the responsibility of the whole school staff.
- The LGC will ensure equality of opportunity for all staff and pupils in school. This will include monitoring recruitment, retention and continuing professional development for disabled and non-disabled staff, monitoring academic and social standards for all pupils. The LGC will ensure that the Action Plan is reviewed and updated as required.
- The Executive Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will monitor, through SLT meetings, the progress of children with disabilities. They will also consider the impact of policies and procedures on these children and their social interaction with other children. They will lead progress on actions in the Action Plan.
- All staff will be familiar with this scheme and ensure that they provide equal access and opportunity for pupils they teach or support.
- Pupils will treat all people with respect and fairness, without discriminating against them or harassing them.
- Parents and carers will support the school in identifying the needs of disabled pupils or their own needs in relation to this scheme.

### **Identifying the main school priorities and deciding on actions**

The schools' aims and vision is positive and inclusive concerning any person with disability or special educational need. Everyone is encouraged to look for the positive in everyone they meet and work with. This is taught in Life Skills (PSHE) lessons and reinforced through assemblies. Discrimination and harassment is not accepted in school.

### **Defining Disability**

The disability discrimination duties and the planning duties are owed to all pupils who are defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) as being disabled. The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has:

*'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.'*

## **Accessibility Plan: Autumn Term 2025-2028**

### **Action Plan A – Improving Curriculum and Extended School Access at The Hermitage Schools**

**All of the targets are immediate and on-going and therefore no target dates have been set.**

|   | <b>Target</b>                                                                                                | <b>Action</b>                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>By Whom</b>                                                 | <b>Success Criteria</b>                                         | <b>Monitoring</b>                     |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Appropriate differentiation in planning for children with SEND to ensure progress                            | Inclusion Leader to monitor quality of differentiation and provision for all SEND pupils.                                                                                                                | Inclusion Leader<br>Assessment Leader                          | All pupils make appropriate progress                            | Inclusion Leader / SLT                |
| 2 | Classrooms are organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils                         | Class teachers to ensure that lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils in their class and layout of rooms allows access to all areas for all pupils, e.g. bookshelf height and IWB font size. | Class Teachers<br>Inclusion Leader<br>Year Team Leaders<br>SLT | Learning is accessible to all pupils                            | Inclusion Leader / SLT                |
| 3 | Ensure that all school trips & residential visits are accessible for all pupils, including those with SEND   | Thorough planning.<br>Advance visits.<br>EVOLVE Form and Risk assessments.                                                                                                                               | Visit leaders<br>EVC<br>Inclusion Leader                       | School trips & residential visits are accessible for all pupils | EVC<br>Inclusion Leader               |
| 4 | Ensure that after-school clubs are accessible for all pupils.                                                | Ensure access is available for all pupils including those with SEND.<br>Provide adult support where appropriate.<br>Make physical adaptations as required.                                               | Club leaders<br>Inclusion Leader<br>Extended Schools Leader    | After-school clubs are accessible to all pupils                 | Extended Schools Leader               |
| 5 | Ensure curriculum is fully accessible to all pupils with any type of special educational need or disability. | Consider alternative communication systems where appropriate.<br>Consider the way in which information is presented to pupils.<br>Consider how pupils can communicate their ideas.                       | All Staff<br>Subject leaders<br>External advisors for SEND     | Curriculum is fully accessible for all pupils                   | Year Team Leaders<br>Inclusion Leader |

|   |                                                                                                                            |                                                                           |           |                                                                                               |                              |
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| 6 | Ensure that no member of staff or pupil is harassed or bullied on grounds of their disability or learning need impairment. | Training as required for all staff.<br>Raised awareness for stakeholders. | All staff | No person experiences harassment or bullying on grounds of their disability or learning need. | Executive Headteacher<br>LGC |
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### **Action Plan B – access improvements required at The Hermitage Junior School**

**School Access Audit was carried out by the Deputy Headteacher and Premises Manager in September 2025. Recommendations are made with reference to this.**

|   | <b>Issue</b>                                                              | <b>Action</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>By Whom</b>         | <b>By When &amp; Cost</b>                                                | <b>Success Criteria</b>                   | <b>Monitoring</b> |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Current disabled bays do not provide enough access for wheelchair users.  | Until repainting takes place, appropriate staff to be made aware in advance if disabled bay/s are required on any specific day/s, so that appropriate arrangements made to ensure accessibility.<br>Bays in staff car park to be re-painted to allow cars parked in disabled bay to be fully opened to allow disabled drivers and passengers to transfer to a wheelchair parked alongside. | External contractor    | Within next 3 years, when car park needs repainting.<br>Approx cost £500 | Car park fully accessible to all users.   | Premises Manager  |
| 2 | Paint fading on a number of external ramps, so not visually identifiable. | Ensure top and bottom of all external ramps are painted in contrast to surrounding areas.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Caretaker / Groundsman | Ongoing<br>Approx cost £100                                              | Ramps visually identifiable to all users. | Premises Manager  |
| 3 | Football playground edging could present a trip hazard due to             | Repaint/respray all edging/capstone white so that it is clearly visible.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Caretaker / Groundsman | Ongoing<br>Approx cost £150                                              | Playground safe for all users.            | Premises Manager  |

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|   | overhang – check regularly for edge paint fading.                                                                           | Ensure any broken brick edging is replaced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                            |                                                     |                                                   |                                            |
| 4 | Main reception area external door is difficult to open from a seated position or for users with some physical disabilities. | Ensure office reception staff aware to manually open the door where appropriate for both entry and exit.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Office Reception Staff                     | On-going.<br>No cost                                | All users able to enter and exit building easily. | Premises Manager                           |
| 5 | Disabled toilets (2) do not have a back rest.                                                                               | Monitor and purchase and fit backrests if necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Finance Assistant / Caretaker              | Monitoring.<br>Approx cost £200                     | Disabled toilets fully accessible to all users.   | Premises Manager                           |
| 6 | Braille signage limited.                                                                                                    | Office reception staff to ensure visitors who require help are provided with appropriate support.<br>Pupils and staff are provided with appropriate support where required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Premises Manager / Caretaker               | As required.                                        | All users able to access required areas.          | Premises Manager                           |
| 7 | No signage from reception area to lift.                                                                                     | Current sign to be moved to signpost visitors from new office area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Premises Manager / Caretaker               | By end of autumn term 2025<br>No cost               | Clear signage to lift area for all visitors.      | Premises Manager                           |
| 8 | No visual alarm system in place to supplement audible alarm.                                                                | Risk to be assessed regularly, depending on need of pupils, staff and visitors. If necessary, fit visual alarm system in key areas for the safety of pupils or staff with hearing impairment.<br>All staff to be aware of visitors who may require support during an evacuation or lock-down.<br>Consideration given to installing a visual alarm system to supplement the current system when an upgrade to the current system becomes necessary. | Premises Manager / School Business Manager | Ongoing<br><br>Cost to be confirmed when necessary. | Safety for hearing impaired.                      | School Business Manager / Premises Manager |

### **Action Plan C – access improvements required at The Hermitage Infant School**

School Access Audit was carried out by the Deputy Headteacher and Premises Manager in September 2025. Recommendations are made with reference to this.

|   | <b>Issue</b>                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Action</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>By Whom</b>                       | <b>By When &amp; Cost</b>                                               | <b>Success Criteria</b>                                                       | <b>Monitoring</b>                          |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Monitor car park bays to ensure access for wheelchair users continues to meet need.                                                                                                 | Consider repainting bays in staff car park if access needs to be increased for wheelchair access.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | External contractor                  | Ongoing monitoring.<br>Cost to be confirmed                             | Car park fully accessible to all users.                                       | Premises Manager / School Business Manager |
| 2 | Monitor access doors into the building including front entrance, all classroom outside doors, Foundation Building entrances and Eco Lobby Entrance, as currently no ramps in place. | As necessary, ramps to be built and painted in front of all entrances/ doors, in order to make all entrances/ exits accessible to everyone.                                                                                                                                                                          | External Contractor                  | Ongoing monitoring.<br><br>Cost to be confirmed as appropriate at time. | Everyone will be able to access the school at all entrances / exits           | Premises Manager / School Business Manager |
| 3 | Accessibility from Infant School car park into the hall if there is a club on the Football Playground at Hermitage Junior School.                                                   | Monitor if there is a need for a suitable accessible route for wheelchair access into the Infant School hall for when there are clubs on the Hermitage Junior football playground. Currently not required and visitors to be reminded to inform school office if wheelchair access is necessary from staff car park. | External Contractor                  | Ongoing monitoring.<br><br>Cost to be confirmed as appropriate at time. | The Infant School hall will be accessible for everyone at any time of the day | Premises Manager / School Business Manager |
| 4 | Badger Room – not currently accessible for wheelchair users.                                                                                                                        | As the Badger Room is currently used for children with special needs, we will continue to monitor whether we need to                                                                                                                                                                                                 | School Business Manager / Admissions | Ongoing monitoring.                                                     | All users able to enter and exit                                              | Premises Manager                           |

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|   |                                                                                      | add various accessible parameters, in order to make it accessible to all users. As currently there is no option to add a ramp for access from the playground, consideration would need to be given to moving this classroom to another location if necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                            |                                                     | Badger Room safely.                             |                                            |
| 5 | Disabled toilets do not have a safety light/ alarm in case someone needs assistance. | Get Safety light/ alarm fitted                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | External Contractor                        | As soon as possible                                 | Disabled toilets fully accessible to all users. | School Business Manager / Premises Manager |
| 6 | No visual alarm system in place to supplement audible alarm.                         | Risk to be assessed regularly, depending on need of pupils, staff and visitors. If necessary, fit visual alarm system in key areas for the safety of pupils or staff with hearing impairment.<br>All staff to be aware of visitors who may require support during an evacuation or lock-down.<br>Consideration given to installing a visual alarm system to supplement the current system when an upgrade to the current system becomes necessary. | Premises Manager / School Business Manager | Ongoing<br><br>Cost to be confirmed when necessary. | Safety for hearing impaired.                    | School Business Manager / Premises Manager |
| 7 | Double doors (2) from Junior football playground into Infant School hall.            | Both doors require ramp access to ensure safety for wheelchair users when entering or exiting.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | External contractor                        | As soon as possible.                                | Safety for wheelchair users                     | School Business Manager / Premises Manager |