

THE MARY BASSETT LOWER SCHOOL



School Accessibility Plan January 2025 - 2028

Approved by:	The Governing Body
Last reviewed on:	January 2024
To be reviewed on:	January 2026

SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2022-25

1. SCHOOLS' PLANNING DUTY

Under the Equality Act 2010 all schools are required to have an accessibility plan.

The purpose of the accessibility plan is to develop and improve the accessibility of our school for disabled pupils, staff, parents and carers, and visitors. It aims to anticipate and proactively improve equality of opportunity for its community.

All improvements will be made in accordance with this plan and in a reasonable time frame.

The definition of a disability according to the Disability Act is:

A person has a disability if

- a) The person has a physical or mental impairment and*
- b) The impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (Equality Act 2010 CH1, Section 6)*

The Equality Act's definition of disability extends to physical disabilities, sensory and other mental impairments and learning difficulties.

This Accessibility Plan forms part of the school's Equality Information and is a statutory duty.

In accordance with the Act the school's accessibility plan focuses on three 'key areas':

- Increasing access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability: this includes teaching and learning, the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities at school or school trips and residential;
- Improving and maintaining access to the physical environment of the school, in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils and the school community can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery of communication and information to disabled pupils, their families and the school community. Communication and information should take account of disabilities and preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame in response to these needs. or disabled parents of information which is provided in writing.

It is a requirement that the school's Accessibility Plan is formally and fully reviewed every three years or in response to an individual pupil's needs. There are interim reviews annually as part of the SEND policy review.

An action plan is attached as **Appendix 1** showing the identified priorities along with how they are to be addressed and measured.

2. SCHOOLS AIMS

At The Mary Bassett Lower School, we are committed to establishing equality for all pupils, their parents, carers, staff and other users of the school. This is reflected in our school aims, which state:

- Our staff acknowledge the core role of nurture and positive mental health in supporting children to develop into successful learners and confident members of the community.
- Excellent teaching in stimulating learning environments inspires the natural curiosity of *all* children to make learning an exciting adventure.
- The whole school community invests in helping children understand how they become successful learners that are willing to take risks in a safe, supportive environment.
- We are committed to promoting the welfare of all children and the highest standards of safeguarding. We provide children with understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, both emotionally and physically.
- We engage children in the learning process and aim for all children to make good progress from their starting points in order that they achieve their full potential.

In drawing up this Accessibility Plan the school set the following priorities:

- To provide safe access throughout the school for all school users
- To ensure that the learning and teaching environment and the resources used are suitable for all staff and pupils, tailoring the requirements to suit individual needs.
- To provide training to all staff regarding the needs of disabled people and how to provide assistance to enable them to enjoy the school experience as fully as possible.

In addition, parents and carers of children and young people with a disability as well as school staff were consulted to ensure all needs and areas of concern had been considered.

As stated above, The Mary Bassett Lower School is committed to equal opportunities and inclusion. This Accessibility Plan is not a standalone document but should be considered alongside the following school policy documents:

- The Mary Bassett Lower School's Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- The Mary Bassett Lower School Safeguarding policy
- Health & Safety policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Statement
- Staff related policies, e.g. risk assessments

This plan itself will also be used to advise and inform other school planning documents and policies.

It will be the responsibility of the whole school community to implement this scheme in a manner which promotes the inclusive ethos of our school.

3. CURRENT ACTIVITIES: INCREASING THE EXTENT TO WHICH DISABLED PUPILS CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

The Mary Bassett Lower School has close working relationships with its own Nursery setting with thorough transition arrangements in the summer term before starting at school. In addition, the school liaises with the Early Years Advisory Service for children with any disability or additional needs transitioning to the school from other early years settings.

The school SEND policy ensures that staff identify, assess and arrange suitable provision for pupils with special educational needs and / or disability. Working with the CBC SEND team, health professionals, as well as a range of outreach services; the SENDCo manages the Statutory Assessment process, ensuring additional resources, including staffing, are allocated where appropriate through additional funding via an EHCP, Exceptional Needs or Graduated Approach Implementation Network (GAIN) funding.

The school's pastoral team (Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Pastoral Manager) also provides additional support for pupils and supports teachers in implementing strategies for improving pupils' behaviour, emotional and mental health wellbeing, and access to learning.

The school currently works closely with specialist outreach services including:

- Early Years Advisory Service
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Educational Psychology Service
- CBC SEND Team
- ASD advisory service
- Hearing Impaired service
- Visually Impaired service
- Inclusion Support (Jigsaw)
- CAMHS including MHST outreach
- CHUMS
- GPs and paediatricians
- School Nurse (0-19 Team)
- Art Therapists
- Previous work with physical disability team of service for a pupil in a wheelchair and use of prosthetics

- Other relevant advisory services and charities as needed

Advice from these agencies is reflected in the reviews of the accessibility plan where appropriate and applicable.

The school's governors, teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisory assistants already have a wide range of qualifications, training and experience of working with children with a varied range of needs including:

- Specific medical conditions including asthma, eczema, diabetes, severe physical impairments
- Specific learning difficulties
- Neurodiversity needs
- Speech, language and communication needs
- Previous training in manual handling for physical disabilities

Facilities and support currently on offer at the school include:

- Designated areas and support for 1:1 or small-group work
- Access to Early Help, BRIF and other agencies, e.g. parenting support at the Children's Centre
- SENDCo
- Pastoral Support Manager
- Pastoral inhouse support work and interventions
- iPads / access technology
- Sensory room and sensory relief resources and pastoral room
- Range of literacy and maths interventions
- Access to ALL extra-curricular activities and clubs, art enrichment groups, school visits, residential and peripatetic instrumental tuition with appropriate risk assessment
- Advice and support from School Nurse (0-19 Team)
- Medical Room with hoist, bed and Paediatric First Aiders
- Wheelchair access to at least one classroom in Year groups 1-4 and all key pupil curriculum areas.
- Range of outdoor learning environments
- Transition arrangements, planning and support for entry into school and departure to Middle School / next setting.

The school celebrates diversity and its curriculum promotes tolerance, awareness and acceptance of all pupils. Resources and activities are chosen to show disability and diversity positively.

4. CURRENT PRIORITIES:

AREA 1 - increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;

Current Provision: - Teachers and support staff adapt resources and equipment successfully for those with impaired movement, physical or sensory disability. - School has experience of pupils requiring a wheelchair and use of prosthetics, hearing impairment and visual impairment and the advisory services that can be accessed to support a fully accessible curriculum.	Priorities for Improvement: - To ensure that staff are aware of, confident with and adequately trained for a wider range of disabilities. - To ensure details for advisory services are up to date for those staff planning for and teaching children with disabilities. - To ensure that all disabilities within a class are catered and differentiated for within Quality First Teaching or necessary interventions. - Ensure that a range of staff are trained in BSL for a pupil, which is ongoing till 2028 if the need for signing is still required.(not currently required)
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AREA 2 - improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;

Current Provision: - The school site is on a split level, which is joined by several sets of steps. There is a wheelchair compliant ramp which adjoins the two levels near the front entrance to the school. - There are paved or tarmac paths between all the school buildings. - We have an accessible toilet based in the Portacabin (Lime) classroom on the lower site - We have an accessible toilet available within the medical room on the upper site.	Priorities for Improvement: - There is a lack of wheelchair access for children in the Reception Year setting to the outside area for their continuous provision. No current children are physically disabled. - There is a lack of independent wheelchair access to the school field for school events. (Currently managed by staff escorted access through school.) - Some door widths, especially in the oldest buildings are not suitable for wheelchair access and would need to be widened should a school user with a wheelchair be part of the school community again. Class assignment would need to take this into consideration). - There is no access to an indoor pupil accessible toilet in the current KS2 block. Pupil access would need to be via an outside route to Lime classroom.
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- There is an additional accessible toilet in the Bungalow on the upper site. - There are wheelchair accessible ramps to at least one entrance/exit of each school building. - There is a designated disabled parking space on site. - Sound Field systems purchased through the Access Initiative Funding to improve acoustic challenges in older double height classrooms - Yellow step edge markers in place for visually impaired - School has already shown itself to be physically accessible for a Lower School Pupil.	- There are some uneven paving stones on paths that have moved and/or raised over time. These cause difficulties for pedestrians and wheelchair and buggy users. This is ongoing as state of repair/replacement needs to be assessed each year for suitability for wheelchairs/pushchairs.
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AREA 3 - improving the delivery to disabled pupils or parents of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Current Provision: - We are aware of services who could offer advice if we had a pupil or parent with additional needs – recognised disability or impairment.	Priorities for Improvement: - Ensure contact details and resources are up to date to provide enhanced information eg large print, Braille. - Consider the increasing needs of pupils and parents who do not have English as an additional language or have limited language skills in English. Whilst this is not a disability it is an area to support for accessing written information on the full life of school and linked apps and services that they need to use. - Confirm access to an interpreter/service to support EAL parents access school information for their child. This is specifically for those pupils with additional needs/SEND needs where parents need to access verbal information and discussion for
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	their child with school and other agencies. This also includes gaining informed consent for referrals from parents.
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5. REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually by the Governing Body and the SENDCo as part of the annual SEND Policy and SEND Information Report review.

The review will look at each action and assess whether the success criteria has been met. Any actions that are incomplete or require further attention are carried forward to the next action plan.

To allow the school to track progress and demonstrate how it is actively fulfilling its duty a plan for 2025 is attached in **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 1

Accessibility Action Plan 2025- 2028

Priority	Actions	Lead Person	Resources	Timescale	Success Criteria
A. Site Access	❖ Annual assessment of state of repair of school pathways and ramps for wheelchair ❖ Assess, Cost and Plan improved independent wheelchair access from the car park to the field for visitors. ❖ Assess, Cost and Plan wheelchair access options between Reception classroom and outside area ❖ Assess cost and plan for independent wheelchair access to the school site for visitors e.g. perimeter front pedestrian gate and front entrance doors to be automatic, or remotely opened. ❖ Assess cost and plan an internal accessible toilet options for recently assigned KS2 block	HW/SB /MR	Cost TBC	State of repair - with each health and safety site visit. Other actions to have an initial assessment by the end of Summer Term 2025 to inform planning and funding.	For the school to be easily and independently accessible by all stakeholders with a variety of sensory and physical needs regardless of time of day or season.
B. 2 Additional Communication	❖ Update contact details to support alternative information sharing formats for teaching staff and office-based staff when required. (eg large print , sign language and translated documents) ❖ Ensure new parents at the point of their child's admission are aware of access to translation support for online communication eg school website and essential	HW/ MR - EAL needs SF - SEND needs	Costs tbc if applicable	May 2025	For staff to be able to support access to information for all parents and carers in order to support their child's access to school.

	apps such as Arbor and Parent Pay ❖ Research and evaluate options for interpreter assisted SEND meetings with parents.				
C. Enhanced curriculum provision	❖ Evaluate and continue to monitor the curriculum delivery within Quality First Teaching ensuring disabilities and impairments are positively and actively considered and needs met. ❖ Continue to monitor provision and adaptations for accessible resources to support the wider curriculum and pupil's social experiences at unstructured times of day or after school ❖ Evaluate the access to the wider school day for pupils with a physical or hidden disability	SF	April 2025 initial analysis and actions for wider school day action point. Other actions ongoing		For all staff to be confident in meeting the needs of all pupils to access a broad and balanced curriculum and enjoy chosen parts for the wider school day..

HW – Headteacher, Hilary Wheeldon, **SF** – Deputy Headteacher/SENDco, Mrs Stephanie Finniss

MR – School Business Manager, Mr Marco Romano **SB** - Site Manager, Scott Bonfield