



# **CASTLEMAN ACADEMY TRUST**

## **Ferndown First School**

### **POLICY : ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN**

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Date: **December 2022**

Review Body: **School Standards Board**

Review Date: **December 2025**

Review Frequency: **3-Yearly**

**Ferndown First School  
Accessibility Policy and Plan**

**Introduction**

It is our intention to remove, as far as we can, those barriers which make it hard for children and adults with a disability to take part in the day to day life of our school and benefit from the educational experiences and services we provide.

We aim to ensure that our school is a welcoming place that understands and responds effectively to children and adults with disabilities and we recognise the importance of a review and planning procedure associated with continuous development and improvement.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'*

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEND.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.
- Schools are allowed to treat disabled children / young people more favourably than non-disabled children / young people, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments and making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what the school's offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can i.e. to put them on a more level footing with children / young people without disabilities
- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.

The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

School governing bodies and proprietors must also publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

## **The Responsible Body**

The responsible body (in maintained schools this is the governing body) must prepare:

- an accessibility plan;
- further such plans at such times as may be prescribed.
  
- An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period
  - increasing the extent to which disabled children / young people can participate in the school's curriculum;
  - improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled children / young people are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by the school; and
  - improving the delivery to disabled children / young people
    - (i) within a reasonable time, and
    - (ii) in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents,

of information which is provided in writing for children / young people who are not disabled.
- An accessibility plan must be in writing.
- During the period to which the plan relates, the responsible body must keep
  - its accessibility plan under review and, if necessary, revise it.
- It is the duty of the responsible body to implement its accessibility plan.

**The Statutory Policies for Schools (updated Sept 2022)** states that it is a requirement that maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools, sixth-form colleges, further education colleges and Pupil Referral Units must review their accessibility plan every three years. It also states that approval should be by the governing body however, they are free to delegate the approval right to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the head teacher.

## **The School's Context**

We are an Academy school for children age from 4 years to 9 years. The school comprises of one building covering a large site, of one storey construction.

We support children and families with a range of disabilities as defined by The Equality Act 2010. These include, but are not limited to, hearing and vision impairments; physical disabilities including wheelchair users; long term health conditions such as asthma, epilepsy, cancer and severe allergies; and social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

## **The School's Aims**

- Further develop support for our small group of children struggling to regulate emotions and behaviour.
- Design and deliver an exceptional Personal Development curriculum, redressing the lockdown deficit.
- Further develop provision for mental health for pupils and staff.
- Embed improvements made to language development, phonics and early reading.
- Improve spelling
- Improve pupils' retention of knowledge across the curriculum.
- Support staff taking on new leadership responsibilities.
- Support ECTs.

## **Formulating our Accessibility Plan**

The priorities for the Accessibility Plan for our school were identified through consultation with:

- **Headteacher**
- **SENCO / Inclusion Manager**
- **School Council**
- **Governors**
- **Staff**
- **Parents**

## **Process**

Our accessibility plan has been developed as follows:

- 1) Access audit and review of current activities completed
- 2) Actions to eliminate barriers identified (with short-term, medium term and long term targets).
- 3) Goals and targets set which can be measured & include time frames.
- 4) Consultation with school staff, governors and other bodies i.e. parents/ carers,
- 5) The Plan's contents checked.
- 6) Publication of the plan (and included it in the governors' report to parents).
- 7) Implemented the plan and allocated adequate resources.
- 8) Evaluated the plan every 3 years (with the accessibility plan under on-going review and revision as necessary).

In addition to this we will;

- continually review the environment of the school, the way we plan, prepare and deliver curriculum and the information we provide for children / young people so that we can improve the access for both individuals and groups;
- work to provide an atmosphere where all children / young people feel safe and valued;
- promote understanding of disability and work to show positive models of people with a disability. We will avoid stereotypes and use language which emphasises the person rather than the disability.

- examine those parts of our active and extra-curricular activities which may have limited access for children / young people with a disability and see if it is possible to provide learning experiences which promote similar development of knowledge and understanding.

### **Accessing the School's Accessibility Plan**

Our Accessibility Plan will be made available via the following :

- School website
- Printed copies which are available from the school office on request

### **Other School Policies & Documentation**

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

- Curriculum
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Health & Safety (including off-site safety)
- Special Educational Needs Policy and the school's SEND Information Report.
- Positive Behaviour Management
- School Development Plan

The School's Complaints Procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

## AUDITS & ACTION PLANS

### Access Audit

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022

Lead member of staff: Jo Di-Pede , Caroline Cload

**Section 1** The school can deliver the curriculum to all children / young people. Give details of items developed, current practise and things to be developed.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
Teachers and assistants have trained to teach and support disabled children / young people. Staff are confident about meeting the needs of children / young people with a disability.		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So many disabilities.</li> <li>• Proactive.</li> <li>• Identify CPD needs for staff taking into account children's needs.</li> </ul>
All school staff and the governors have had access to training on disability equality and inclusion.		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff meeting to review this would be useful.</li> <li>• SSB would benefit from refresher training</li> </ul>
We take advice to ensure our classrooms are optimally organised and resourced for disabled children / young people.	✓			
Positive images of people with different abilities are apparent in the classrooms and the school generally.		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleft lip and palate images are needed.</li> </ul>
Staff plan alternative ways of providing experience and understanding of parts of the curriculum. i.e. All children / young people are encouraged to take part				



in music, drama and physical activities. Alternative forms of exercise are given in PE and games for disabled children / young people.	✓			
Lessons are responsive to diversity. Lessons allow children / young people to work individually, with a partner, in groups and whole class. There is extensive peer support and collaborative learning in support of those with a learning disability.	✓			
When planning the deployment of additional adults, there is a consideration of pupils with disabilities so that if needed, they benefit from high staffing ratios and smaller group activities in order to ensure their inclusion and raise attainment.	✓			
Staff recognise and allow for the mental effort/additional time required by some disabled children / young people, e.g. using lip reading, processing time for children / young people with Social Communication Difficulties.	✓			
When renewing computer hardware and software, machines and materials are chosen to support children / young people with a disability, e.g. vocalising braille, touch screen, assistive technology.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KL completed an pilot assistive technology course and made immediate recommendations, such as Helperbird</li> <li>• Clicker has been rolled out to Y2,3 and 4.</li> </ul>
Provision of laptops or e-devices are considered to				

aid recording and / or communication.	✓			
School visits are subject to a regular review to ensure increased levels of access or alternative experience.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptions and adjustments are made</li> <li>• Children are included in visits, including boat travel and forest school activities.</li> </ul>
The school links with other schools to share good practice.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of support with SENCOs through trust.</li> </ul>
Staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation. When curriculum units are developed the originators always ask if there could be a disability dimension.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routes into curriculum have been considered with an SEN dimension.</li> </ul>
Access Arrangements are used when appropriate to support children / young people with accessing assessments.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quieter environment provided for assessments</li> <li>• Small groups</li> <li>• Enlarged print where necessary</li> </ul>
The school signpost children, young people and families to further support SENDIASS, Early Help, etc.	✓			
A governor takes particular interest in, and responsibility for promoting disability awareness and inclusion.	✓			

**Section 2:** The school is designed to meet the needs of all children / young people.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
The size and layout of areas allow access for all children / young people, including wheelchair users.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exit arrangements.</li> <li>• Slope.</li> <li>• Fire exits.</li> </ul>
In considering the school budget there is a clear plan to improve access and resources for those with a disability.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TAs.</li> <li>• Resources.</li> <li>• Building repair and maintenance.</li> </ul>
There is a plan which shows priorities for major and minor works, costed and included in the School Improvement Plan.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion plan has assessed and prioritised major development.</li> <li>• Toilets are new and improved</li> <li>• Assisted bed is now installed in first aid/medical room.</li> </ul>
The school has procedures to ensure the rigorous maintenance of specialist equipment and facilities.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE.</li> </ul>
Emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform all pupils including children / young people with SEND, including alarms with both visual and auditory components.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PEEPS</li> </ul>
Personal Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in place to provide people with any form of disability, who cannot be adequately protected by the standard fire safety provisions within a premises, with a similar level of safety from the effects of fire as all other occupants.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearing – radio aids.</li> <li>• PEEPS.</li> </ul>
With regards to <i>'Supporting pupils at school with</i>	✓			

<p><i>medical conditions (2014)</i>’, there a policy in place for the effective and safe administration of medication.</p> <p>Personal hygiene and medical issues are dealt with full attention to the safety and dignity of all concerned i.e. children / young people taking medication, those with limited toileting training.</p>	✓			
<p>Pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements are safe. Disabled parking spots are available.</p>	✓			
<p>There is a positive attitude to the recruitment and employment of staff with a disability and a good knowledge about the levels of support they are entitled to.</p>	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are supported with appropriate furniture if needed eg special chairs</li> </ul>
<p>Furniture and equipment is selected, adjusted and located appropriately. Steps are taken to reduce the background noise for HI children / young people and advice sought from other agencies to take appropriate measures in the classroom.</p>	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HVSS assess school environment and we take appropriate steps to comply with recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p>The décor and / or signage is not confusing or disorientating for children / young people with a visual impairment, Social Communication Difficulties or epilepsy. Colour schemes provide colour &amp; tonal contrast for VI children / young people. Labels and signs are presented pictorially and in written word if needed for people with a disability.</p>		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment has been adapted to make it less visually overwhelming. Neutral colours and simpler classroom displays have been implemented across the school.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Improve signs and labels with images from Widget</p>

**Section 3:** The school delivers materials in other formats.

Statement	Fully	Partly	Not	Plan Prompt
Information is provided in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in braille for children / young people and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with forms of printed information.	✓  Where requested			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents can't read and when we know or suspect this we support them, reading literature, explaining newsletters.</li> <li>• Interpreters are used, including sign language interpreters.</li> </ul>
Information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly or people with disabilities e.g. reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams.	✓			
ICT facilities are used to produce written information in different formats as appropriate.	✓			
<p>Staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities.</p> <p>External agencies have raised staff awareness i.e. VI, HI, occupational / physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, school nurses, Health visitors...</p>	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio Aid.</li> <li>• Diabetes monitor.</li> <li>• OT /Physio.</li> </ul>
There is an effective process to deal with both complaints and positive suggestions from the parents of children / young people with a disability.	✓			

## Access Planning Template for Period 2022-2025

Lead member of staff: Sean Watts/Caroline Cloud

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023

The main priorities in our access plan focus on:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled children / young people can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled children / young people can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery to disabled children / young people of information that is provided in writing for children / young people who are not disabled.

Ferndown First School will monitor the implementation of the plan and keep under review the access needs of the school.

	Focus/Objective	Action	People Involved	Timeframe	Cost
<b>Short Term</b>	Improve accessibility of written information around the school building.	Improve school signs and labels within classrooms and wider school area with visual support, e.g. from Widget.	SENCO / SLT/ Teaching staff	Summer 2023	£300 per year.
	Positive images of people with different abilities to be apparent in the classrooms and the school generally.	Include images of people with different disabilities, specifically those which represent children within our school community.	SENCO/ Teaching staff	Summer 2023	---
	All school staff and the governors to have access to training on disability equality and inclusion.	Staff meeting to ensure teachers and school support staff are informed about disabilities, equality and inclusion.  Updated training for SSB on disabilities, equality and inclusion.	SENCO/ SLT/ Governors	Summer 2023	---
<b>Medium Term</b>	Staff are confident about meeting the needs of children /	Identify CPD needs for staff linked to the needs of the children they are working with.	SENCo/ SLT/	Autumn 2023	To investigate

	young people with a disability.	Staff to have a good general awareness of a range of disabilities. Seek support from the local authority SEND team, specialist teachers and links within the CAT for high quality CPD.	Teaching staff	and ongoing	depending on CPD required
	Improve access to the curriculum by embedding assistive technology within classroom practice.	Clicker8 site wide license to be embedded with further training and refreshers on an ongoing basis for staff. Induction support for new staff to use Clicker8 as they join. Investigate additional assistive technologies that can improve access to the curriculum and enhance independence.	SENCo/ Teaching staff	Autumn 2023 and ongoing	£2500 for three years
<b>Long Term</b>	Create a multi-purpose building which can facilitate an accessible learning environment and sensory regulation area for children with special educational needs and disabilities.	Investigate planning and logistics involved in building a new structure within the school grounds. Take specialist teacher advice on how to equip the space to best support disabled children. Build and furnish the structure to enable its use.	SLT/ Governors/ SENCo	<i>Summer 2024</i>	To investigate .

## **Additional Views from Consultation**

**Insert any other views of those consulted during the development of the plan.**

### **Parent views**

Parents were consulted via the newsletter on two separate occasions but did not provide any views towards the development of the plan.

### **Children's views**

Children were consulted via a whole class discussion. Their views on how to improve accessibility for disabled people at our school are listed below:

- Make sure there are adults to help them.
- Be kind and helpful.
- Make sure everyone can join in every activity.
- Learn some sign language.
- Make sure the disabled toilets are clean and ready for use.
- Keep our classrooms safe.
- They discussed adapting the school for someone who is blind.
- They talked about using touch or sound instead of having to read. (braille posters/bumps on the floor).
- They described making the school accessible as making it fair.
- They mentioned needing ramps for wheelchair users.

### **Staff views**

Staff were consulted via email but did not provide any views.



When a new Access Plan is formulated (every 3 years), the following check will be completed prior to publication.

Lead member of staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Governors \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period of Plan being checked; \_\_\_\_\_

Does the plan cover;	Yes/ No	Comments
Access to the Curriculum?		
Access to the Physical Environment?		
Auxiliary aids and services?		
Teaching and learning practices?		
Staff training?		
Culture and ethos?		
Provision of written information?		
2. Are there targets that are;		
Short term?		
Medium term?		
Long term?		
3. Are there clear strategies to ensure targets fulfilled?		
4. Are there clear outcomes linked to the targets?		
5. Is there a realistic time frame?		
6. Are there indications as the resourcing of the plan?		

## Recommendations

**Insert any recommendations made as a result of the checking exercise.**

## Appendix 1: Review of Ferndown First School Accessibility Plan 2019-2023

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
To increase pupil's independence in their learning and organisation of tasks.	<p>Independence training from SENSS.</p> <p>Set up independence kits for each classroom.</p> <p>Run parent workshop on independence training.</p> <p>Monitor the impact on learners and their outcomes as well as adaptations to learning environments.</p>	<p>Monitoring indicates that most pupils are able to independently access tasks set within their own abilities achieving a sense of success.</p> <p>Learning environments have clear accessible resources to promote and facilitate independence.</p> <p>Outcomes for children indicate good levels of progress.</p> <p>Monitoring indicates that all teaching and support staff facilitates independence through quality questioning.</p> <p>Additional accessibility features such as Clicker 8 have been embedded in KS2 to increase pupil independence.</p>
To embed individual learning plans for children who need personalised targets and learning pathways due to their significant SEND.	<p>To embed a bespoke system of tracking and assessment for pupils working at ARE-4, to fairly reflect their progress against realistic and achievable milestones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop a progressive learning pathway tool for assessing small steps for reading, writing and maths for children working at ARE-4.</li> <li>•Monitor the outcomes for pupils through their individual plans.</li> <li>•Monitor the planning and provision in class for ARE-4 and other SEND children in class.</li> </ul>	<p>Monitoring of individual learning plans indicates that children achieve or partly achieve their targets each term.</p> <p>Teachers are able to clearly track the progress of these vulnerable children and plan appropriate next steps which drive their provision.</p> <p>A new SEND software tool – 'Provision Map' has moved ILPs away from paper and onto electronic means.</p> <p>Pupil Passports have also been created for all SEND pupils.</p> <p>In 2021-22, SEND pupils achieved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 95% made expected or above expected progress in reading.</li> <li>- 97% made expected or above expected progress in writing.</li> <li>- 94% made expected or above expected progress in maths.</li> </ul>
Create a sensory space within school which children with ASD or SEMH can use to calm down.	<p>Locate an area for a sensory room within the school which will support all pupils, including those who need it as their transition activity into school.</p> <p>Investigate the possibility for a grant to equip and design the room</p> <p>Action the building and equipping of the room.</p> <p>Put in a place a signing up system for use.</p>	<p>Due to extremely limited space as the school has expanded over the last few years since this plan was written, this action has not yet been achieved. The school intend to investigate this over the course of the new accessibility plan.</p>
To improve the choice and inclusivity of school's offer at lunch time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Encourage existing staff to offer a club at lunchtimes as an alternative to the playground in KS1 and KS2.</li> <li>◦ Build a programme of choice for the week</li> </ul>	<p>- 'Leaf' club (a lunchtime nurture club) has been used across the school over the last few years and has been positioned, staffed and led by the needs of the children attending it.</p> <p>- All new support staff have a lunchtime duty as part of their contracts.</p>

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME
	<p>which is as diverse as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Consider the inclusion of a lunch time commitment when recruiting new support staff.</li> <li>◦ Consider the redeployment of staff e.g. JA to move one or more of her afterschool library slots to the lunch time slot.</li> </ul>	
To maintain accessibility to main entrance with an inclusive sign in system, this prioritises safeguarding.	<p>Regularly service the main entrance automatic door.</p> <p>Display sign indicating the induction hearing loop.</p> <p>Purchase an electronic sign in system</p>	<p>-New electronic sign in system has been installed.</p> <p>-Some difficulties have been encountered with contractors to fix/maintain the automatic doors at the main entrance.</p>
Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats	<p>The school will publish all the letters to classes on the website. All newsletters will also be published on the website.</p> <p>On request, the office will email individual parents letters in a format which can be translated.</p>	<p>Newsletters are sent by parentmail and are available on the website. Should parents request an alternative format we will provide this, but no such requests have yet been received.</p>
To ensure that all parents and other members of the school community can access information	<p>Written information will be available in alternative formats, eg. large print, on request.</p> <p>Where necessary, the school will make itself aware of the services available through the LEA for converting written information into alternative formats.</p>	<p>Large print has been made available to pupils with vision impairments. Interpreters are booked to sign/interpret all parent meeting with families who have a hearing impairment.</p> <p>Where parents have informed us that they have difficulties with literacy, staff have made appointments with them to explain and guide them through written reports and documents.</p>
To ensure that all notifications and messages that are necessary to communicate to parents is electronic and can therefore be translated or read for those that need it.	<p>Use parent mail to notify parents of information and events, collect money, book appointments and gain permission.</p>	<p>Parentmail, website and Tapestry are used to communicate with parents. We have moved away from printed communication.</p>