# Accessibility Policy and Plan

*The Lioncare School | 2026-2029*

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| **Document Owner** | Headteacher |
| **Monitoring Lead** | School Operations Manager |
| **Date Created** | 30 March 2026 |
| **Formal Approval Date** | 28 August 2026 |
| **Next Full Review** | By September 2029 (with progress reviewed at least annually) |

**Purpose:** This policy explains how The Lioncare School will identify and reduce barriers for disabled pupils. The action plan records practical improvements across curriculum access, the physical environment and accessible information.

## 1. Aims And Commitment

The Lioncare School is committed to providing an environment in which every pupil is treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and can participate as fully as possible in school life. We will not discriminate against a pupil because of disability and will anticipate needs, make reasonable adjustments and remove barriers wherever it is reasonable to do so.

Under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the school must prepare and implement an accessibility plan. The plan has three statutory aims:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment so disabled pupils can take better advantage of education and the benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils, including information provided in writing to pupils who are not disabled.

The plan applies to current and prospective pupils. Accessibility is considered in teaching and learning, assessment, enrichment, school trips, social times, transitions, safeguarding arrangements and emergency procedures. The school will also seek to communicate accessibly with disabled parents, carers and visitors.

## 2. Our school context and approach

The Lioncare School works therapeutically with children who have complex needs and may have experienced abuse, neglect, instability or trauma. Pupils may find it difficult to make sense of strong feelings, regulate themselves, trust adults or manage the demands of day-to-day life. Our approach is relational, individualised and informed by ongoing assessment.

We provide carefully planned, individual timetables and learning experiences, linked to each pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Personal Education Plan (PEP), risk assessments and relevant professional advice. Our aim is to help pupils enjoy childhood, engage in education, develop greater emotional integration and become valued and valuable members of their communities.

We aim to create a school where:

- children and adults are happy to attend, feel that they belong and are proud of what they achieve;

- parents and carers are confident that children are safe, happy, making progress and listened to;
- each pupil receives the support and challenge needed to learn and succeed beyond school; and
- staff create consistently positive, accessible learning experiences that engage and challenge every pupil.

The school also recognises that disability may affect family life. We will make reasonable efforts to support accessible communication with parents and carers, including families affected by disability, illness or caring responsibilities. Cultural and religious diversity will be respected, including access to an appropriate private space for individual prayer where this has been requested and is practicable. These wider commitments complement, but do not replace, the three statutory accessibility-planning aims.

## 3. Legal And Guidance Framework

This policy and plan have been prepared with reference to:

- the Equality Act 2010, including section 6 (the meaning of disability), the schools' provisions in Part 6 and Schedule 10 (accessibility for disabled pupils);
- Department for Education, Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (May 2014, last updated June 2018);
- the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015), where applicable to the school; and
- the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, particularly the requirements for effective teaching, pupil welfare, health and safety, and the provision of information.

### What Disability Means

A person is disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. "Substantial" means more than minor or trivial. "Long-term" generally means that the effect has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least 12 months, or for the rest of the person's life. The definition can include sensory impairments, neurodivergence, learning disabilities, mental health conditions and long-term health conditions. Some conditions are treated as disabilities from diagnosis under the Act.

### Reasonable Adjustments and Physical Accessibility

The school must take reasonable steps to avoid disabled pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage. This may include changing a policy or practice, adapting how an activity is delivered, or providing an auxiliary aid or service. The reasonable-adjustments duty for schools does not itself require alteration of a physical feature; improvements to physical access are planned through this accessibility plan. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances, including effectiveness, practicality, cost, health and safety, available resources and the pupil's individual needs. The duty is anticipatory, so the school will consider barriers for disabled pupils generally as well as responding to an individual pupil.

## 4. How We Identify and Remove Barriers

Accessibility will be considered through ordinary school planning and individual pupil planning. In particular, the school will:

- review EHCPs, PEPs, professional reports and information from pupils, parents, carers and placing authorities;
- seek and take account of the pupil's views, using communication methods suited to the pupil;
- consider accessibility when planning admissions, timetables, lessons, assessment, trips, activities, transitions and emergency arrangements;
- complete proportionate audits of teaching resources, classroom access, signage, circulation routes, toilets and evacuation arrangements;

- record agreed individual adjustments in the relevant plans and communicate them to staff who need to know;
- review whether adjustments are working and change them when needs or circumstances change; and
- work with families and relevant professionals, including occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and other specialist services, where appropriate.

Health and safety will be considered alongside accessibility. It will not be used as a general reason to exclude a disabled pupil from an activity; any restriction will be based on an individual, evidence-informed assessment and consideration of reasonable alternatives.

### 5. Roles And Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibility |
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| **Proprietor** | Approves the plan, considers resources and holds school leaders to account for implementation and review. |
| **Headteacher** | Leads implementation, embeds accessibility in school and pupil planning, and reports progress to the proprietor. |
| **School Operations Manager** | Coordinates premises and resource audits, agreed adaptations and the annual action-plan review. |
| **Teachers and all staff** | Plan accessible learning, apply agreed adjustments, identify barriers, keep spaces safe, complete relevant training and contribute to reviews. |

### 6. Training, Resources And Partnership Working

Staff will receive equality and disability awareness training appropriate to their roles. Individual or specialist training will be arranged when a pupil's needs require it. Line managers will monitor completion through supervision and the school's training arrangements.

The school will allocate reasonable resources to implement agreed actions. Where a substantial premises change or specialist provision may be needed, the Headteacher will assess feasibility and seek advice from the proprietor, placing authority and relevant professionals. The school will support appropriate partnerships that help it develop and implement this plan.

### 7. Publication, Monitoring And Review

The policy and plan will be made available on the school website and in an accessible format on request. The Headteacher and School Operations Manager will review progress at least annually, and sooner following a significant change to the premises, pupil population, law or guidance, or where monitoring identifies a barrier. The proprietor will receive the review and approve any material revision. A new plan will be prepared at least every three years.

Monitoring will draw on pupil and parent/carer feedback, complaints, incident and behaviour information where relevant, curriculum and progress information, EHCP and PEP reviews, staff feedback, premises checks, and evidence recorded against the action plan. Information will be handled in accordance with data-protection and confidentiality requirements.

### 8. Concerns And Complaints

A pupil, parent or carer who identifies an accessibility concern is encouraged to raise it promptly with the

class teacher or Headteacher so that it can be considered and, where possible, resolved. Formal concerns may be raised through The Lioncare School Complaints Policy and Procedure. This does not remove any statutory rights a person may have.

## 9. Linked Policies and Documents

- SEND Policy
- Equality information and objectives, where applicable
- Curriculum Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Procedures
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions / Medication Policy
- Admissions, Exclusions and Disruptions Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Emergency evacuation arrangements and any Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

## Accessibility Action Plan 2026-2029

This is a working plan. Progress should be updated during the annual review and actions may be added where a pupil's needs, an audit or a change to the school identifies a new barrier. Individual adjustments must not be delayed until the annual review.

### Curriculum Access

***Maintain individualised, accessible timetables and teaching***

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| **Actions** | Review each pupil's EHCP, PEP and relevant professional advice when planning and at least termly. Record required adjustments, including alternatives for lessons, assessment, trips and enrichment. |
| **Lead** | Class teachers; oversight by Headteacher |
| **Timescale** | Termly and following any change in need |
| **Resources** | Staff planning time; existing pupil-planning resources |
| **Success evidence** | Plans are current; agreed adjustments are evident in practice; pupils can participate and make progress. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

***Ensure suitable learning and sensory resources are available***

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| **Actions** | Audit and provide resources according to assessed need, which may include coloured paper, varied print size, coloured overlays or screen settings, writing slopes, lap weights, supportive seating, laptops and accessibility software. Seek OT/SALT or other specialist advice where needed. |
| **Lead** | Class teachers; School Operations Manager |
| **Timescale** | Audit each term; procure promptly when a need is identified |
| **Resources** | Within delegated resources; additional costs referred to Headteacher |
| **Success evidence** | Resources identified in plans are available and used; pupil and staff feedback shows they reduce barriers. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

***Strengthen staff confidence in disability and accessibility***

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| **Actions** | Maintain equality and disability awareness training. Identify pupil-specific training through induction, supervision, EHCP review and professional advice. |
| **Lead** | Line managers; Training Manager; Headteacher |
| **Timescale** | Annual training check and on admission/change of need |
| **Resources** | Training time and course costs |

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| **Success evidence** | Training is in date; staff can describe and consistently apply pupils' adjustments. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

## Physical Environment

***Keep classrooms and shared spaces safe and accessible***

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| **Actions** | Complete a termly walk-through of access points, furniture layout, movement routes, lighting, visual contrast, signage and toilet access. Remove avoidable obstructions and record any improvement requiring resources. Use a suitable ground-floor teaching space when required. |
| **Lead** | School Operations Manager; class teachers |
| **Timescale** | Termly and before admitting a pupil with a new access requirement |
| **Resources** | Premises budget according to identified need |
| **Success evidence** | Routes and exits remain clear; agreed adaptations are completed; no pupil is unnecessarily excluded by room allocation. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

***Maintain individual emergency access arrangements***

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| **Actions** | Assess whether any pupil, staff member or regular visitor requires a PEEP. Prepare, practise and review the PEEP with the person and relevant staff; ensure evacuation information and equipment are accessible. |
| **Lead** | Headteacher; School Operations Manager |
| **Timescale** | On admission/appointment or change of need; review at least annually |
| **Resources** | Staff time; equipment or advice as identified |
| **Success evidence** | Current PEEPs are available to relevant staff and drills/reviews confirm workable arrangements. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

***Plan proportionately for access by visitors and prospective pupils***

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| **Actions** | Ask about access needs in advance where practicable. Provide clear arrival information, identify the most accessible entrance/room, and explain local parking arrangements, including available on-street Blue Badge parking. Consider reasonable alternatives if part of the site is inaccessible. |
| **Lead** | School Operations Manager |
| **Timescale** | For each visit/admission; site audit annually |

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| **Resources** | Normally within existing resources |
| **Success evidence** | Visitors and prospective pupils receive clear arrangements and can access the service without avoidable disadvantage. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

## Accessible Information

***Provide information in formats suited to the recipient***

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| **Actions** | Ask pupils and parents/carers about communication needs and preferences. Provide, as appropriate, large print, simplified language, pictorial/symbol-supported information, alternative paper colours, electronic copies or verbal explanation. Obtain specialist support where required. |
| **Lead** | All staff; class teacher coordinates pupil arrangements |
| **Timescale** | At admission and review; whenever information is issued |
| **Resources** | Existing resources; specialist advice as needed |
| **Success evidence** | Key information is understood and available in the agreed format within a reasonable time. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

***Make safety and key school information easier to understand***

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| **Actions** | Review core information sheets, signs and visual prompts. Prioritise safeguarding, behaviour expectations, emergency information and complaints information; create accessible versions for needs represented in the school. |
| **Lead** | School Operations Manager; Headteacher; SALT advice where appropriate |
| **Timescale** | Initial review by March 2027; annual check thereafter |
| **Resources** | Design/printing time; specialist advice if required |
| **Success evidence** | Accessible versions are available, signage is clear, and pupils can demonstrate understanding appropriate to their needs. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

## Engagement And Review

***Use pupil and family voice to test whether the plan is working***

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| **Actions** | Build proportionate accessibility questions into pupil voice, EHCP/PEP reviews and parent/carer contact. Include disabled parents/carers and families affected by illness or caring responsibilities when identifying communication barriers. Record themes and actions without identifying individuals. |

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| **Lead** | Headteacher; class teachers |
| **Timescale** | At least annually, with ongoing feedback welcomed |
| **Resources** | Existing review and consultation arrangements |
| **Success evidence** | Annual review records evidence, feedback, progress and any new priorities. |
| **Progress/evaluation** | To be completed at annual review. |

## Approval And Annual Review Record

| Stage | Date | Reviewed / Approved by | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Policy & Plan Created** | 30 March 2026 | The Headteacher & The School Operations Manager | Policy & Plan Implemented |
| **Initial Approval** | 28 August 2026 | The Chair of The Lioncare School | Plan Approved |
| **Annual Review 1** | By 28 August 2027 | The Chair of The Lioncare School | Plan Approved |
| **Annual Review 2** | By 28 August 2028 | | |
| **Full Review** | By September 2029 | | New three-year plan to be approved |

## Authoritative References

Equality Act 2010, Schedule 10; DfE Equality Act 2010 advice for schools; SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years; and Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Available from GOV.UK and legislation.gov.uk.