



# Mill Water School

Preparation for *their* best future

## Accessibility Policy and Plan

April 2026

### Legislation and Guidance

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- 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

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

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.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a pupil with disabilities faces in comparison with a pupil without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan, including but not limited to the Special Partnership Trust, of which the school is a member. We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of the plan, including parents/carers, staff, and governors.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, the complaints procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

### Our Approach

Mill Water School is a specialist academy school and part of the Special Partnership Trust (SPT). We provide education for pupils with complex needs, severe learning difficulties, and profound and multiple learning difficulties. Pupils may also have characteristics that include severe communication impairment; complex physical and/or sensory impairment; autistic spectrum disorder; complex health difficulty that may be life-

limiting; challenging behaviour; social and emotional difficulties; attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder; and obsessive/compulsive behaviours. All pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Our mission statement of ***preparation for their best future*** underpins all that we do; providing an aspirational and safe environment in which all of our pupils can develop the skills which will enable them to have a positive impact upon the world around them.

Mill Water's core values are:

- Communicate thoughtfully – everyone is entitled to be listened to, understood, and communicated with appropriately
- Celebrate achievements – everyone will work hard to the best of their ability and have successes recognised
- Respect one another – everyone trusts, supports and cares for one another
- Behave kindly – everyone will be considerate towards one another and feel safe

## Action Plan

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

### 1. Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum

Strengths	Areas for improvement, owner/timescales
<p>Lessons are highly differentiated and take account of individual learning difficulties. Priority is placed on pupil participation, as independently as is possible. Adults are clear about the learning objectives of the lesson, class and individuals.</p> <p>Target setting is individualised, and progress is mapped for all pupils.</p> <p>We support good communication by the use of signing, symbols and low and high tech communication aids. Pupils who need them have AAC devices. All pupils have access to appropriate computer technology.</p> <p>A school nurse, part time physiotherapists, occupational therapists and a designated speech and language therapist work alongside staff and parents to ensure that we meet the physical needs of our pupils. We use sensory approaches for children with sensory impairments.</p> <p>Our minibus is designed to take wheelchairs to ensure no child misses out on school activities that take place off site. As a school we encourage independence in our pupils and strive to ensure that they experience full and rewarding lives.</p> <p>The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of external services/professionals to ensure barriers to learning are reduced and to enable pupils to reach their full potential.</p>	<p>Pupils with a hearing impairment, or those who find listening difficult in noisy environments, would benefit from a soundfield system in classrooms, which would allow the main focus adult (the teacher) to be heard clearly and consistently around the room.</p> <p><i>This improvement is dependent on securing necessary funding. AT to explore funding options.</i></p> <p>Pupils would benefit from updated IT equipment to keep pace with rapidly changing technology, e.g. AI.</p> <p><i>This improvement is dependent on securing necessary funding. AT to explore funding options.</i></p>

### 2. Improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

Strengths	Areas for improvement, owner and timescales
<p>The school building was purpose built in 2015 and has good facilities for a variety of needs. The school is fully accessible for all pupils, staff and visitors. It has a fully accessible hydrotherapy pool, a physiotherapy room, sensory rooms and a rebound room. The outdoor environment is also fully</p>	<p>For pupils with a visual impairment, the following improvements could be made to improve independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trailing markers in the hall are cluttered with objects, and there are no clear trail routes to reach the senior corridor or the classes on the far side of</li> </ul>

<p>accessible with early years having a designated outdoor learning space. The school has laid new paths with specialist matting to allow all year round access. The school has a wheelchair accessible tree house in the orchard area.</p>	<p>the hall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearer demarcation of external steps/uneven surfaces.</li> <li>• Greater contrast of colours within classroom spaces (e.g. chairs and carpet)</li> </ul> <p>Passing through the double doors is difficult for wheelchair users. This could be improved with automatic doors or easy-to-reach door holders.</p> <p><i>BR and AT to investigate costs and funding opportunities for these improvements.</i></p>
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### 3. Improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for improvement, owner, and timescales</b>
<p>Makaton signing, PECS and AAC devices are used throughout the school to support pupils' communication, reading and understanding.</p> <p>The school has supported the provision of AAC devices for pupils to use at home, and helps parents to set up and understand these devices to maximise their use and benefit.</p> <p>School updates are communicated to families via several means, including email, website news stories, and social media. The language used in communications to parents/carers is straightforward and easily understandable.</p> <p>School newsletters include links to local organisations and support services that pupils and their families may benefit from.</p> <p>All statutory and relevant information is posted on the school website.</p>	<p>Signage within school and the school grounds to support teaching about environmental print. Symbolled signage within the school grounds.</p> <p><i>AT, AM and BR to investigate costs and funding opportunities for these improvements.</i></p>

## **Monitoring arrangements**

This document will be reviewed every three years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team following consultation with staff and parents/carers, and approved by the Headteacher.

## **Links with other policies**

The accessibility plan is linked to the following documents and policies:

- Risk assessments
- Health and Safety
- SEND Information Report
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions / Administration of Medicine
- Emergency Management Plan