

Thomas Telford School



Accessibility Plan

Prepared by:

N Parkinson

Approved by:

I Rawlings

Date:

July 2026

Review Date:

April 2027

(Final Review April 2029)

Thomas Telford Accessibility Plan 2026-2029

Introduction

This Accessibility Plan is compliant with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010.

Duties under the Equality Act 2010 require the responsible body for the school:

- Not to discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled students;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled students (an accessibility plan);
- To comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED); and
- (For maintained schools, academies and PRUs) To publish equality information and objectives under the PSED.

This plan sets out the proposals of the responsible body of the school to increase access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by the accessibility planning duties:

- To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum;
- To continue to improve the environment of the school, in line with the presenting needs of our community, in order to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services; and
- To further improve, where necessary, the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

The school recognises the need to resource the plan adequately, implement the plan and review and revise it as necessary. The Accessibility Plan is written with reference to the guidance of Equality Act (2010); The Children and Families Act (2014); The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014); The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015); Accessibility plans and the Equality Act 2010: a handbook for schools from the Council for Disabled Children (2025) and guidance from the Local Authority's Accessibility Policy .

Statement of Intent

Thomas Telford School is thoroughly committed to improving access for disabled students in order to prevent discrimination and to fully promoting inclusion. Through effective and considered access to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information disabled students will have access to engagement and enjoyment of school life with a full access to the 'welcome' of the school. The school believes that it is the reality of the culture and ethos of the school as experienced by those within the school community that matters and seeks to involve a variety of stakeholders in the development of accessibility.

Through the accessibility offer the school aims to:

- Promote inclusion, increase the engagement in and enjoyment of school life for disabled students and promote a 'welcome' for all students;
- Incorporate any required one-off adjustments into school policies in a planned way;

- Incorporate accessibility strategies into all aspects of the school, distributing responsibilities across the school;
- Promote a whole school focus on inclusion to ensure the school is welcoming and responsive to disabled students in a planned way.

The School Governing Board are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility plan over a prescribed period. They will ensure through the Head Teacher and Senior Management Team that all staff are aware of how these duties should be implemented in their specific areas of responsibility.

Vision and values: the purpose and direction of the school's plan

Thomas Telford School is an inclusive school and is proactive in thinking ahead to anticipate the barriers that disabled students may face. The school recognises its duties not to discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled students and to anticipate and make reasonable adjustments for disabled students. This includes a recognition of the schools' duties to students with special educational needs (SEN) under the Children and Families Act 2014 (CFA).

The school takes active steps to minimise these barriers so that students are fully included in all aspects of school life. This accessibility plan ensures that we continue to improve all aspects of the physical environment of the school site, the curriculum and written information so that all students with a disability can take full advantage of the education and associated opportunities provided by the Thomas Telford School.

The Accessibility plan will:

- Define 'disability'
- Be embedded in a culture of high expectations for all
- Be guided by the Special Needs Policy
- Respond to the views of students and parents/guardians
- Demonstrate a commitment to developing access to the school for all students
- Show commitment to the effective and sustainable use of resources
- Be clear about how it will be evaluated.

Disability and the School Culture Definition (Equality Act 2010)

Disabled students are defined as experiencing mental or physical impairments that have a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. In the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) substantial means 'more than minor or trivial'. Long-term means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months. The Accessibility Plan incorporates the Equality Act's acknowledgement that some conditions are classified as a disability regardless of the 'substantial and long-term adverse effect' threshold, specifically:

- Cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV are named as disabilities;
- Severe disfigurements should be treated as having an adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities; and
- Progressive conditions, that is, conditions that get worse over time, should be classified as disabilities before the effect is substantial.
- Under regulations made under the Equality Act, people who are certified as blind or partially sighted are also considered to be disabled.

Through effective accessibility the school has a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through:

- Strong, shared values, policies and practice.
- A curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or high needs, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life;
- A curriculum that remains as broad as possible for as long as possible, including when delivered remotely, with a reduced curriculum not being the norm.
- A strong take-up by disabled students of the opportunities provided by the school.

More widely the school vision, ethos and strategic direction focus on elements that are highly relevant to the development of the school's accessibility plan with an emphasis on:

- The school's high ambitions for its disabled students;
- The school's focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school;
- A commitment to ensure all students access learning, make progress and achieve;
- An emphasis on ensuring that staff skills inspire all children to make excellent progress from their respective starting points;
- A focus on values that celebrate difference and promote an inclusive ethos;
- A commitment to all students feeling included and valued as members of the school community; and
- The school's wider commitment to equal opportunities.

The school works to ensure that students with disabilities engage in the activities of the school together with children who do not have disabilities. Where appropriate students and families will be signposted to the relevant SEN and disability local offer of services further support.

The full participation of students, staff, parents and relevant external agencies in decision-making is highly valued. As such information and support to enable participation in decision-making is committed to by the school to ensure robust support through co-production to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes. Decisions involving accessibility are informed by the insights of parents and those of children and young people themselves. This endorses the principle of children's participation in decision-making both from the from The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Information Gathering

The school takes its duty to explore who may count as disabled seriously and uses many different ways to become aware that a student may be disabled. For example information is received from a student's previous school; evidence is provided by the child's parents; also information may be collected through careful observation of a child's progress and behaviour which may have led to a referral to external agencies. The school also acknowledges that there is no duty on either parents or students themselves to disclose a disability, with the focus placed upon any adjustments that the school may need to make, rather than on the nature or existence of a disability. This approach serves to make the experience of information sharing productive and supportive for students and their families, with a range of options offered to in which to share information with the school. Data monitoring also examines presence, participation and progress and achievement of disabled students in wider aspects of school life to ensure equality of access, representation and achievement.

Responsibility for the Plan

This Accessibility Plan has been drawn up in consultation with the governors of the School. A whole school approach to the development, review and revision of the accessibility plan is

adopted, and involves the full school community. This has the benefit of allowing access to a range of different perspectives and expertise.

Inputs are sought from:

- Teaching and non-teaching staff including learning support assistants or teaching assistants;
- Those with responsibilities for different areas of school life: curricular, pastoral, recreational, organisational and administrative, and buildings maintenance and capital projects;
- Disabled members of staff;
- Parents;
- Students, taking into account ages, the nature of their disabilities, and how they prefer to communicate; and
- Professionals from services and other agencies working with the school.

Different stakeholders and representatives are involved in different ways and consulted on how they would like to contribute to the process, with different means of sharing views publicised on the plan. At Thomas Telford School we are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. Thomas Telford School will constantly monitor, with a view to improving where necessary, the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors to the School. The Accessibility Plan also acknowledged that there will be the need for ongoing awareness raising and training for all staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the potential need to inform attitudes on this matter.

This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with policies, strategies and documents on the following areas and under the Equality Act:

- School Improvement plan;
- Equal Opportunities Policies;
- School Prospectus and Mission Statement
- SEN policy;
- The policy setting out the school's arrangements for supporting students with medical conditions;
- Anti-bullying policies;
- Behaviour policies;
- Asset management plan; and
- Health and safety policies.

The Accessibility plan is also co-ordinated with other services and agencies, for example:

- The Local Authority's accessibility strategy
- Social services; and
- Health agencies, particularly in respect of meeting the health needs of disabled students in school.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the Head and Governing Board. It will be reviewed annually and revised every three years. In the process of its review it will take into consideration the views of disabled students, their parents/guardians and care providers in the community. Consideration will be paid to whether it is:

1. Adequately resourced
2. Implemented
3. Reviewed
4. Revised as necessary
5. Renewed every three years
6. Available to parents/guardians

During the three-year period of the plan, new information may come to light which may also trigger immediate review, for example:

- Feedback on the plan itself;
- A new intake of students may indicate that existing arrangements need to be revised or that new arrangements are needed;
- New views may be gathered in relation to accessibility or in relation to aspects of school life that affect accessibility;
- Evidence may suggest that actions need amending as the school community changes or new data or evidence emerges to address further accessibility objectives.

Opinions of the student and parental body will be regularly sought. If parents/carers think that their child has been discriminated against, they have a right of redress by making a claim of disability discrimination to the SEN and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). If the tribunal finds that a school has discriminated unlawfully against a disabled student it can order any remedy that it sees fit, except financial compensation.

The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the school. An accessibility audit will be completed by the school prior to the end of each period covering this plan in order to inform the development of a new Accessibility plan for the ongoing period.

Equality impact assessment will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed.

The school prospectus will make reference to the Accessibility plan

The schools complaints procedure covers the Accessibility plan.

The Accessibility plan will be monitored through the curriculum and finance and premises.

Increasing access for disabled students: setting objectives for the school's plan

This plan addressed the three strands of the statutory requirements, on the basis of which action plans will be drawn up and regularly reviewed:

- **Increasing access for disabled students to the school curriculum:** This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after schools clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.

- **Improving access to the physical environment of schools:** This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and associated services/physical aids to access education.
- **Improving the delivery of written information to disabled students:** This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the school to its students available to disabled students. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events. The information should take account of students' disabilities and students' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.

Procedure

To identify barriers to access by disabled students a needs analysis checklist has been completed – Annex 1.

From the findings of this checklist an Action Plan has been written to identify necessary action to make the adjustments necessary – Annex 2.

This action plan will form part of the whole school development plan agenda. Progress will be reviewed annually and this accessibility plan adjusted accordingly. The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

Identifying Barriers to Access: Checklist

Section 1: How does your school deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled students?	☒	☐
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled students?	☒	☐
Do sequences of lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve?	☒	☐
Are lessons responsive to student diversity?	☒	☐
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	☒	☐
Are all students encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	☒	☐
Do all staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled students for example using lip reading?	☒	☐
Do all staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled students to use equipment in practical work?	☒	☐
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled students who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?	☒	☐
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	☒	☐
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all students irrespective of attainment or impairment?	☒	☐
Are there high expectations of students regardless of any disability?	☒	☐
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	☒	☐

Section 2: Is your school designed to meet the needs of all students?

Question	Yes	No
Does the size and layout of areas including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, restaurant, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms allow access for all students?	☒	☐
Can students who use wheelchairs move around the school Without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps, toilet facilities and showers?	☒	☐
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	☒	☐
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform all students, including students with SEN and disability?	☒	☐
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?	☐	☒
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorienting for disabled students?	☐	☒
Are areas to which students should have access well lit?	☒	☐
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired students such as considering a rooms acoustics, noisy equipment?	☒	☐
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	☒	☐

Section 3: How does your school deliver materials in other formats?

Question	Yes	No
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for students and prospective students who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	☒	☐
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	☒	☐
Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	☒	☐
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	☒	☐

Annex 2

Thomas Telford School - Accessibility Plan 2026 - 2029

A - IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Target	Action	Resources	Timeframe	Outcomes
A1: Continue to develop range of learning resources that are accessible for students with different disabilities.	Heads of Departments to review resources in their curriculum areas. SEND team communicate with relevant outside agencies to determine appropriate equipment on an individual basis. Assistive tech provision to be incorporated where necessary.	Time / training	Annually, Review April 2027	Students with disabilities have increased access to curriculum materials and reduced barriers to assessing the curriculum.
A2: Teachers develop their knowledge of different teaching and learning styles to adapt the curriculum and classroom environment, effectively deploying staff to enhance the learning of students with SEND.	Staff development/Teacher Observations and feedback/CPD Sessions.	Time/training	Annually, Review April 2027	Teachers use multiple intelligence principles to suit a wide range of learning styles. Staff to be able to incorporate inclusive adjustments for emerging neurodivergent trends. Higher attainment for students with SEND disabilities.
A3: Teachers develop skills to deal with students who have specific disabilities	SEND staff provide or arrange specific training for new and existing staff relating to disabilities experienced by students. Utilise Thomas Telford School risk assessment process to engage teachers in developing knowledge on an individual basis.	Time/training	Annually, Review April 2027	Staff have greater understanding of disability issues. Staff to be able to incorporate inclusive adjustments for emerging neurodivergent trends. Students have reduced barriers to accessing the curriculum and higher achievement. Students are able to access the full extended curriculum.

A4: Disability equality issues are incorporated into PSHE/Citizenship curriculum	Students to address issues of disability, mental wellbeing and inclusion through Tutor sessions/assemblies/ PSHE sessions.	PSHE Programme of Study	Annually, Review April 2027	Students have greater understanding of disability/welfare issues and understand equality better.
A5: Extra-Curricular/enrichment inclusivity	Departments to ensure disabled students are able to fully access, participate and make progress in session 3 and enrichment activities.	Session 3	Annually, Review April 2027	Barriers (Structural/Physical/Emotional) are removed to ensure full access, participation and progress of disabled students in all aspects of school life.
A6: Attendance of disabled students is analysed with a view to further investigating is there are further reasonable adjustments that could be made to improve attendance. Where possible systematic changes serve to avoid a narrowed curriculum offer.	Barriers to attendance identified and addressed through reasonable adjustments.	Attendance Team tracking	Annually, Review April 2027	Further reasonable adjustments incorporated where possible/necessary to improve access, participation and progress. Where possible narrowed curriculum avoided due to systematic changes and support.
A7: Views from stakeholders concerning accessibility to the curriculum to inform reasonable adjustments. This to happen in a format that is best accessible to the stakeholder.	Stakeholders inputs sought to assist in identifying and addressing through Reasonable adjustments barriers to accessing the curriculum	Time	Annually, Review April 2027	Further reasonable adjustments incorporated where possible/necessary to improve access, participation and progress.

B - IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Target	Action	Resources	Timeframe	Outcomes
B1: Ensure fire procedures take account of the needs of students/staff with disabilities	a) Review the needs of the identified students/staff b) Ensure that appropriate provision, including places of safety have been established c) Fire procedures for wheelchair students/staff are clearly in place, PEEPs and mandatory fire training to occur in a timely fashion	Financial resources (funding for evacuation chairs) Time/training	Annually April 2027	Identified students/staff are safe and have a clearly recognised set of procedures to meet their needs in case of fire. Waiting areas located in safe areas at key points around the school, 2 at each end of the building. Fire officer to take responsibility for safe evacuation of disabled students/staff from these areas. Relevant staff aware of designated points.
B2: Ensure that there is appropriate vehicle access for students/staff with physical disabilities.	Review the needs of identified Students. Ensure that appropriate provision and safety has been addressed.	Financial resources Site Management.	Annually April 2027	Identified students have access when required to disabled parking provision.
B3: To constantly review access to the physical environment for students/staff with physical disabilities.	Review the access to individual rooms, ensuring appropriate adaptations are made where feasible.	Site manager, SENCO, Advice sought from Occupational Therapist when Required.	Annually, Review April 2027	Physical environments will be reviewed and evaluated frequently with the support of the Occupational Therapy Service. Appropriate Risk Assessments will be carried out regularly and evaluated in line with the SEN and Health and Safety Policies.
B4: Views from stakeholders concerning accessibility to the physical environment to inform reasonable adjustments. This to happen in a format that is best accessible to the stakeholder.	Stakeholders inputs sought to assist in identifying and addressing through reasonable adjustments barriers to accessing the physical environment.	Time	Annually, Review April 2027	Further reasonable adjustments incorporated where possible/necessary to improve access, participation and progress.

C - IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Target	Action	Resources	Timeframe	Outcomes
C1: Make information more accessible to students (and parents) with disabilities	Use national and local recommendations information to be accessible according to need. Newly procured external software, e-books or digital learning platforms will conform to EAA-aligned standards. The school website, parents communication apps and student portals will adhere to WCAG 2.2 AA guidelines.	LA guide to making information more accessible Teaching Staff, Parent and Student feedback	Annually, Review April 2027	Students/parents with disabilities have greater access to information. School able to respond quickly to requests for information in alternative formats, such as In simplified language, or Easy Read documents with visual resources, for students with learning difficulties; In picture or symbol versions for students with language and communication difficulties; Using subtitles on slides/videos may benefit many students, including deaf students; In a large font for students with vision impairment; In an accessible electronic format for students using screen reading software; or In Braille, in large print, in simplified language, as an audio or video file, through sign language, using a symbol system. Newly procured external software, e-books or digital learning platforms will conform to EAA-aligned standards. The school website, parents communication apps and student portals will adhere to WCAG 2.2 AA guidelines. .

C2: Views from stakeholders concerning accessibility to information to inform reasonable adjustments. This to happen in a format that is best accessible to the stakeholder.	Stakeholders inputs sought to assist in identifying and addressing through reasonable adjustments barriers to accessing information.	Time	Annually, Review April 2027	Further reasonable adjustments incorporated where possible/necessary to improve access to information.
--	--	------	-----------------------------------	--