Grove School

Accessibility Plan

Mission statement:

“Enjoy, learn, achieve”

Grove School

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Introduction

This Accessibility Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, particularly Schedule 10, and the Children and Families Act 2014. It has regard to the Department for Education's Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

This plan should be read alongside the school's SEND Policy, Equality Information and Objectives, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Fire Risk Assessment, Lockdown Policy and relevant emergency procedures.

Legal duties

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school must not discriminate against, harass or victimise a disabled pupil or prospective pupil. This includes direct discrimination, indirect discrimination and discrimination arising from disability.

The school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled pupil would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage. This includes reviewing policies, practices and procedures and providing reasonable auxiliary aids and services where required.

Physical improvements to the school premises are considered through the school's accessibility planning duties. The school will therefore plan progressively to improve access to the physical environment while also making appropriate arrangements for individual pupils.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory. The school will consider potential barriers in advance and will not wait until a disabled pupil experiences a disadvantage before considering what adjustments may be required.

Definition of disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that 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" normally means that the effect has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Disability may include physical, sensory, cognitive and mental health impairments, neurodevelopmental conditions and long-term medical conditions. A pupil may be disabled under the Equality Act 2010 without having special educational needs. Equally, a pupil may have special educational needs without meeting the Equality Act definition of disability. Some pupils will fall within both groups.

The school recognises that the effects of a disability may fluctuate and that not all disabilities are visible. Decisions about reasonable adjustments will be based on the needs of the individual pupil and the barriers they experience.

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The absence of a formal diagnosis will not prevent the school from identifying barriers, considering appropriate support or making reasonable adjustments where these are required.

Purpose and objectives of the Accessibility Plan

Grove School is committed to identifying, preventing and removing barriers that may prevent disabled pupils and prospective pupils from participating fully in school life. Over the period covered by this plan, the school will:

1. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum and wider school life.
2. Improve the physical environment so that disabled pupils can take greater advantage of education, facilities, benefits and services.
3. Improve the availability and delivery of information in accessible formats.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for individual pupils and will also plan proactively for the future needs of pupils, prospective pupils, parents, staff and visitors.

Grove School occupies a Grade II listed building dating from 1903, and an annex constructed in the 1970s. Parts of the main building are arranged over two levels. Some rooms are accessible only by steps including: a meeting room in the reception office; the staffroom; a storage cupboard currently storing art resources; two meeting rooms in the main school building; the three Year 4 classrooms; and the school's two libraries.

The age, layout and listed status of the premises present accessibility challenges. However, the school will not assume that these barriers cannot be addressed. It will consider reasonable adjustments, room changes, alternative routes, changes to service delivery, appropriate equipment and feasible physical alterations in response to identified need.

Where substantial building work may be necessary, the school will seek advice from the local authority, competent access professionals, fire-safety advisers and the relevant planning or listed-building authorities. Accessibility will be considered whenever refurbishment, maintenance or capital work is planned.

The school will ensure that pupils are not excluded from lessons, interventions, libraries, clubs, performances, after school clubs; assemblies, visits or other educational activities simply because their usual location is inaccessible. Where necessary, the location or method of delivery will be changed.

A site visit was conducted in October 2018 by the school's safety adviser. Actions arising from that visit were recorded, and their current status is shown in Appendix A. As the assessment is now historic, a new assessment is scheduled for the autumn term 2026. The findings will be incorporated into this plan and the premises action programme.

An action plan for 2026 to 2029 can be found in Appendix B.

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Emergency evacuation and lockdown accessibility

The accessibility of evacuation, invacuation and lockdown procedures will be considered for pupils, staff and visitors with physical, sensory, communication, medical or cognitive needs.

Where an individual may be unable to follow standard emergency procedures safely or independently, the school will prepare and regularly review a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, or PEEP, and any other appropriate individual emergency arrangements. Relevant staff will be informed and trained, and arrangements will be practised sensitively where appropriate.

Accessibility actions arising from the fire risk assessment or professional access assessment will be added to the action plan without waiting for the next scheduled three-year review.

Emergency lighting is installed in the relevant areas of both the upper-school and lower-school buildings. A permanent ramp provides access to an external classroom on the upper-school site. The condition and suitability of these arrangements will be included in routine premises checks.

Principles

Grove School recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010:

- Not to discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled pupils or prospective pupils in relation to admissions, the provision of education, access to benefits, facilities and services, suspension or permanent exclusion.
- To make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled pupils from being placed at a substantial disadvantage.
- To provide reasonable auxiliary aids and services where required.
- To plan progressively to improve disabled pupils' access to the curriculum, physical environment and information.
- To publish, implement, monitor and review its Accessibility Plan.

In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the Equality Act 2010.

Grove School recognises and values the knowledge that pupils and their parents or carers have of the pupil's disability, individual strengths, needs and the barriers they may experience. The school will involve pupils and their parents or carers in decisions about reasonable adjustments and will respect their privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the school's data-protection and safeguarding responsibilities.

Grove School provides all pupils with a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. Teaching, resources, environments and assessment arrangements will be adapted where necessary to respond to individual strengths and needs and to overcome potential barriers to learning and participation.

At Grove School, we are committed to:

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to pupils' diverse strengths and needs.

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- Identifying and overcoming potential barriers to learning, participation and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Curriculum and participation

The school will seek to ensure that disabled pupils can participate fully in teaching, assessment and the wider life of the school. Planning will include lessons, interventions, assemblies, performances, educational visits, residential visits, clubs, playtimes, lunchtimes, PE and swimming.

Teachers will identify potential barriers when planning teaching and will make appropriate adjustments. These may include adapted teaching, additional processing time, alternative methods of recording, seating arrangements, visual support, communication systems, assistive technology, adapted equipment, movement breaks, sensory adjustments and changes to the location or timing of provision. Planning will also consider transitions, behaviour and attendance arrangements, access to toilets, changing facilities and personal care where relevant.

Adjustments will be personalised. The school will avoid applying one standard approach to all pupils with the same diagnosis or need. Reasonable adjustments will not automatically involve reducing curriculum ambition or changing the intended learning. Wherever appropriate, adjustments will enable the pupil to work towards the same ambitious curriculum objectives as their peers.

Staff training will be planned in response to the needs of current and prospective pupils and reviewed as needs change.

Accessible information

The school will provide information to disabled pupils in an accessible format and within a reasonable period. The format will be determined by the pupil's needs and, where appropriate, preferences expressed by the pupil or their parents.

Accessible formats may include:

- enlarged print;
- simplified or Easy Read versions;
- electronic documents compatible with accessibility tools;
- audio;
- Braille or tactile resources;
- coloured paper or adjusted contrast;
- symbols, photographs and visual timetables;
- Makaton or other communication support;
- subtitles or transcripts;
- translation or interpretation where this is separately required;
- alternative communication methods recommended by specialists.

The school will progressively review the accessibility of key digital content, forms, newsletters, policies and online learning resources, prioritising information needed to access education and school services.

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Requests for alternative formats should be made the school's Headteacher (Ms J Baker) through the school office. Requests may be made by telephone, email, in writing or in person through the school office. Assistance will be provided where a person cannot make a written request. The school will respond within a reasonable period and will explain any interim arrangements where specialist production is required.

Evidence considered in preparing the plan

This plan has been informed by:

- Staff observations and curriculum reviews.
- The school's SEND information.
- Incident, attendance and participation information.
- Complaints and accessibility requests.
- Premises inspections and the current fire risk assessment.
- Advice from local authority and health professionals.
- Consideration of the needs of prospective pupils.
- Findings and actions from the October 2018 site visit.

Further evidence to be incorporated

- The findings of the updated accessibility assessment scheduled for the autumn term 2026.
- Feedback from pupils with SEND.
- Parents' and carers' views.

Pupils and parents or carers will be involved in decisions concerning individual reasonable adjustments. Their views will also inform the annual monitoring and review of this plan.

Monitoring and review

The governing body will monitor implementation of this plan at least annually. Progress against each action will be recorded, together with evidence of impact.

The plan may be revised before its scheduled review where:

- A pupil's needs identify a new or urgent barrier.
- The school admits or expects to admit a pupil requiring additional adjustments.
- Building work or refurbishment is proposed.
- An incident, complaint or accessibility request identifies a concern.

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- Professional advice recommends an amendment.
- Legislation or statutory guidance changes.

The school will publish the current plan on its website and make it available in alternative formats on request. The accessibility plan does not replace the school's duty to make reasonable adjustments for an individual pupil when those adjustments are needed.

The governing body will receive an annual report summarising completed actions, outstanding priorities, consultation findings, evidence of impact and any additional resources required. The first formal update under this plan will take place following receipt of the autumn term 2026 accessibility assessment.

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Appendix A

Findings and actions from the October 2018 site visit

The visit was undertaken by Mark Checkley, Safety Adviser, Education Safety Services.

2018 Issue	Current Position	Required Next Step	Status
Sandpit access	Temporary access solution proposed in 2018	Reassess the access route, surface, gradient and suitability of any proposed access solution as part of the updated professional accessibility assessment.	Requires reassessment
Main office entrance	A portable ramp purchased in October 2018 remains available for access to the main office.	Review the ramps suitability, inspection, storage, safe deployment and staff-training arrangements. Confirm an alternative accessible entrance and reception arrangement where the ramp cannot provide safe, dignified and timely access.	Requires reassessment
Steps outside Year 3 fire exit	Warning signs installed	Reassess as part of fire risk and accessibility review.	Ongoing control
Cleaning staff using stairs	Annual training provided	Retain under health and safety arrangements rather than the accessibility action plan.	Transferred to health and safety monitoring
Cleaner's store	Lock fitted and room kept locked	Retain under COSHH/site-security inspections rather than the accessibility action plan.	Transferred to site monitoring

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Appendix B

Action Plan for 2026 to 2029

Priority and action	Baseline or barrier	Lead	Timescale	Resources	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evidence	Status
Commission updated accessibility assessment	Previous visit was in October 2018	Headteacher and Building Site Supervisor	Autumn Term 2026	Assessment fee and staff time	Written assessment received; recommendations prioritised according to urgency, impact and cost	Assessment presented to governors; action plan amended	Planned
Review portable ramp arrangements	Ramp purchased in 2018; its current suitability needs to be confirmed	Building Site Supervisor	Immediately and following assessment	Inspection, staff time and replacement costs if required	Safe, dignified and timely access to the office is available; relevant staff understand the procedure	Inspection record, staff briefing and termly premises check	In progress
Audit step-free routes across the site	Some areas have steps or inaccessible surfaces	Headteacher, Building Site Supervisor and SENCO	Spring Term 2027	Staff time and professional advice	Access map completed; barriers, alternative routes and priorities recorded	Completed audit reported to governors	Planned
Review access to sand and outdoor play areas	Historic barrier identified in 2018	Assistant Headteacher for EYFS and Building Site Supervisor	Spring Term 2027	To be established following assessment	Disabled pupils can participate in comparable outdoor and sensory play activities	Observation, pupil and parent feedback, premises check	Planned
Review room allocation procedures	Some curriculum and meeting spaces are upstairs	Headteacher and SENCO	Autumn Term 2026, then annually	Staff planning time	Lessons, interventions, meetings and activities are relocated when necessary; no pupil is excluded because a room is inaccessible	Annual timetable review and records of individual adjustments	Planned
Update and republish the plan	The plan will require review following receipt of the updated accessibility assessment and consultation evidence.	Headteacher and Governing Body	Within one term of receiving the updated accessibility assessment.	Staff time	Assessment findings and consultation evidence incorporated; revised actions approved by governors and published; alternative formats available on request.	Website check and governing-body minutes	Planned

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Audit disabled pupils' participation in the curriculum and wider school life.	Currently reviewed half-termly by the senior leadership team	Senior Leadership Team	Autumn Term 2026 onwards	Staff time	Potential barriers are identified during planning and appropriate adjustments are recorded. Disabled pupils can participate in curriculum and wider-school opportunities wherever reasonably possible.	Participation information, planning documents, educational-visit risk assessments and pupil and parent feedback.	Ongoing
Establish and monitor an accessible-information request process.	The policy identifies a contact and possible formats, but no central system for recording requests and responses is currently identified.	Headteacher and Administration Team	Autumn Term 2026	Staff briefing, request log and staff time	Pupils and families know how to request accessible formats. Requests and responses are recorded and completed within a reasonable period.	Termly review of requests, response times, formats provided and feedback received.	Planned
Review the accessibility of the school website and key digital documents.	Key digital information has not been subject to a formal accessibility review.	Headteacher, Deputy Head Teachers and Computer Technician	Spring Term 2026 then annually	Staff time and possible external advice	Priority policies, forms, newsletters and online learning materials follow accessible formatting practices. The accessibility statement and contact arrangements are current where applicable.	Annual sample audit, website checks and records of improvements made.	Planned
Consult with disabled pupils, pupils with SEND and their parents or carers.	Systematic consultation has not yet been completed for the 2026 to 2029 plan.	Headteacher, Deputy Head Teachers and Governors	Autumn Term 2026 then annually	Survey, discussion or meeting time; accessible communication methods where required.	Pupils and parents have meaningful opportunities to identify barriers and suggest improvements. Consultation findings influence the annual review of the plan.	Anonymised consultation summary, identified themes, resulting actions and governing-body minutes.	Planned

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