



John Masfield High School and Sixth Form Centre

JMHS Accessibility Plan

STATUTORY: Yes

DATE AGREED: Pending approval

REVIEW DATE: Sept 2027

RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF STAFF: R French / H Newnes

TRUSTEE COMMITTEE: Personnel & Welfare

SIGNED HEADTEACHER: J Holmes

SIGNED CHAIR OF TRUSTEES:

Review Date and Summary of Changes

Date of Change	Summary of Changes
	Version 1 New Document
2019	Version 2 General Updates
September 2026	Version 3 Full review and update

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1. Introduction

At John Masefield High School & Sixth Form Centre (JMHS) we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards and to achieve excellent and enjoyable learning. To achieve this, we take account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs.

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children are paramount. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

This Access Policy pays due regard government law, including the Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014) Part 3 which links into the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and to past legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995, the SEN and Disability Act 2001.

We are also fully supportive of Herefordshire Council's Accessibility Strategy and Plan for Schools https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/ibpbk2jb/accessibility_strategy_and_plan_for_schools_2023.pdf.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 aims to end discrimination against people with disabilities and to improve access in all areas of life. Since 2002, it has been unlawful for schools and Local Authorities to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in admissions and exclusions, in education, and in associated services. From 1st October 2004, it became unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities by preventing them from having access to premises.

Along with all other public buildings, our school is required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable access.

We recognise that the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 places the following duties upon us:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- To plan to make reasonable adjustments to the school buildings so that there is an increased access to education for disabled pupils and to make the school buildings more accessible for disabled persons.

Schools are required to resource, implement and review their accessibility plan as necessary. This plan will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher. The plan within this policy sets out the proposals for increasing access to education for disabled pupils.

Our accessibility plan details the changes required to our buildings and to other aspects of our school, so that we fulfil our legal requirements, and aims to remove barriers to inclusion for all pupils and staff with disabilities.

2. Aims

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

JMHS aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

JMHS aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children, and this of course includes pupils with disabilities.

- We will ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils to benefit from the education our school provides
- We will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his/her disability
- We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage
- We will do our best to anticipate the needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities before she/he joins the school

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, including understanding disability issues.

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.

3. Legislation and guidance

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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. What is disability?

The Disability and Discrimination Act states that 'a person suffers from a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities'

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday life

Disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

5. Removing Barriers

The school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils and members of staff and of the public are not disadvantaged.

Disabilities can limit the extent to which children are able to participate in the curriculum, and can impede the delivery of information. So, for example, if a child suffers from hearing loss, the teacher will always try and face the child when addressing the class, or, in severe cases, the teacher may wear a microphone and transmitter.

The accessibility plan covers the measures we have already taken, and are still taking, to improve our school.

6. The Physical Environment

We will endeavour to improve provision for disabled pupils and staff by developing the physical environment of the school, within the limits of the resources available. Currently the school site is rated as 1 Partly Accessible with the Additional Needs Service within Herefordshire Council <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directories/schools-directory/john-masefield-high-school-and-sixth-form-centre/>

Current established practice and that under development includes the following:

- Information is obtained on future students to facilitate advanced planning, and if required, planning for adaptations and funding bids
- Access to the school is improved by the installation of ramps, handrails and lifts. Lifts are situated in the sixth form centre, main reception and sports centre, and are regularly maintained and inspected by external contractors
- Reserved parking bays for people with disabilities are available, and are monitored and enforced
- There are accessible toilets in the main building, sports centre and sixth form centre
- Risk assessments are carried out for all school trips
- Individual risk assessments are put in place for students with a high level of need
- Personal evacuation plans are put in place for vulnerable students
- Medical room provision and a dedicated lead first aider is available throughout the school day
- Adaptations to movement around the site and rooming of lessons
- The Hub and The Haven offer a quiet working space for students with additional needs
- The use of appropriate ICT hardware and software
- Accessible internal signage and a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible including large print

7. The Curriculum

Guidance from the Department for Education on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (2014) explains that "Schools are free to include a full range of issues, ideas and materials in their syllabus, and to expose pupils to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, without fear

of legal challenge based on a protected characteristic. But schools will need to ensure that the way in which issues are taught does not subject individual pupils to discrimination."

Therefore, the Equality Act applies to the delivery of the curriculum, rather than the content of the curriculum. This means the way it is taught, not what is taught.

When designing our school curriculum, individual curriculum leaders have considered potential barriers to learning, including considering what children with disabilities might require and what adjustments might need to be made. This is particularly the case in practical subjects, where reasonable adjustments are identified to allow inclusion. This approach is also applied to extracurricular activities and school trips. Detailed risk assessments are also put in place for all school trips.

Our curriculum is regularly reviewed by senior leaders, including the SENDCO, to ensure that it is accessible for all and that possible adjustments have been identified. The school regularly reviews the way in which resources are matched to the needs of all the children. If necessary, to improve our provision, adjustments will be made to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training.

8. Meeting individual student needs.

As part of our admissions processes, the SENDCO is notified of any students with high needs, including special educational needs and disabilities.

Students with high levels of need will often have an Education, Health and Care Plan, or Medical Care Plan. These plans are written by experts such as medical professionals, educational psychologist and social workers, and we use the advice of these professionals to ensure that any adjustments are best placed to meet a child's needs.

We can assess individual needs by:

- Information obtained during visits to primary schools to facilitate advanced planning
- Using assessment for the identification and support of pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Liaison with and support for staff and parents from external agencies (For example, Educational Psychologists, CAMHS, Occupational Health, Speech and Language Therapists).

Following assessment, we may seek the advice of external specialists to ensure that we are making suitable adjustments.

We value the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions. When creating individualised plans we consider the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents.

To support individuals, we may use one or more of the following:

- Training arranged if specialist knowledge is required
- Individual timetables for children with severe learning needs
- Access arrangements for examinations
- Teaching Assistants deployed to provide individualised support.
- Individual risk assessments put in place for pupils with a high level of need.

9. Safeguarding

At JMHS safeguarding and child protection is paramount, and we are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all our children.

We believe that students have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems.

If any behaviour is a concern in relation to safeguarding, JMHS procedures will be followed at all times in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Any concerns will be referred to our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed at least every 3 years but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by the Trustee Board via the Personnel and Welfare Committee.

It will be approved by Trustee Board on recommendation for adoption by the Personnel and Welfare Committee.

11. Links with other policies

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

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- SEND Information Report
- SEND policy
- Supporting students with medical needs policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy