Accessibility Policy

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Statement of intent

Thorntree Academy is committed to taking all steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage and works closely with pupils with disabilities, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove any potential barriers to their learning experience.

The school is active in promoting an inclusive positive environment by ensuring that every pupil is given equal opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy school life. The school continually looks for ways to improve accessibility within the school through data collection, parent questionnaires and discussions.

This policy must be adhered to by all staff members, pupils, parents and visitors.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 1996
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017

1.2. This policy has due regard to national guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

1.3. This policy will be used in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

2. Definition

2.1. A person is defined as having a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

2.2. The Equality Act 2010 means that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. Staff members will act in accordance with the school's Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan at all times.

3.2. The headteacher, in conjunction with the governing board will create an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving the school's accessibility.

3.3. The governing board will be responsible for monitoring the Accessibility Plan.

3.4. The full governing board will approve the Accessibility Plan before it is implemented.

3.5. All staff members are responsible for ensuring that their actions do not discriminate against any pupil, parent or colleague.

3.6. The headteacher will ensure that staff members are aware of pupils' disabilities and medical conditions where necessary.

3.7. During a new pupil's induction, the headteacher will establish whether the pupil has any disabilities or medical conditions which the school should be aware of.

3.8. The headteacher and SENDCO is responsible for consulting with relevant and reputable experts if challenging situations regarding pupils with disabilities arise.

3.9. The headteacher, governing board and SLT will work closely with the Trust, LA and external agencies to effectively create and implement the school's Accessibility Plan.

3.10 The SENCO will work closely with the headteacher and governing board to ensure that pupils with SEND are appropriately supported.

3.11 All staff members and governors will partake in whole-school training on equality issues related to the Equality Act 2010.

3.12 Designated staff members will be trained to effectively support pupils with medical conditions, for example, understanding how to administer insulin.

4. Accessibility Plan

4.1. The Accessibility Plan will be structured to complement and support the school's Equality and Diversity Policy, as well as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

4.2. The Accessibility Plan will be presented as either a freestanding document or as part of another document, such as the Securing Improvement Plan.

4.3. The school's Accessibility Plan demonstrates how access will be improved for pupils with disabilities, staff, parents and visitors to the school within a given timeframe.

4.4. The plan has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the school's physical environment to enable pupils with disabilities to take advantage of the facilities and education on offer
- To improve the availability and delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

4.5. The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three-year period ahead of the next review date, which will be in September 2023.

4.6. If it is not feasible to undertake all the plans/works during the lifespan of the Accessibility Plan, some items will roll forward into subsequent plans.

4.7. The Accessibility Plan will be used to measure the necessity of making reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities where practicable.

4.8. The Accessibility Plan will be used to advise other school planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

4.9. Both the Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

4.10 An access audit will be undertaken by the governing board every year.

4.11 The school will provide adequate resources for implementing plans, ensuring pupils are sufficiently supported.

4.12 The school will seek support from the LA where necessary to help the school provide suitable support to pupils with disabilities.

5 Equal opportunities

5.10 The school strives to ensure that all existing and potential pupils are given the same opportunities.

5.11 The school is committed to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness.

5.12 Staff members will be aware of any pupils who are at a substantial disadvantage and will take the appropriate steps to ensure the pupil is effectively supported.

5.13 The Accessibility Plan will detail any barriers which are hindering the opportunities for pupils with SEND. The aim of the plan is to take appropriate measures in order to overcome these barriers, allowing all pupils equal opportunities.

5.14 Wherever possible, teaching staff will adapt their lesson plans and the curriculum to allow all pupils to reach their full potential and receive the support they need.

5.15 The school will ensure that all extracurricular activities are accessible to all pupils and make reasonable adjustments to allow pupils with SEND to participate in all school activities.

6 Admissions

6.10 The school will act in accordance with the Admissions Policy.

6.11 The school will apply the same entry criteria to all pupils and potential pupils.

6.12 The school will strive to not put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at the school.

6.13 All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all opportunities available to any member of the school community.

6.14 Information will be obtained on future pupils in order to facilitate advanced planning.

6.15 Prospective parents of statemented pupils, and pupils with SEND, are invited to a transition meeting prior to the pupil starting school in order to discuss the pupil's specific needs.

7 Curriculum

7.10 The school is committed to providing a healthy environment that enables full curriculum access and values and includes all pupils regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual and emotional needs.

7.11 No pupil is excluded from any aspect of the school curriculum due to their disabilities or impairments.

7.12 The school aims to provide a differentiated curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress.

7.13 The SENDCO and class teacher will work together to adapt a pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP), with advice sought from outside agencies where appropriate, to allow all pupils to reach their full potential.

7.14 Physical education lessons will be adapted, wherever possible, to allow pupils with disabilities to participate in lessons.

7.15 Where areas of the curriculum present challenges for a pupil, these are dealt with on an individual basis.

7.16 The SENDCO and class teacher, in discussion with the pupil and their parents, will ensure that all adjustments possible, in line with common sense and practical application, will be made for any disability or impairment.

7.17 There are established procedures for the identification and support of pupils with SEND in place at the school.

7.18 Detailed pupil information on pupils with SEND are given to relevant staff in order to aid teaching, e.g. transition meetings

7.19 Specialist resources are available for pupils with visual impairments, such a large print reading books.

7.20 Learning support assistants are deployed to support specific literacy, numeracy and speech programmes.

8 Physical environment

8.10 The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff members, parents and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within the school premises.

8.11 There are no parts of the school to which pupils with disabilities have limited or no access to.

8.12 The school has toilet facilities suitable for people with disabilities which are fitted with a handrail and an emergency pull cord.

8.13 There are provisions for nappy changing.

8.14 Where entrances to the school are not flat, a ramp is supplied for access.

8.15 Wide doors are fitted throughout the school to allow for wheelchair access.

8.16 The corridor flooring and lighting is designed to support those who are visually impaired.

9 Monitoring and review

9.10 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when new legislation or guidance concerning equality and disability is published.

9.11 The governing board and headteacher will review the policy in collaboration with the SENDCO.

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

Planning duty 1: Curriculum

	Issue	What	Who	When	Outcome	Review
Short term	Staff members to plan to ensure the curriculum is accessible for all, dependant on their new classes	Audit of the curriculum	Headteacher, teachers, SENCO	Autumn 2023	Management and teaching staff are aware of the accessibility gaps in the curriculum	Summer 2026
Medium term	Ensure all school trips take into account pupils with SEND, including those with a physical focus	Needs of pupils with SEND are incorporated into the trip planning process	Teachers, SENCO	Autumn 2023 – ongoing	Planning of school trips takes into account pupils with SEND	Spring 2026
Long term	Pupils with SEND, including EAL, cannot access lessons as effectively as peers	Provide tablets and other adjustments for pupils with SEND	Headteacher, ICT manager, SENCO	Autumn 2023 – ongoing	Pupils with SEND can access lessons, including EAL	Spring 2026

Planning duty 2: Physical environment

	Issue	What	Who	When	Outcome	Review
Short term	Areas of school's physical environment is not easily accessible to all	Audit of physical environment	Building surveyors	Spring 2026	School is aware of accessibility barriers to its physical environment and will make a plan to address them/plan activities to suit the needs of individuals	Summer 2026
Medium term	Disabled Toilets are not close to all users	Planned placement of individuals requiring access	SBM	Ongoing when relevant	Access to toilets is increased	Ongoing
Long term	Learning environment of pupils with visual impairments is not accessible	Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes	SENCO	Ongoing if relevant	Learning environment is accessible to pupils with visual impairments	Ongoing

Planning duty 3: Information

	Issue	What	Who	When	Outcome	Review
Short term	Management staff do not know whether school information is accessible or not to all parents	Audit of information and delivery procedures	Head Teacher PSA SBM	Spring 2026	School is aware of accessibility gaps to its information delivery procedures	Summer 2026
Medium term	Written information is not accessible to pupils with visual impairments	Provide written information in alternative formats Incorporate appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing and install window blinds	SENCO	Ongoing if relevant	Written information is fully accessible to children with visual impairments	Ongoing
Long term	School website is not accessible to parents with SEND	Audit of website	Head Teacher	Autumn 2025	Website is fully accessible	Autumn 2026