Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST)
Accessibility Policy and Plan for
Sherford Vale School & Nursery

Mission Statement

Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST) holds a deep-seated belief in education and lifelong learning. Effective collaboration, mutual support and professional challenge will underpin our quest to ensure that all of the students and adults we serve are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential and succeed in life.

Person(s) responsible for updating the policy:	Karin Rhodes
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Status:	Statutory

WeST Core Values

- **Collaboration**
  Creating a shared vision and working effectively across boundaries in an equitable and inclusive way to skilfully influence and engage others. Building and securing value from relationships, developing self and others to achieve positive outcomes.
- **Aspiration**
  Having high expectations, modelling the delivery of high-quality outcomes. Showing passion, persistence and resilience in seeking creative solutions to strive for continuous improvement and excellence.
- **Integrity**
  Acting always with the interests of children and young people at our heart, and with a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles. Communicating with transparency and respect, creating a working environment based on trust and honesty.
- **Compassion**
  Recognising need in others and acting with positive intention to promote well-being and improve outcomes.

Providing Accessible Formats

If you require this policy in an accessible format, please contact the Director of Inclusion.

1. Introduction

1.1 Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST) aims to ensure that all pupils, regardless of disabilities or learning needs, have equal access to Sherford Vale School & Nursery. We have high expectations of all of our pupils, and we strive to ensure that each and every pupil can take part in the whole school curriculum. We value the diversity of our school community and celebrate inclusion for all.

1.2 Definition of "disability"

The Equality Act defines a 'disability' as when a person has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities'. This has some overlap with the definition of 'Special Educational Needs' (SEN) in the Children and Families Act (2014) , but not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa. 'Disabled pupils', for the purpose of this policy, refers not only to those pupils with physical disabilities but could include, for example, those with health issues, including mental health, or learning disabilities if they meet the legal definition of 'disability'.

1.3 Expectations of staff

- Ensure that they do not treat a disabled person less favourably than someone else for a reason relating to the person's disability
- Not indirectly discriminate against a pupil with a disability by failing to make a reasonable adjustment when a disabled pupil is placed, or is likely to be placed, at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled
- Implement reasonable adjustments
- Ensure that if a pupil discloses a disability, the member of staff should request their permission, where appropriate, to share this information with relevant colleagues

1.4 This policy covers three aspects:

1.4.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum

This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers entry into the school.

1.4.2 Improving the accessibility of written information

This includes planning approaches by which the school will make written information (e.g., handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about School events) more accessible to pupils with SEND. The delivery of such information will be determined after taking into account pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents and be within a reasonable timeframe.

1.4.3 Improving the physical environment of the school

This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

1.5 The school is committed to meeting legislative requirements, providing access as defined above and nurturing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness. The school will not treat disabled pupils less favourably and will take reasonable steps (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty) to avoid putting disabled pupils at a disadvantage in matters of admission and education. The school allocates adequate resources for the implementation of this policy.

1.6 This policy is written under the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice (updated May 2015) and Schedule 10 of Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') and sets out the school's strategy relating to improving access for disabled pupils, including those with learning difficulties. It draws upon the DfE guidance The Equity Act 2010 (2014).

1.7 This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Statement / Teaching and Learning Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety

2. Reasonable Adjustments

2.1 The duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' does not include a duty to change physical features. It does include a duty to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide auxiliary aids and services where a disabled person would otherwise be put at a substantial disadvantage compared with persons who are not disabled.

2.2 Examples of auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to: hearing loops, adaptive keyboards, special software, and reading pens to support independent access to written information.

3. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum

3.1 When planning, teachers will need to set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to succeed, including pupils with disabilities. They should plan their approaches to teaching and learning so that all pupils can take part in lessons fully and effectively. To create effective learning environments this will include:

• valuing all contributions

• ensuring pupils feel secure and able to contribute appropriately

• ensuring that all forms of bullying will be challenged

3.2 Many pupils with disabilities learn alongside their peers with little need for additional resources beyond the aids which they use as part of their daily life (e.g. a wheelchair, a hearing aid or equipment to aid vision). However, teachers must take account of potential barriers to learning and, where necessary, ensure in their planning that they make provision to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to participate as fully and effectively as possible in the curriculum and assessment activities. This may include adapting / modifying resources and / or making them more accessible. For example, providing soft copies / printed copies of teaching material, ensuring font sizes and reproduced materials are fully accessible, etc. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset of work. Also, during assessments, teachers should bear in mind that reasonable adjustments may need to be made to support individual pupils.

3.3 Curriculum planning and assessment for pupils with SEND must take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil. Disabled pupils may need access to specialist equipment and approaches or to alternative or adapted activities, consistent with school-based intervention augmented by advice and support from external specialists. Teachers should work closely with the SENDCO and, where appropriate, representatives of other agencies who may be supporting the pupil.

3.4 Teachers plan inclusive learning with high expectations and accessible resources (e.g., soft copies, appropriate font sizes, colour contrast).

- Potential barriers are identified and addressed at the outset; adjustments are considered for assessments.
- Teachers work closely with the SENDCo and external agencies as appropriate.
- Specialist aids/equipment, adult/peer support, adapted tasks or alternative activities are used where necessary.

3.5 Teachers should also take specific action to enable the effective participation of pupils with disabilities, for example by:

- planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for the satisfactory completion of tasks, for example by:
  - taking account of the very slow pace at which, some pupils will be able to record work, either manually or with specialist equipment, and of the physical effort required
  - being aware of the high levels of concentration necessary for some pupils when following or interpreting text or graphics, particularly when using vision aids or tactile methods, and of the tiredness which may result
  - allocating sufficient time, opportunity and access to equipment for pupils to gain information through experimental work and detailed observation
  - being aware of the effort required by some pupils to follow oral work, whether through use of residual hearing, lip reading or a signer, and of the tiredness or loss of concentration which may occur.
- planning opportunities, where necessary, for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum, for example by:
  - providing adapted, modified or alternative activities or approaches to learning in physical education and ensuring that these have integrity and equivalence to the curriculum and enable pupils to make appropriate progress
  - providing alternative or adapted activities in science, art and design and design and technology for pupils who are unable to manipulate tools, equipment or materials or who may be allergic to certain types of materials
  - ensuring that all pupils can be included and participate safely in fieldwork, local studies and visits to museums, historic buildings and sites, etc.
- identifying aspects of the curriculum that may present specific difficulties for individuals.

3.6 Sports

Sherford Vale School will make plans to consider the provision for disabled pupils. Where a pupil cannot access a specific activity, teachers will provide adapted, modified or alternative activities of equivalent integrity; provide specific support; and carefully manage any medical considerations.

3.7 Drama

Sherford Vale School & Nursery has a hall that is fully accessible for pupils with disabilities, and this space is used for Drama and performance-based activities. Where required, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure safe and inclusive participation, including adaptations to space, lighting, sound, and movement-based tasks.

3.8 Recreational activities and school clubs
Recreational areas for break and lunchtimes are accessible. Sherford Vale School offers alternative support for pupils who find unstructured times challenging. The school ensures that clubs and societies are inclusive through reasonable adjustments where required.

3.9 For further information, see the Curriculum and Teaching & Learning Policies.

4. Improving the accessibility of written information

4.1 Written information provided to pupils covers a wide range of areas (e.g., textbooks, worksheets, visual presentations). Accessibility is considered when procuring new equipment to meet current and future needs where reasonable.

4.2 Beyond curriculum materials (e.g., timetables, letters, newsletters, Class Dojo messages), information will be provided in accessible ways on request within a reasonable timeframe, recognising that different pupils may require different arrangements.

4.3 Accessibility for all learners is considered when introducing and setting up new ICT hardware and software.

4.4 Assistive technology: Where appropriate, SVS provides access to assistive technologies that support reading and comprehension. This includes the use of reading pens for pupils who require them as part of their reasonable adjustments to access written information, including classroom texts, worksheets and assessments.

5. Improving the physical environment of the school

5.1 Although the duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' does not include a duty to change physical features, the school has a planning duty which includes physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services.

5.2 Wheelchair users
Sherford Vale School & Nursery is built on a single level, allowing step-free access to all internal areas. The MUGA is accessed via steps at the main entrance point; however, an alternative sloped walkway is available through the bottom access, ensuring that wheelchair users and others with mobility needs can safely and independently access the MUGA.

6. Support for Specific Areas of Need

6.1 Teachers will make subject-specific adjustments as required (e.g., approaches for hearing or visual impairment; adapted activities in PE, science, art and design, and design & technology).

For example, by:

• using approaches to enable hearing-impaired pupils to learn about sound in science and music

• helping visually impaired pupils to learn about light in science, to access maps and visual resources in geography and to evaluate different products in design and technology and images in art and design

• providing opportunities for pupils to develop strength in depth where they cannot meet the particular requirements of a subject, such as the visual requirements in art and design and the singing requirements in music

• adjusting or discounting these aspects in appropriate individual cases when required to make a judgement or academic attainment.

6.2 Access Arrangements

The school's policy and procedures with regard to Access Arrangements in Entrance Examinations and Public Examinations are outlined in the following policies:

• Admissions Policy

• SEND Policy

6.3 Working with external advisers: Parents can contact the SENDCo or Family Support Advisor; the school engages external services (e.g., medical practitioners, Educational Psychologists) and has access to support through WeST.

6.4 Health and Safety: PEEPs are maintained for pupils/staff with specific needs; evacuation procedures are reviewed and revised to incorporate their needs.

6.5 For further information about provision for pupils with SEND, please see the SEND Policy.

7. Staff Training

7.1 Staff training and development ensure that teachers and support staff can provide effectively for pupils with a range of disabilities.

7.2 Training may include: ensuring access to text and supporting delivery of information across physical, hearing and visual impairments (using different media); differentiation and/or

scaffolding; and developing ICT-based resources/templates that make teaching/resources more accessible.

Appendix 1 – Accessibility Plan 2026–27

Access Statement	Evidence of compliance	Further Action Needed
1. Facility Access		
1.1 Size and layout of school allows access for all pupils (all classrooms, assembly hall, playgrounds, library, intervention rooms, toilets).	Single-storey site with step-free internal routes; accessible toilets/medical space.	Publish updated site map with accessible routes on the website as needed.
1.2 Pupils who use wheelchairs can move around the school without encountering barriers to access.	Disabled toilets Medical room Fully accessible site	
1.3 Pedestrian and vehicle routes are appropriately signed and risks minimised for all users.	Disabled parking bays provided; paths kept clear of obstructions.	
1.4 Emergency and evacuation alarms are audible in all buildings.	Audible alarm system; escape routes identified; regular emergency drills.	
1.5 Adequate and adjustable lighting in pupil and staff areas.	Routine maintenance; emergency lighting tested.	
1.6 Signs/displays designed for visual impairment, epilepsy or autism.	Signage follows best-practice; displays aim for low cognitive load.	
1.7 Rooms consider needs of hearing-impaired pupils.	Seating plans as needed; radio aids supported where required.	Seek advice from Hearing Impairment team as needed.
1.8 Rooms have furniture to match users' needs.	Age-appropriate furniture; adjustable options available as needed.	
1.9 Classrooms organised to meet needs of disabled pupils.	Clear routes; seating plans; accessible resources.	Include accessibility checks in regular learning walks.
Access Statement	**Evidence of compliance**	**Further Action Needed**
2. Curriculum Accessibility		
2.1 Lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve.	Planning and observations show inclusive practice and adaptation; targeted interventions in place.	

2.2 Lessons are responsive to pupil diversity.	Planning reflects diversity and inclusion.	
2.3 Lessons include individual, group and whole-class work.	Evidenced in observations.	
2.4 All pupils have the opportunity to engage in all subjects, including PE.	Curriculum planning evidences inclusion and safe participation.	
2.5 Access to technology including computers and software is appropriate to need.	Assistive software per need; dyslexia-friendly slides used; reading pens available. PowerPoints are dyslexia friendly	
2.6 School trips are accessible to all pupils.	Trip planning and risk assessments consider disability inclusivity; residential venues checked for access.	
2.7 School liaises with external agencies to identify need, provide advice and supply aids.	Regular contact with specialist services; provisions sourced as needed.	
Access Statement	**Evidence of compliance**	**Further Action Needed**
3. Staff Training		
3.1 Staff have a range of skills to support varied disabilities.	Training needs are identified and undertaken as required. School, Trust and external INSET.	
3.2 Staff allow for additional time/effort required by some pupils.	Planning reflects barriers and adjustments.	
3.3 Staff have high expectations for all pupils.	Termly progress monitoring in place.	
3.4 Staff seek to remove barriers to learning and participation.	Inclusive classroom organisation observed.	
3.5 Lessons/meetings presented in accessible formats.	Communication tailored to audience needs; alternative formats on request.	