

Annan School

**Equality, Disability and Access Statements
And
Accessibility Plan**

Version: 01/26

Next full revision: November 2028

Reviewed by: Debby Hunter

Reviewed on: 01/11/25

EQUALITY AND DISABILITY STATEMENT and ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

School Commitment to Equality

At Annan School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, sex (as defined by the Supreme Court in April 2025), disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, age or background.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality, by challenging bullying and stereotypes and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

At Annan, we believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

Framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the school's obligations under the following legislation and guidance:

- Equality Act 2010 (as amended, including the 2025 interpretation of 'sex' by the UK Supreme Court)
- Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021, as amended)
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)

Under the school's duty to comply with the Act, and to meet its aspirations as an inclusive school, the school will make **'reasonable adjustments' (anticipatory and responsive)** to ensure disabled pupils are not disadvantaged compared to their peers.

Employment (Updated 2025)

The school recognises its duty not to discriminate against job applicants or employees in any area of employment. From October 2024, the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act strengthens the school's responsibility to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. The school will take all reasonable steps to create a safe and respectful environment for all staff.

The Equality Act 2010

A person is covered by the Equality Act if they have one or more of the 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Act.

Protected Characteristics in a school

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Age (staff)
- Marriage and civil partnership (staff/employment)

Responsibilities

- The Proprietors, Principal and staff recognise their responsibilities under the Equality Act to eliminate discrimination.
- The Proprietors are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities and for implementing the Equality Policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, are given appropriate training and support, and for taking appropriate action in any case of unlawful discrimination.
- Staff training will be provided regularly on equality, inclusion, disability awareness, unconscious bias and safeguarding to ensure full understanding of responsibilities.

Policy and planning

Equality of opportunity will be considered whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

Annan School will:

- Promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes towards all children, staff and other people if they have one or more of the 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Act;
- Eliminate discrimination and harassment defined by the Equality Act 2010, including sexual harassment under the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023; promote positive attitudes towards disability and diversity;
- Endeavour to make the school a welcoming place for all ethnic and national groups represented in the community;
- Ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- Encourage participation by disabled children in all aspects of school life;
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment;
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled children are not disadvantaged compared to their peers;
- Have due regard to disabled children's progress.

Disability Statement

Under the Equalities Act a disability is defined as:

'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'

The definition is designed to be as broad as possible and there are a wide variety of conditions and impairments covered.

Some impairments automatically meet the definition from the point of diagnosis, such as cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis. People registered as blind or partially sighted are also automatically regarded as disabled under the Act.

If a person meets this definition they will be protected if someone discriminates against them because of their impairment.

There is no need for a medically diagnosed cause for the impairment; what matters is the long-term adverse effect of the impairment on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Reasonable adjustment

Under the school's duty to comply with the Act, and to meet its aspirations as an inclusive school, the school will make 'reasonable adjustments' (anticipatory and responsive) to ensure disabled children are not disadvantaged compared to their peers.

The Equality Act does not say what is 'reasonable'. What is reasonable in one set of circumstances may not be reasonable in another.

Reasonable adjustment may relate to a physical adjustment such as rearranging the furniture of a room to accommodate a child who is partially sighted. Or it may relate to the provision of material or aids such as a physio cushion for a child with sensory needs. Additionally, it could include making adjustments to class organisation to allow a child to be in an environment more suited to their ability or developmental needs.

Adjustments may include:

Physical adjustments to the environment (e.g., classroom layout)

Provision of aids or specialist equipment

Modifications to teaching or classroom organisation

The following factors are likely to be taken into account when considering whether adjustments are reasonable:

- The effectiveness of making the adjustment. Will it be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage suffered by the disabled child?
- The practicality of the adjustment;
- The financial resources of the school and cost of making the adjustment;
- The availability of grants, loans and other assistance to disabled children, such as DSAs, local authority funding;
- The extent to which aids and services will be provided to disabled children from other sources;
- Health and safety requirement;
- The relevant interests of other children – for example if the adjustment results in significant disadvantage for other children.

Employment

The school recognises its duty not to discriminate against job applicants or employees. All areas of employment are covered including:

- recruitment and advertising
- employment contracts
- pay and benefits
- promotion and training
- dismissal and redundancy

The school will follow the detailed guidelines regarding staff recruitment set out in our staff recruitment policy. From October 2024, the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act strengthens the school's responsibility to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

Complaints or failure to comply

Complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's Equality Policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g. complaints relating to staff may be investigated either under the disciplinary or grievance procedure as appropriate). All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously.

The school will set measurable equality objectives at least every four years. Progress will be monitored annually by the Proprietors and Senior Leadership Team. Objectives will aim to promote positive outcomes for pupils and staff with protected characteristics.

Review

This policy is monitored by the Proprietors and staff of the school and will be reviewed for changes in procedures and statutory guidelines in accordance with the school's policy review guidelines.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Aim of the Accessibility Plan and Access Statement

Annan School is committed to ensuring that all children, staff, parents, and visitors, including those with disabilities, can fully participate in school life. We aim to provide an inclusive, safe, and supportive environment where barriers to learning and participation are actively removed.

To achieve our intentions Annan School will

Make reasonable adjustments to the school's physical environment, including classrooms, outdoor spaces, and pathways.

Review health, safety, and emergency procedures to ensure accessibility for all, including evacuation arrangements.

Increase awareness of barriers to access, including spatial, sensory, and environmental considerations.

Maintain open communication with parents and prospective parents regarding accessibility needs.

Regularly review policies and practices to ensure inclusivity.

Provide staff training to meet the needs of all children and adults within the school community.

Plan trips and extra-curricular activities to be as inclusive as possible.

Ensure all children can participate in curricular and extra-curricular activities wherever reasonably possible.

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 he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her 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 disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

Our previous three-year plans from 2011

Our three-year plan (2011-14)

- Our 2011-14 three-year plan focussed in particular on the EYFS. This included a £25,000 project to create an accessible garden - designed and part-funded in consultation with the Inclusion team at East Sussex County Council. This has been further developed with accessible growing beds being incorporated into the kindergarten garden. The layout of the Infant garden has been planned to incorporate free flow activities accessible by all children in the Infant House. The toilets are accessible from the building and include a compliant disabled facility.

Our three-year plan (2014-17)

- Our 2014-17 three-year plan had particular focus on the KS2 provision. This included the construction of an architect designed Junior Building (Keilhau) where access was a requirement of the design. It has incorporated no internal thresholds, full opening doors to all area and new compliant toilet facilities within the building. The design layout included open access cloakrooms to increase independent access to these facilities. In addition, the outside has been level-paved around the building to ensure all outside areas can be accessed. This has been supported by fundraising.

- Further areas of the plan included a new level tarmac playground, disabled parking and drop off facility and a re-surfaced drive between the car park and school.
- The final phase of the three-year plan (2016-17) was to increase the access to the outdoor learning environment. This included designing an 'on-site' wildlife area for forest school, activities. This was planned by the children together with a Forest School design consultant. The project included level (woodchip) paths clearly defined around the site, fencing the pond area incorporating a 'safe' decking area to view the pond, and access to equipment and materials within the area to enable all children access to forest school type activities.

Our three-year plan (2018-2021)

- School employed the services of an outside agency (Council for Disabled Children) to review the school policies, in particular the Equality and Disability Statement, the Access Statement and Accessibility Plan and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy.
- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the school proprietors advised on ways to ensure that the policies incorporate best practice and the school's ambitions for its disabled pupils.
- In the light of this review, policies updated to ensure they are fully compliant with the Equalities Act (2010), reflect best practice and make the school as inclusive as possible.

Our three-year plan (2022-2025)

Reviewed the whole school curriculum to ensure accessibility for children with a range of disabilities.

- Integrated awareness of disability into chosen areas of the curriculum.
- Outcome: Successfully implemented across identified curriculum areas.
- Introduced touch-typing programs and other software.
- Individualised laptops with accessibility settings where possible.
- Weekly newsletter to online format for improved readability, links, and translation options.
- Reviewed documentation for parents and visitors (handbook, prospectus) to reflect accessibility aspirations.
- Reviewed the online pupil portal (Blick!) for accessibility, included in Distance Learning Policy.

Our current three-year plan (2025-2028)

Strand 1: Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- To consider the whole school curriculum in relation to the aspirations of this plan. This will be led the School Curriculum Lead in conjunction with others with curriculum expertise within the school.
- To ensure that the curriculum can be accessed by children with a range of disabilities.
- To ensure that awareness of disability is developed through the curriculum.

Lead: Alastair Leigh (Curriculum Lead), Ania Smith (Learning Support/SendCo)

Strand 2: Physical Environment and Safety

- Provide more sensory break-out spaces for pupils who need quiet, low-stimulation areas.
- Introduce new climbing and brain-break equipment to support children's motor skills, self-regulation, and conditions such as dyspraxia in KS2.

Lead: Ania Smith (Learning Support/SendCo), Debby Hunter (Principal).

Strand 3: Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff parents and visitors

- Online newsletters and learning platforms to remain accessible, with adjustable text size and text only version if parents want a translation option.
- School registration forms to give parents opportunity to share their accessibility needs.
- Parents offered a verbal summary of information given to visitors when signing in.

Lead: Lucie Hunter (Communications Lead)

Review

This plan is reviewed annually. The current three-year cycle will be reviewed in September 2028. The plan will also be reviewed if there are changes to the current legislation.

Current review dated: 01/10/25

Effective date: September 2025 (3YP)

Next Full Review date: September 2028

Reviewed by: Debby Hunter