The Polesworth School
ENSURING EXCELLENCE

Accessibility Plan

Member of leadership team with lead responsibility for oversight and update of policy	ROS
Approved by Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)	November 2024
Approved by School Standards Committee (SSC)	December 2024
Policy review cycle	Biennially
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1. Aims of this policy

The aims of this Accessibility Plan are to ensure that The Polesworth School continues to work towards increasing the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors to the school. The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students

This involves providing access and opportunities for all students without discrimination of any kind. The Polesworth School is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals able bodied or disabled and, on a continuous basis, will work towards improving access to the physical environment, to the curriculum and to the provision of information in order to ensure access for all.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues. The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan. We work closely with the Local Authority, feeder schools and other organisations to ensure that we are informed of any difficulties that students may have in accessing the school site.

2. Relevant legislation

This policy 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 students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

3. School context and values

The Polesworth School is a large rural 11-18 secondary school in North Warwickshire

Our values are underpinned by a core set of principles that shape and define the way we work with the students in our care and the community we serve.

They can be thought of as our 'non-negotiables' – beliefs, expectations and standards that underpin how we work with the young people in our care, and the community we serve. We believe that if we work in the context of these values, students will achieve more than they ever thought possible. They have evolved following a sustained period of success for Polesworth.

A teenager of today has the world at their fingertips. We have a responsibility to equip young people with a local, national and global knowledge and understanding. It will only be through education that the right questions will be asked and understanding and tolerance achieved. The young people of today must be part of the solution.

Our Young People

We value three main types of achievement for our young people, and the vision for Polesworth is that we ensure our students are empowered to achieve to a consistently outstanding level.

Achievement – Academic: We believe all young people have the potential to achieve great things. Intelligence can be developed regardless of emotional, academic and social background, given high quality teaching and bespoke, personalised support. They should be equipped with a crucial sense of belief based on a well-developed self-awareness and an ambition for themselves and for the local and global communities in which they live and work.
Achievement – Personal: All young people achieve things they can be proud of every day outside our school's planned curriculum in addition to academic success. We have a vital role in ensuring individuals develop their own talents and interests and have a responsibility to instill in them a sense of pride in who they are and what they can and do achieve.
Achievement – Social: Excellent relationships for learning are a prerequisite for all other achievements. Relationships that engender mutual respect between young people and all other members of our school, local and global communities will ensure learning can be fun in a disciplined and caring environment where the highest expectations of behaviour, courtesy, manners and respect are the norm.

Our Staff

Our values extend to how we challenge, support and work with each other. All staff (support and teaching) play a crucial role in the education of young people. We all understand how our work has a direct influence on the life chances of the young people in our care. In the same way that we all have a duty of care to them, we have a duty of care to each other and have regard for each other's professional and personal well-being. We are the keeper of each other's reputation.

All members of the staff community see themselves as learners. They are empowered to make decisions, be creative and to lead. Mutual respect pervades all relationships, working together to enhance professional learning and practice and collaboration; collegiality and a sense of team identifies how all staff work together. All staff have clarity and certainty about the direction our school is taking and all staff contribute to that vision. Staff co-operate with each other and are not in competition with each other – they are part of a team that ensures Polesworth strengthens its position as a great school.

Key terms/abbreviations

SLT – Strategic Leadership Team
SENDCO – Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator
DHT – Deputy Head Teacher
VI – Visual Impairment
HI – Hearing Impairment

4. Accessibility actions

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim	Current good practice *Include established practice and practice under development*	Objectives *State short, medium and long-term objectives as appropriate*	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	Our school offers a differentiated curriculum while maintaining the principle that students should not be forced into choices due to disability. We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum based on advice from the SENDCO and external agencies such as the Specialist Teaching Service and the Educational Psychologist Service Curriculum progress is tracked for all pupils, including those with a disability. Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs. These are reviewed on a yearly basis and discussed by DHT (Curriculum and Student Progress) and SENDCO.	Short term Continue to recruit and train appropriate staff to deliver quality first teaching that is responsive to individual needs. Ensure that all staff have the relevant information and training to support specific needs of individual students. Medium term Ensure that there are no barriers to access of the wider curriculum and educational visits.	Advice from SENDCO and external agencies to teaching staff regarding the delivery to identified students. Staff training to keep practice up to date – Compliance training delivered as and when needed Review the curriculum offer and sequencing for all students. Audit the wider curriculum and educational visits. Review educational visits policy to ensure that it reflects staff	SLT SENDCO Curriculum leaders	Ongoing	Students access core knowledge in all subjects through appropriate teaching allowing them to make expected or better progress. Staff are confident at using suggested strategies from the SEND toolkit Students benefit from an adapted delivery of curriculum appropriate to needs. No barriers preventing all students from engaging with the wider curriculum.

	The curriculum is reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.		taking account of SEND students.			
Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	Reasonable adaptions to the school environment to promote accessibility. This includes: • Wheelchair access to all buildings including ramps and lifts • Replacing existing doors with automatic opening where ever possible • Lifts/Platform lifts in allow access to all areas of the school except MFL/Sociology classrooms first floor Editha • Corridor width is suitable for wheelchair users • Disabled parking bays • Disabled toilets • Library shelves at wheelchair-accessible height • Edges of steps and bollards painted to have a 20 shade difference to distinguish them.	Short term All Staff & students with specific needs have all the appropriate equipment and furniture they need. Timetables for identified staff & students are continually checked to ensure allocated classrooms are accessible i.e. Wheelchair users not timetabled in upper floor classrooms with no lift access. Medium term Maintain yellow step edges and bollards to support students and visitors with VI Long term Ensure that all new buildings and rooms within them	Purchase of equipment and furniture as required Staff are informed and updated of all staff & students with mobility issues and create a suitable timetable to meet their need. All external areas to be included, ongoing maintenance of existing warning fixtures and strips. Checked and maintained all year round. New plans to be monitored closely to	Business Manager SENDCO DHT SENDCO Timetabler Assistant School Business Manager SLT	Ongoing Annually Ongoing As required	Students access all areas of the curriculum allowing them to make expected or better progress towards the school's curriculum intent. All identified staff & students are timetabled in appropriate classrooms to meet their needs All staff & students and visitors with VI are able to navigate successfully around school safely

	• Personal evacuation plans for identified vulnerable students.	allow for independent access	ensure compliance with building and Equality Act regulations.			All staff & students are able to independently access all areas of school both internally and externally
Improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff and visitors with a disability	Our school uses a range of communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This includes: • Internal signage • Large print resources • Pictorial or symbolic representations on signage around the site and on the website • Use of different colours as and when needed	Short term Ensure that all staff have the relevant information and training to support specific needs of individual staff & students. Medium term Ensure that school information is presented in the clearest way possible. Ensure that VI and HI students can be alerted to school alarms independently.	Advice from SENDCO and external agencies to teaching staff regarding the delivery to identified students. Review the accessibility of information with visitors, parents, staff and students by asking for feedback. Consider improvements that would address feedback such as hearing induction loops training staff in BSL Constant review of the needs of SEND register for VI and HI students. Investigate alert devices as needed.	SENDCO Teaching staff SLT SENDCO Business Manager	Ongoing Annually Annually	Students access core knowledge in all subjects through appropriate teaching allowing them to make expected or better progress. Staff are confident at using suggested strategies. All visitors, parents, students and staff can access all school information. HI and VI students can be more independent within a safe environment

5. Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every two years but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be approved by the Strategic Leadership Team of the School and the Local Governing Board.

6. Links with other policies

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

- Health and Safety policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Special educational needs and Disabilities (SEND) report
- Equality policy
- Equality information
- Equality Objectives statement

Appendix 1 - Accessibility audit

A - APPROACH and CAR PARKING

		RAG	Notes
A01.	Is the building within convenient distance of a public highway?		
A02.	Is the building within convenient distance of public transport?		
A03.	Is the building within convenient distance of car parking?		
A04.	Is the route clearly marked/found?		
A05.	Is the route free of kerbs?		The approach to visitor carparking and Reception entrance is kerb free.
A06.	Is the surface smooth and slip resistant?		
A07.	Is the route wide enough?		
A08.	Is it free of such hazards as bollards, litter bins, outward opening windows and doors or overhanging projections?		The approach to visitor car parking and Reception entrance is free of bollards, bins etc. Where windows open outwards the path ways are wider, litter bins are strategically place to reduce the any hazards.
A09.	Is it adequately lit?		
A10.	Is it identified by visual,		
A11.	Is there car parking for people with reduced mobility?		
A12.	Is the car parking clearly marked out, signed, easily found and kept free from misuse?		
A13.	Is the car parking as near the entrance as possible?		
A14.	Is the car parking area suitably surfaced?		
A15.	Is the route to the building kept free of snow, ice and fallen leaves?		
A16.	Is the route level? (ie. no gradient steeper than 1:20 and no steps)		Where there is a gradient steeper than 1:20 or steps there is an alternative route to get to the location required.

B – ROUTES AND EXTERNAL LEVEL CHANGE INCLUDING RAMPS AND STEPS

		RAG	Notes
B01.	Is there a ramp, with level surfaces at top and bottom?		
B02.	Is it wide enough and suitably graded?		
B03.	Is the surface slip resistant?		

B04.	Are there kerbs and are there edges protected to prevent accidents?		
B05.	Are there handrails?		
B06.	Are there alternative routes?		

B07.	Identified by visual/tactile information?		Some step edging needs to be repainted to give a the 20 shading difference to highlight the edge of the step.
B08.	Are there handrails to one or both sides?		
B10.	Are ramps and steps adequately lit?		
B11.	Are treads and risers consistent in depth and height?		
B12.	Are all nosings marked and/or readily identifiable? (delete)		
B13.	Are landings of adequate size and are they provided at intermediate levels in long flights?		
B14.	If safe and convenient ramps and steps cannot be provided is vertical movement by powered means an alternative?		Lifts available in 4 buildings

C – ENTRANCES, INCLUDING RECEPTION

		RAG	Notes
C01.	Is the door clearly distinguishable from the facade?		
C02.	If glass is it visible when closed?		
C03.	Does the clear door opening or one leaf when opened permit passage of a wheelchair or double buggy?		
C04.	Does it have a level or flush threshold, and a recessed matwell? (delete)		
C05.	Is there visibility through the door/way from both sides at standing and seated levels?		
C06.	Is there a minimum 300mm wide wheelchair manoeuvre space beside the leading edge of the door to clear door swing?		
C07.	Can the door furniture be used at both standing and seated height?		Reception Desk is DDA complaint for both standing and seated. Adjustable desks in Science and Technology.
C08.	Can it be easily grasped and operated?		Reception Desk is compliant.
C09.	If the door has a closer mechanism does it have:		
	(A) slow-action closer?		
C10.	If the door is power-operated does it have visual and tactile information?		

C11.	If the door is security-protected is the system suitable for use by and within reach of people with sensory or mobility impairments?		
C12.	If there is a lobby, do the inner and outer doors meet the same criteria?		
C13.	Do lobby layouts enable all users to clear one door before going through the next?		
C14.	Are signs designed and positioned to inform those with visual impairments and wheelchair users with reduced eye-levels?		
C15.	Does the lighting installation take account of the needs of visually disabled people?		

C16.	Are floor surfaces:		Yes
	(a) slip-resistant, even when wet?		
	(b) of a quality that is sympathetic to acoustics – i.e. not so "hard" as to cause acoustic confusion?		Medical room, changing room and toilets flooring is Altro flooring or similar
	(c) firm for wheelchair manoeuvre?		
C17.	Are junctions between floor surfaces arranged in a way that avoids presenting tripping hazards and causing visual confusion?		
C18.	Is any reception point suitable for approach and use from both sides by people in standing and seated positions?		
C19.	Is it fitted with an induction loop?		An induction loop was not required by either staff or students at this stage and had never been requested by a visitor. I the becomes a requirement a portal hearing loop will be purchased.
C20.	For those progressing to other parts of the building is information provided by signs?		

D – HORIZONTAL MOVEMENT AND ASSEMBLY

		RAG	Notes
D01.	Is each corridor/passageway/aisle wide enough for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre and for other people to pass?		
D02.	Is each corridor, etc, free from obstruction to wheelchair users and from hazards to people with impaired vision?		

D03.	Do any lobbies allow users, (inc. w.ch. users) to clear one door before approaching the next with minimal manoeuvre?		
D04.	Is turning space available for w.ch. users?		
D05.	Do natural and artificial lighting avoid glare and silhouetting?		
D06.	Are there visual clues for orientation?		
D07.	Do floor surfaces:		
	(a) allow ease of movement for wheelchair users?		
	(b) avoid light reflection and sound reverberation?		
D08.	Do textured surfaces convey useful information for people with impaired vision?		

D09.	Are direction or information signs (inc means of escape) visible from both sitting and standing eye levels, and are they in upper and lower case, and large enough type to be read by those with impaired vision?		
D10.	Are there tactile signs and information for those with impaired vision?		Some areas but not all
D11.	Is the maintenance of these items checked regularly?		
D12.	Is lighting designed to meet a wide range of needs?		
D13.	Is sufficient circulation space allowed for wheelchair users?		
D14.	Is it maintained clear of obstructions which could create hazards for people with visual disabilities?		
D15.	Are seating arrangements/spaces suitable for use by people with visual disabilities?		
D16.	Are all areas for assembly/meeting equipped with an induction loop system?		Not currently needed
D17.	If the use of an induction loop system is precluded is an infra-red system in place?		Not currently needed
D18.	Is the functioning and operation of the induction loop or infra-red system checked regularly?		Not currently needed
D19.	Are telephones fitted with inductive loop couplers?		Yes from Feb 2025
D20.	Is a minicom available for use by people with hearing disabilities?		Not currently needed

E – VERTICAL MOVEMENT AND INTERNAL LEVEL CHANGE

		RAG	Notes
E01.	Is the location of any step/stairs/ramp clearly indicated by use of sign/colour/contrast/texture fighting? (delete)		
E02.	Does any step/stairs/ramp have a handrail to one/both side(s), and do(es) it/they extend 300mm beyond the top and bottom of any flight? (delete)		
E03.	Is any level change clearly lit?		Yes - all changes in levels clearly lit

E04.	Is the pitch (risers & treads) of step/stairs or any ramp consistent, and are nosings clearly identifiable? (delete)		Yes – carpeted steps have metal nosing's
E05.	If there are landings are they large enough to permit passing and turning manoeuvres, and are they provided in any long flight?		
E06.	Is any short rise within a single storey ramped; if so is the ramped surface indicated, and is it slip-resistant?		No internal short rise ramps onsite
E07.	Are all ramp gradients easily negotiated? [Range length 3m max = 1 in 12, 6m max = 1 in 26, 10m max = 1 in 20]		No internal ramps. Steps provided to all changes in levels
E08.	If a permanent ramp cannot be provided (perhaps a listed Building) can a moveable ramp be made available?		N/A
E09.	Are steps available as an alternative to any ramp or ramped surface?		

E10.	Where level change is less than a full storey in height is a power-operated system appropriate? (Platform Lift/Stairlift/Lift - see 11, 12 & 13)? (delete)		Lifts available in – Nethersole, Drayton & Bramcote – Platform lift in Editha
E11.	Platform Lift (delete)		Editha only
	(a) Are the controls at both levels identifiable, and reachable from sitting and standing levels? (delete)		
	(b) Is the platform adequate for wheelchair use and manoeuvre.		
	(c) In the event of a power failure does the platform return to lower level?		
	(d) Is the equipment maintained and its operation checked regularly?		All lifts are Maintained regularly by external contractor as per manufacturer requirements
E12.	Stairlift (delete)		N/A
	(a) Are the controls at all levels identifiable, and reachable from sitting and standing levels? (delete)		N/A
	(b) Is the platform adequate for wheelchair use and manoeuvre?		N/A
	(c) Is approach convenient and safe at all appropriate landings? (delete)		N/A
	(d) Does the stairlift have a 'Soft-Start' action?		N/A
	(e) When not in use is the platform powered to fold away to avoid obstruction?		N/A
	(f) In the event of a power failure does the platform return to lower level?		N/A
	(g) Is the equipment maintained and its operation checked regularly?		N/A
E13.	Lift		
	(a) Is the lift's location clearly defined by visual and tactile information? (delete)		Bramcote, Goodere, Drayton & Nethersole
	(b) Are controls at all floors visible, identifiable and reachable from sitting and standing levels? (delete)		
	(c) Is there adequate, unobstructed space at each floor lift entry for wheelchair manoeuvre?		

(d) Does the lift door open widely enough for wheelchair user access?		
(e) Does door operation allow slow entry and exit?		
(f) Do the lift car internal dimensions allow sufficient space for a wheelchair user and carer? (delete)		Bramcote, Goodere & Nethersole only
(g) Does the car have appropriate support rails?		
(h) Are the lift car controls. inc. emergency call, located within reach of all users and with visual and tactile information?		
(i) Is there audible floor indication?		
(j) Is the lift an 'Evacuation Lift? (see section J – MEANS OF ESCAPE)		No – Lifts not to be used during an evacuation
(k) Is the lift regularly maintained and its functional operation routinely checked?		All lifts are Maintained regularly by external contractor as per manufacturer requirements

F - DOORS

		RAG	Notes
F01.	Do the doors serve a functional/safety purpose? (delete)		
F02.	Can they be readily distinguished?		
F03.	If glass, are they visible when shut?		
F04.	Can people standing or sitting in a wheelchair see each other, and be seen from either side of the door? (delete)		
F05.	Does the clear opening width permit wheelchair access?		
F06.	On the opening side of the door is there sufficient space (300mm) to allow the door handle to be grasped and the door swung past a wheelchair footplate?		
F07.	Is any door furniture/handle at a height for standing/sitting use? (delete)		
F08.	Are door/handles clearly distinguished?		
F09.	Can the door furniture/handles be easily operated/grasped? (delete)		
F10.	If door closers/mechanisims are fitted do they provide the following: (delete)		
	(a) security linkage?		
	(b) delay-action closure?		
	(c) slow-action closure?		
	(d) minimum closure pressure?		All Automatic doors are complaint.
F11.	Is door/mechanism function checked regularly?		Annual door inspection is in place

G - LAVATORIES

		RAG	Notes
G01.	Is WC provision made for people with disabilities?		
G02.	Do all lavatory areas have slip-resistant floors?		
G03.	Are they easy to distinguish by colour contrast from walls?		
G04.	Are all fittings readily distinguishable from their background?		
G05.	Are all door fittings/locks easily gripped and operated?		
G06.	Can ambulant disabled people manoeuvre and raise and lower themselves in standard cubicles?		
G07.	Is provision made for wheelchair users? If so:		
G08.	Is wheelchair approach free of steps/narrow doors/obstructions, etc? (delete)		
G09.	Is the location clearly signed?		
G10.	Is there sufficient space at entry to the compartment for wheelchair manoeuvre and door opening?		
G11.	Are the door fittings/locks and light switches easily reached and operated?		
G12.	Is there an emergency call system and is someone designated to respond?		

G13.	Can the emergency call system be operated from floor level?		
G14.	Is the wheelchair WC compartment large enough to permit manoeuvre for frontal lateral/angled/backward transfer, with or without assistance? (delete)		
G15.	Are the fittings arranged to facilitate these manoeuvres?		
G16.	Are handwashing and drying facilities within reach of someone seated on the WC?		
G17.	Is the tap appropriate for use by someone with limited dexterity, grip or strength?		
G18.	Are suitable grab rails fitted in all the appropriate positions to facilitate use of the WC?		
G19.	Is the manoeuvring area free of obstruction, eg boxed-in pipework/radiators/cleaner's equipment/disposal bins/ occasional storage, etc., and is any difficulty caused by the activity of service contractors? (delete)		
G20.	If there is more than one standard layout WC compartment provided, are they handed to offer a left-sided approach and a right-sided approach?	N/A	

H – FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

		RAG	Notes
H01.	Is any servery/counter accessible to all users, including those with hearing impairments?		
H02.	If the building has fixed seating are there also associated spaces for wheelchair users and at regular intervals on long routes?	N/A	
H03.	Is it possible for wheelchair users and people with other disabilities to approach and use all vending machines/drinking water dispensers, etc?		
H04.	Is it possible for people with disabilities to serve as volunteers?		
H05.	Are all fittings readily distinguishable from their background?		
H06.	Where there are display stands, bookstalls etc. are they visible/reachable/accessible by people with disabilities?		
H07.	In any eating/meeting space do tables, chairs and the layout allow for use by wheelchair users and other people with disabilities?		
H08.	In any staff accommodation is it suitable for use by people with disabilities including wheelchair users, with slip-resistant floor, reduced level kitchen units and sink and lever action taps?		
H09.	Are all relevant locations clearly signed?		

I - INFORMATION

		RAG	Notes
I01.	Is the building equipped to provide hearing assistance?		None available
I02.	Does lighting installation of the building take into account the needs of people with visual disabilities?		Yes
I03.	Is there a tactile plan or diagram of the building?		Large print versions available and staff would accompany any visitor requiring tactile plan
I04.	Are there large-print versions of information about the building/activities available?		Can be made available upon request
I05.	Is there 'braille' information available for people with visual disabilities?		Not currently needed
I06.	Is there an 'audio' version of information about the building available?		Not currently needed
I07.	Where there are staff available in the building at information/refreshment facilities, are they trained in communication with people with physical and sensory disabilities?		Some staff trained

J – MEANS OF ESCAPE

		RAG	Notes
J01.	Is there a visible as well as audible fire alarm system? (delete)		Yes installed 2024
J02.	Are final exit routes as accessible to all, including wheelchair users, as are the entry routes?		
J03.	Is evacuation from upper and lower levels possible using an evacuation lift/platform lift with a protected power supply? (delete)		Evac chairs available – site team member are trained in their use
J04.	If people with disabilities cannot evacuate from the building independently are designated and signed refuges available?		Yes
J05.	If refuges are available are they equipped with 'carry chairs'?		Evac chairs on all stairwells –
J06.	Is there a 'management evacuation strategy' for staff, pupils and visitors, and are staff trained in evacuation procedures?		Updated annually
J07.	Is the evacuation strategy checked regularly for its effectiveness?		Termly as a minimum
J08.	Are evacuation routes checked routinely and regularly for freedom from combustible materials/obstacles/locked doors? (delete)		
J09.	Are all fire warning devices and detectors checked routinely and regularly?		Weekly tests internally by site team,6 monthly maintenance servicing by external contractor.