ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2026–2029

Reviewed: September 2026 | Annual review: September 2027, September 2028 and September 2029

The Discovery School is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which disabled pupils can participate fully in learning and school life, access the physical environment and receive information in formats that meet their needs.

This plan sets out the school's priorities and planned actions over three years. It is a working document: actions will be monitored, adequately resourced, reviewed annually and revised where necessary.

At a glance

Area required by the Equality Act 2010	The school's priorities
1. Curriculum access	Remove barriers to learning and participation; monitor outcomes; provide staff development, specialist advice, targeted support and inclusive access to outdoor learning and wider school activities.
2. Physical environment	Maintain and improve access across the site, including routes, entrances, toilets, outdoor spaces, signage, visitor facilities and emergency arrangements.
3. Information access	Provide information to disabled pupils in accessible formats and within a reasonable time, taking account of individual needs and preferences. Strengthen communication access, including support for pupils with hearing loss.

Section 1. Purpose, scope and vision

The purpose of this plan is to explain how The Discovery School intends, over time, to increase accessibility for disabled pupils. The School aims to provide an environment that enables full curriculum access and values and includes pupils, staff, parents and visitors, recognising physical, sensory, communication, learning, social, emotional and cultural needs.

The plan applies to the School's curriculum and wider provision, including lessons, trips, visits, clubs, leisure and cultural activities, social times and associated services. It also considers access to information and the school's physical environment.

Definition of disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial; 'long-term' generally means that the effect has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months. Physical impairment includes sensory impairment. Mental impairment can include learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

Some pupils with conditions such as autism, dyslexia, speech and language impairments or ADHD may meet the Equality Act definition where the legal test is satisfied. A diagnosis or SEND identification does not automatically determine whether a person is disabled under the Act. The School considers each pupil's circumstances and the impact of their impairment.

Legal duties and relationship with other plans

This plan is prepared under paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010. The responsible body must prepare a written Accessibility Plan covering the three areas set out above, keep it under review, revise it where necessary and implement it. In relation to information, the School must take account of pupils' disabilities and preferences expressed by pupils or their parents, and provide information within a reasonable time.

The Equality Act 2010 also places duties on schools not to discriminate against disabled pupils and to make reasonable adjustments. These duties are ongoing and apply to individual circumstances; they are not postponed until an action appears in this three-year plan. The School will consider reasonable adjustments alongside its strategic accessibility work.

This plan informs the School's wider development and inclusion work and should be read alongside the SEND Information Report, SEND policy, Equality Information and Objectives, safeguarding and health and safety arrangements, and relevant premises documentation.

Consultation and preparation

The September 2026 plan states that the plan was developed using Local Authority information and in conjunction with pupils, parents, staff and governors. The school will continue to use pupil and parent voice, staff knowledge, specialist advice and governor monitoring when reviewing priorities and individual access arrangements.

Availability, review and complaints

- The plan is published on the school website. Paper copies are available from the school office.
- The School will consider requests for the plan or other school information in an alternative accessible format, and will discuss the format and reasonable timescale with the person making the request.

- The plan covers September 2026 to September 2029 and will be reviewed at least annually. It will also be reviewed sooner if there are material changes to the school site, pupil needs, provision or relevant requirements.
- The Governing Board oversees the plan and its implementation. Responsibilities may be delegated to school leaders and relevant staff, with governor monitoring.
- Concerns or complaints should be raised through the school's published Complaints Procedure. Requests for individual adjustments should be directed to the School so that they can be considered promptly.

Section 2. Aims and objectives

The school's aims are to:

- Increase access to the curriculum and wider school life for disabled pupils.
- Ensure pupils with SEND, including disabled pupils, receive provision that enables them to make strong progress from their individual starting points.
- Ensure pupils with hearing loss can access teaching, learning, communication and school life through appropriate specialist support and communication strategies.
- Improve access to the physical environment and the information the school provides.

The second aim reflects our wider inclusion commitment. SEND and disability are not interchangeable categories; this Accessibility Plan focuses on removing disability-related barriers while remaining aligned with the School's wider SEND provision.

Section 3. Three-year accessibility action plan

A. Increasing access to the curriculum

Objective and actions	Lead responsibility	Timescale	Evidence, milestones and success measures
1. Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by disability and identify trends or patterns requiring additional support. Use assessment information alongside individual plans and pupil progress reviews; agree and record follow-up action where a barrier is identified.	Assessment Lead; SENCo; SEND Governor	Use the school assessment timetable; ongoing throughout 2026–29.	Analysis completed and discussed through pupil progress / SEND review processes. Where gaps or barriers are identified, actions and impact are recorded. Progress is evaluated from pupils' starting points; the school does not assume that all pupils will make identical progress.
2. Provide ongoing staff training on specific learning, communication and physical needs, particularly for new staff. Include disability awareness and practical strategies for adapting teaching and activities.	SENCo; relevant specialist teams; school leaders	From September 2026; ongoing and refreshed as needs arise.	CPD needs identified; training booked and completed; staff can explain and apply relevant pupil-specific strategies. Training and its impact are reviewed.
3. Ensure curriculum and site-access arrangements, including outdoor areas, are reviewed and barriers addressed. Plan learning activities, trips, clubs, PE and social times so disabled pupils can participate meaningfully.	SENCo; Inclusion Lead; Site Manager; relevant subject / trip leaders	Initial review September 2026; annually and whenever provision changes.	Accessibility and risk assessments completed where appropriate; reasonable adjustments agreed in advance; participation barriers and actions recorded. Pupils can access activities with appropriate support.
4. Continue working with specialists, including Hearing and Visual Impairment, Occupational Therapy and relevant Local Authority teams, to maximise access for pupils with physical disabilities.	SENCo; Inclusion Lead	Ongoing, according to pupil need.	Specialist advice sought where appropriate; recommendations considered and actioned or reasons for alternative arrangements recorded; resources and adaptations are matched to individual needs.

Objective and actions	Lead responsibility	Timescale	Evidence, milestones and success measures
5. Improve outdoor surfacing to facilitate gross motor play and access for pupils with physical disabilities. Obtain advice and quotations and plan installation where feasible and funded.	School Business Manager; SENCo; Site Manager	Quotes / feasibility work during 2026–27; target installation by July 2027, subject to approval, funding and site constraints.	Advice and quotations received; project decision and funding recorded; if approved, work completed and checked for suitability. Pupils who use mobility aids can access the relevant outdoor provision as far as reasonably practicable.
6. Review provision mapping, interventions and their impact; triangulate monitoring against personal plans; hold regular SEND reviews and pupil progress meetings; provide targeted support; meet with parents and undertake case sampling.	SENCo; Assessment Lead; Inclusion Lead; Headteacher; SEND Governor monitoring pair	Ongoing throughout 2026–29; formal review points each term / as set by school processes.	Pupils who are not making expected progress or whose access is restricted are identified. Support is planned, reviewed and adapted. Parent and pupil views inform decisions. Impact is evidenced through progress, participation and individual outcomes.
7. Develop staff confidence and communication support for pupils with hearing loss, including profound hearing loss, cochlear implant users and pupils who use sign-supported communication / BSL. Seek advice from the Hearing Impairment / Vision Impairment team as appropriate.	SENCo; Inclusion Lead; specialist HI/VI team	Training commenced / planned in 2026; ongoing in response to pupil need.	Relevant staff receive pupil-specific guidance and training; communication arrangements are shared with staff who need them; pupils can access teaching and school routines; parent and pupil feedback informs review.
8. Provide targeted BSL training for named support staff and continue the Diversity Council's work to promote signing across the school, including assemblies.	SENCo; Diversity Council	Ongoing; BSL CPD target July 2027; review annually.	Named staff complete appropriate training; basic signs are used consistently where relevant; signing is visible in school life and assemblies; pupil and parent feedback is considered.

B. Improving the physical environment

Feature / current position recorded in September 2026	Action / improvement	Lead	Target / review
Building is recorded as single-storey throughout.	No additional action identified in the source plan. Continue to consider access when layouts or use of rooms change.	Site Manager	Ongoing / annual audit
Corridors are recorded as accessible for wheelchairs and walking frames and wide enough to manoeuvre.	Keep corridors free from clutter and ensure routes remain unobstructed.	All staff; Site Manager monitors	Ongoing
Four disabled parking bays and a drop-off zone are recorded on site.	Keep designated bays and drop-off access clear and usable, including at drop-off and collection times. Review arrangements if site traffic patterns change.	Site Manager	Ongoing
Entrances, including pavilion buildings, are recorded as ramp-accessible and supported by handrails.	Keep ramps and handrails in good repair and free from obstruction. Check surfaces for cracks, wear and trip hazards.	Site Manager	Ongoing
Discovery Walk has been landscaped, but the source audit records that the ground is not sufficiently even for wheelchair or walking-frame access.	Liaise with Liberty Estates and Kent County Council about options and support to improve wheelchair access to Discovery Walk.	School Business Manager	January 2027
Three accessible toilets are recorded in the main school building.	Explore provision of additional accessible toilets in EYFS and KS1 so pupils do not lose learning time travelling to facilities. Confirm feasibility, need and funding.	School Business Manager	July 2027
A care suite, including a shower, is recorded in the main school building.	Keep facilities functional and safe; complete regular Legionella prevention tasks in accordance with the school's water-safety arrangements.	Site Manager	Ongoing
Hearing loop and visual signage are recorded as available in reception.	Ensure visitors are made aware of the hearing loop and how to use it; check it remains functional and signage is clear.	Office staff; Site Manager	Ongoing
Internal room signage is recorded as clearly labelled and positioned at a height accessible to wheelchair users.	Review wayfinding for pupils and visitors with visual impairment. Consider braille / tactile signage following consultation and specialist advice; confirm whether this is required and appropriate before installation.	Site Manager; SENCo	Target July 2027; subject to review
Emergency escape route signs are recorded throughout the school.	Maintain signs and ensure evacuation procedures and personal emergency arrangements take account of disabled pupils, staff and visitors. Review with relevant staff and emergency-planning leads.	Site Manager; School Business Manager; SENCo	Ongoing; review by July 2027

C. Improving access to information and communication

Objective and proposed actions	Proposed lead	Timescale	Evidence and success measures
1. Ask disabled pupils and, where appropriate, their parents or carers what information formats and communication methods work best for them. Record preferences and review them when needs change.	SENCo; class teachers; Office staff	From September 2026; ongoing.	Communication preferences are recorded where appropriate and shared with staff who need the information. Pupils and families know how to request an adjustment.
2. Provide written information for disabled pupils and parents in an accessible format and within a reasonable time, taking account of the disability and preferences. This may include accessible digital text, enlarged print, simplified / supported formats, audio or other suitable formats as appropriate to the individual.	SENCo; class teachers; Office staff	As required; reviewed at least annually.	Requests are discussed and responded to within an agreed reasonable timescale. The format is suitable for the individual; feedback is sought where appropriate.
3. Ensure teaching materials and classroom information are presented in ways that support access, including clear layout, readable text, suitable contrast, uncluttered presentation and alternative communication or sensory supports where required.	Class teachers; SENCo; subject leaders	Ongoing; considered in planning and lesson review.	Adaptations are visible in teaching and learning; pupils can access key instructions and learning materials; barriers raised by pupils are addressed.
4. Ensure key school communications to parents and carers can be provided in an accessible format on request, and that communication preferences are considered. This is an additional inclusion commitment alongside the statutory pupil-information duty.	Office staff; SENCo; Senior Leadership Team	Ongoing.	Requests are logged and responded to; alternative formats / communication arrangements are agreed with families.
5. Review the accessibility of information published on the school website and downloadable documents. Maintain a separate website accessibility statement and provide an accessible route for reporting website barriers or requesting information in another format.	Website administrator; School Business Manager	Review during 2026–27 and at least annually; update when issues are identified.	Website accessibility statement is published and reviewed. Identified barriers are recorded and addressed or explained in the statement. Relevant school service information is accessible.
6. Maintain and promote the reception hearing loop and visual signage. Check equipment and make visitors aware of the available support.	Office staff; Site Manager	Ongoing.	Hearing loop is checked and working; visitors are informed of its availability; faults are reported and resolved.
7. Continue BSL / signing development across the school, including training for named staff and use of signing in assemblies where appropriate to the needs of pupils.	SENCo; Diversity Council	BSL CPD target July 2027; ongoing.	Staff training records and examples of signing in school routines / assemblies; pupil and parent feedback.
8. Review wayfinding and signage for pupils with visual impairment, including the source plan's proposed braille signage, with specialist advice and consultation before deciding what is needed.	SENCo; Site Manager	Review by July 2027; implement agreed actions subject to feasibility and funding.	Audit completed; pupil / specialist feedback considered; agreed signage or alternative wayfinding arrangements put in place.

4. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The School will monitor delivery of the plan through the following arrangements:

- Senior leaders will review progress against actions at least termly and identify any actions that are delayed, no longer appropriate or need additional resources.
- The SENCo / Inclusion Lead and relevant staff will review the impact of support with pupils and parents, including participation, access to learning, communication and wellbeing.
- The Assessment Lead will analyse relevant achievement and progress information, taking care to interpret small cohorts appropriately and to identify barriers rather than relying on headline data alone.
- The Site Manager / School Business Manager will maintain the physical access audit and record inspections, maintenance, quotations, decisions and completed works.
- Governors will receive an annual update on implementation, progress, barriers, resource implications and any proposed revisions.
- The plan will be reviewed annually in September and revised where necessary. A new three-year plan will be prepared for the period after 2026–29.

Review point	Review focus	Record / outcome
September 2026	Baseline review of current provision, access audit and three-year priorities.	Plan approved / published; action owners and resources confirmed.
During 2026–27; annual review September 2027	Progress on outdoor surfacing, Discovery Walk, toilets, BSL training, information-access arrangements and pupil outcomes.	Annual progress report; revised actions and timescales where needed.
During 2027–28; annual review September 2028	Review impact of completed actions; reassess physical access and communication needs; identify emerging barriers.	Annual progress report; revised priorities and resource requirements.
During 2028–29; review September 2029	Evaluate delivery across all three statutory areas and prepare the next three-year plan.	End-of-plan evaluation and successor plan.

5. Resources and implementation

The School will consider the need to allocate adequate resources to implement this plan. Actions will be prioritised according to pupils' needs, the extent of barriers, specialist advice, feasibility and available resources. The School will not assume that a planned physical improvement or purchase has been completed until it has been approved, funded and checked.

Where an individual pupil requires an adjustment or support, the School will consider and respond to that need without waiting for the annual review of this strategic plan. The plan does not limit the School's wider legal duties.

6. Website publication

This Accessibility Plan is the School's strategic plan under the Equality Act 2010. It is not the same document as the website's Accessibility Statement.

7. Approval and document control

Document control	Details
School	The Discovery School
Document	Accessibility Plan 2026–2029
Reviewed	September 2026
Review frequency	At least annually, and sooner where necessary
Next review	September 2027
Responsible body / approval	Governing Board
Approved by	Governing Board
Date approved	16th November 2026