Shilbottle Primary

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Fun, Respect & Friendship

Access Plan

Staff and Pupils

At Shilbottle Primary we value and respect everyone in our community and work as a team
'Fun, Respect & Friendship – Every Child Matters to Us'

Shilbottle Primary – Access Plan

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for an Access Plan at Shilbottle Primary. The policy was reviewed and updated in September 2026 through a process of consultation with teaching staff and wider school community.

It was approved by the governing body in the autumn 2025 Governing Body Meeting. A schedule for the review of this, and all other, policy documents is set out in the school's five-year plan of whole school development. It has been agreed that this policy will be reviewed annually.

This Plan reflects the requirement for an Access Plan under current equalities legislation.

The duty under the Equality Act 2010 is that schools collect and publish equality information, and publish equalities objectives. This duty has existed since April 2012. However, guidance makes it very clear that schools continue to have a duty to produce an Access Plan which must be implemented.

Schools' plans should reflect their intention to:

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

Access Plan for Shilbottle Primary: September 2025 – 2028

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful.
Schools and Local Authorities have to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils.

Our school's accessibility plans are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

We recognise the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will regularly review them.

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Our school's previous access plans were incorporated into a Disability Equality Scheme and build on those foundations. This access plan includes data and consultation from those schemes where they continue to be relevant.

Notes

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one. A disabled person is someone who has 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.
The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included.
If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoverees and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life. It is likely that every school has disabled pupils, staff members and service users.

Vision and values

Our School fully supports the vision of Northumberland Children's Services, namely:

- We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future.

Our school endorses the Northumberland's Inclusion definition that says:

> "Northumberland County Council is committed to improving access for all disabled pupils and prospective pupils. We believe that all disabled pupils have a right not to be discriminated against in the provision of education and associated services in schools, and in respect of admissions and exclusions. Wherever possible disabled pupils should have the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers in their access to education. The child/young person is at the heart of everything we do. For schools we will promote the strategy to improve access through our overall inclusion programme and through specific guidance and training for head teachers and senior leaders, and for governors".

We will promote the principle that inclusive schools provide for all pupils, through increasing access and removing barriers to learning.

Further details can be found on the Northumberland County Council website under 'Inclusive Northumberland'.

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Our School Vision

Fun Respect & Friendship - Every Child Matters to Us

- We aim to enthuse and challenge our children.
- We have high expectations for every child.
- We ensure that the skills of English and Maths are rigorously taught
- We embrace equal opportunities and ensure all children are included.
- We take account of individual ability and differentiate learning so that each child progresses in every lesson and achieves their full potential.
- We reward effort as well as achievement.
- We develop children's awareness of moral, spiritual, social and cultural values, physical well-being and sensitivity towards the needs of others.

The nature of Shilbottle Primary population:

- We have around 150 main stream pupils from Reception to Year 6 and 21 staff members (full and part time).

The school environment

All classrooms are on the ground floor and are accessible. Many physically disabled pupils are using powered wheelchairs which can be quite large, door frames in the main school are narrow and when alterations to the classrooms are planned in the door frames will be widened. The new extension, which came into full use in 2017, adheres to all regulations to allow full disabled access, including a dedicated disabled toilet. Where classroom space is tight, adjustments may have to be made to classroom layout in order to facilitate access, where appropriate.

- *Many pupils with quite complex medical needs are attending mainstream settings now and staff will receive training from Health professionals and volunteering to carry out procedures as and when this is required*.

From time to time we have children with disabilities and have developed the school building to meet their needs:

- A disabled toilet, wash basin and large changing bed in a room was added to the Portakabin, this also is used as a medical room. (2013)
- Ramps at all entrances to ensure wheel chair access. (2005)
- All classrooms have a coloured thresh for visually impaired children (September 2013)
- All doors are painted in a darker colour to ensure visually impaired children can see the openings. (2010)
- We offer all policies and documentation in bigger text to parents who are visually impaired.
- An allocated parking space for the parents of disabled pupils is vital, as is ensuring that the space is not used inappropriately, or blocked by other vehicles. Access into school from the parking space should be level with no obstacles. This work was completed as part of the transition to primary

and the remodelling of the building and the grounds.

- Schools have a responsibility to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils and this can include specialist equipment. We provide a range of learning support material for children to access the curriculum including clever fingers, writing slopes, pencil grips and scissors. We provide specialised cutlery for children to use at lunch time where needed. In partnership with parents we also offer a facility to provide learning aids for use at home to facilitate home learning.

Awareness of staff

All staff are aware of the needs of individual children and have regular training to support the needs of children in school, e.g. physiotherapist training for disabled pupils. Work with healthcare workers to support toilet training etc. New staff will have an induction meeting about children's needs. As part of the annual transition programme teachers meet with colleagues to discuss cases and support.

All children in school are included, disabled children are encouraged to take a full and active part in school life, e.g. sport's day, performing in concerts, and educational visits. Support is given to children who cannot attend school for medical reasons e.g. home learning tools. Afterschool clubs and morning club are available for all children [at a small charge].

We have policies in place and a named person to administer medicines and care. We have a strong Anti-Bullying Policy to ensure all children feel safe and included.

All children with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) will be offered a broad and balanced curriculum that is tailored to meet their needs for example, speech therapy, circle time, visual timetables and social stories.

Access to the curriculum

- All areas of the curriculum are available to pupils regardless of their disability. If an activity cannot be made accessible or would be inappropriate then an alternative activity will be made available. Handwriting practice might be inappropriate for a disabled pupil but practising keyboard skills would be a suitable and valuable alternative.
- Planning to improve access to the curriculum will include identifying reasonable adjustments to offer an equality of opportunity.
- Depending on the impairments of disabled pupils, planning specific staff training improves access to the curriculum. Training is available from a number of sources.
- Purchasing specialist equipment may increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils, school have purchased a variety of equipment including iPads, writing slopes and pencil grips.
- Reviews of the participation of disabled pupils during lesson observations will inform future developments in inclusion.
- Access to school visits can be problematic for some disabled pupils. Reviews and investigating more accessible venues and transport providers will be valuable, as will better forward planning and a creative approach to staffing. As part of any educational visit an 'Evolve' form is completed and submitted in which staff are required to identify any potential issues with access.

Access to written information

- Support for learners with reading difficulties.
- Raising awareness of font size and page layouts will support pupils with visual impairments.
- Auditing the school library to ensure the availability of large font and easy read texts will improve access. Auditing signage around the school to ensure that is accessible to all is a valuable exercise.

Good Print Guide Lines

Font size
Most fully sighted people can read 12-point font easily.
Visually impaired people will need different sizes depending on their level and type of vision.
It is not correct to assume that the larger the font the better – this is fine for some, but others, for example those with a small field of vision, might prefer a smaller font.
If you are printing for individuals, it is best to ask them their preferred font size.
Font size 14 is a good size to use to cover as many people as possible.

Font type
Always use a plain, Sans Serif font such as Arial, Calibri, Universe, Tahoma, Verdana or Comic Sans. Letters should be evenly spaced.

Font style
We never print anything using only capital letters. A mixture of upper and lower-case letters, as on this page, is easier for everyone to read.
Use bold weight for emphasis; avoid using italics as much as possible.
Letters and words should be spaced conventionally.
Leave extra spaces between lines of text and between paragraphs for greater clarity.

Alignment
Do not use right-justified text, as this can cause irregular spacing. Use left or central alignment only.

Colour
Use dark ink on light paper – black on pale yellow is particularly good for people who are troubled by glare.
Alternatively, use light coloured text on a dark background – yellow on black or dark blue is best.
Never use dark ink on dark paper or light ink on light paper.

Enlarging

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It is possible to enlarge print using a photocopier, but this can result in a grainy image and oversized paper.
Always print the correct font size directly from a laser or ink jet printer where possible.

Paper
Choose paper with a matt finish where possible.
Glossy paper produces glare that may cause reading difficulties.
Thin paper should be avoided as print can show through from the other side.

Images
Never print text over patterns, photographs or illustrations.
Try to position any images so that they do not confuse the flow of the text.

Individual needs
Different people will have different needs – visually impaired people will have different levels and types of vision.
Dyslexic people may also have different needs. If you are producing documents for individuals, it is usually best to ask what their preferred format is.
After all, with modern word processing packages, it is easy to manipulate text and give everyone exactly what they want.

Access Plan for Shilbottle Primary from September 2025-2028

Buildings

Area	Area	Action to be taken	Time scales	Priority	Resources	Responsibility	Monitoring and evaluation
	Approaching the school	Ensure access at all time.	Ongoing	A		Head Teacher [HT]	Governors
Car parking	Provide a suitable car parking bay for disabled visitors [marked out]	Markings in car park - Clearly visible in good condition	Ongoing	B		HT	Governors
External ramps	Ramps to access main building (front and rear access) and Portakabin in good condition and maintained.	Yearly Check		A A		Caretaker HT	Governors
Corridors	Check corridors in a regular basis for access	Access checked	On going	C	N/A	All staff – awareness raising.	'Near Miss' book reviewed and used.
Doors	All doors have unblocked windows in to all areas. (Safeguarding)	Nothing to be on the windows to block view	Check on regular basis	A	N/A – awareness raising	All staff	Governor health and safety audit.
Signs and information	All fire signs and toilet signs have Braille on them.	Staff to walk around school to see where extra signage is needed.	2018	A	Updated School Plan		Governor health and safety audit.
Means of escape	All signs are clearly placed and are regulation size. All signs are in Braille.	Plan staff meeting to raise awareness of access for escape with all staff.	Annual check	A		HT with all staff	Governor through Headteacher's reports
Building management	Whole school site	Work with caretaker on the management of the site to develop access.	On going	A	Planned improvements	Head teacher working with caretaker	Governor health and safety audit.

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Curriculum

Area	Action to be taken	Time scales	Priority	Resources	Responsibility	Monitoring and evaluation
Differentiated curriculum	On-going development of teachers understanding of a differentiated curriculum for all children.	Staff CPD	B	Staff meeting time Evidence trail by SENDCo to see inclusion and an inclusive classroom.	Head teacher, SENDCo	SENDCo Governor report
Deaf awareness	As and when this is an issue in school teachers will have training to deal with this.	On going	C	Staff development	Head teacher, SENDCo	
Training to support disabled pupils	As in the past, all staff have ongoing training to meet the needs of individual children. As children's needs are assessed training will be put in place to best meet the needs of individuals.	As and when issues arise	C but could be A	Staff time and training needs analysis	SENDCo	Head teacher
Specialist equipment	Seek and provide specialist equipment as and when it is required by an individual child	When necessary	C but could be A			
To recognise pupil diversity through lesson delivery and techniques	Awareness raising the lessons covered about access for all Every Child Matters agenda	Staff CPD	B	Staff time PHSE coordinator time	Head teacher PSHE Coordinator.	HT report to Governors
Training needs of all staff	Regular support for Teachers and Teaching Assistants on named conditions that children might have. Performance management targets for TAs	Autumn term	B	Performance management time Staff training sessions planned over the year SENDCo information of named conditions folder available in SENDCo cupboard	HT PSHE coordinator	Head teacher

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Alterative formats

Area	Action to be taken	Time scales	Priority	Resources	Responsibility	Monitoring and evaluation
Alternative Formats	All parents are aware through website, newsletters and prospectus' that large type formats of any school produced documentation can be made available. School can provide help with reading any documentation.	Already in place				
Good print guidelines	We try at all times to follow the good print guide lines (see above).	Already in place			Everyone who is providing information	Monitored by HT
Policies to include foot note about larger print	As policies are reviewed a foot note to be added about the availability of larger print.	On going	C	Staff time when reviewing	Coordinators Head Teacher	Governor policy development