

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN

2026–2029



Serenity School

Policy holder	Headteacher
Approved by	COO
Approval date	September 2026
Plan period	September 2026 – August 2029
Progress review	At least annually
Next full review	September 2029

1. Purpose

Serenity School is committed to ensuring that disabled pupils can access education, participate fully in school life and benefit from the facilities, services and information available to other pupils. Accessibility is embedded within the school's specialist SEND provision and is considered through curriculum planning, the physical environment, communication, reasonable adjustments and individual pupil planning.

This policy and plan sets out how the school will continue to identify and remove barriers to access over the three-year period 2026–2029. It is intended to be a practical working document. Progress against the plan will be reviewed at least annually and actions will be adjusted where pupil need, the school environment or available technology changes.

2. Legal framework

This plan is prepared in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, including Schedule 10, which requires schools to prepare, implement, review and revise an accessibility plan. The school also has regard to the Equality Act duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and to relevant requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

The plan addresses the three areas required by Schedule 10:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of the school so disabled pupils can take greater advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services; and
- improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils where that information is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

3. Our approach to accessibility

As a specialist SEND school, accessibility is not treated as a separate exercise. It forms part of the way teaching, therapy, communication, behaviour support, personal care, transitions, educational visits and wider school opportunities are planned.

In applying this plan, the school will:

- start from each pupil's strengths, needs, EHCP outcomes and established methods of communication;
- avoid assumptions about what a pupil can or cannot participate in because of disability;
- make reasonable adjustments in advance where barriers can reasonably be anticipated;
- involve pupils and parents/carers in decisions where appropriate;
- seek advice from relevant professionals when specialist assessment or equipment is required;
- ensure accessibility is considered when purchasing equipment, planning changes to the environment or introducing new systems;
- review adjustments where they are no longer effective or where a pupil's needs change; and
- balance safety with the pupil's right to dignity, participation, independence and an ambitious education.

4. Understanding individual accessibility needs

All pupils attending Serenity have identified SEND. Accessibility arrangements are therefore informed by the pupil's EHCP, admission and transition information, baseline assessment, risk assessments, communication profile, medical information, therapy advice, parent/carers information and ongoing review.

Particular attention will be given to pupils who are non-speaking or have limited functional communication; use AAC, symbols, signing, gesture, visual communication or objects of reference; have sensory processing differences; have physical or mobility needs; have visual or hearing impairment; require personal care or medical support; or communicate distress, pain, fear or unmet need through behaviour. Spoken language will not be treated as a prerequisite for meaningful participation or pupil voice.

5. Access to the curriculum

The school will provide an ambitious and appropriately personalised curriculum through its Formal, Semi-Formal and Nurture pathways. Adjustments will be made where required so that disabled pupils can participate in learning, enrichment, physical activity, vocational learning, educational visits, careers education and Preparation for Adulthood.

Curriculum accessibility may include:

- adaptive teaching, scaffolding and differentiated modes of response;
- AAC, visual supports, symbols, signing and alternative communication systems;
- assistive technology and alternative methods of recording work;
- adapted resources, furniture or specialist equipment;
- sensory regulation strategies, movement breaks and environmental adjustments;
- additional processing time, reduced language load or chunking of instructions;
- reasonable adjustments to assessment and examination arrangements where applicable;
- therapy-informed strategies embedded within teaching and daily routines;
- adjusted staffing or supervision where this is necessary for safe participation; and
- individualised planning for educational visits, work experience and community access.

6. Access to the physical environment

The school will consider accessibility whenever premises are reviewed, maintained, refurbished or developed. A site accessibility review will be undertaken at least annually and when significant changes to the premises or pupil cohort make an earlier review necessary.

The review will consider, as relevant:

- routes into and around the building, entrances, corridors and circulation spaces;
- steps, thresholds, ramps, lifts and handrails;
- accessible toilets, changing and personal-care facilities;
- classroom layout, furniture and access to specialist rooms;
- lighting, acoustics, signage, contrast and wayfinding;
- sensory demands within teaching and communal spaces;
- playgrounds, outdoor areas and arrival/departure arrangements;
- fire evacuation and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans where required;
- access to dining, therapy, medical and welfare facilities; and
- parking or drop-off arrangements where reasonably required.

Where a physical barrier cannot immediately be removed, the school will consider reasonable alternative arrangements and will record any required improvement through its premises or accessibility action planning.

7. Access to information and communication

Information will be provided in formats that disabled pupils can understand and use. The method chosen will reflect the pupil's established communication system and level of understanding rather than relying solely on written or spoken language.

Adjustments may include:

- symbols, photographs, visual timetables, now-and-next boards and social narratives;
- AAC systems and communication devices;
- signing, gesture and objects of reference;
- large print, enlarged resources, simplified layouts or increased contrast;
- audio, text-to-speech, speech-to-text or other assistive technology;
- plain language, reduced text and information presented in manageable steps;
- additional time and supported explanation; and
- accessible digital formats where appropriate.

Important information for parents and carers will also be made accessible where a reasonable adjustment is required.

8. Reasonable adjustments

The school will take reasonable steps to avoid disabled pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage. Adjustments will be considered individually and may relate to teaching, communication, timetabling, equipment, the environment, school routines, behaviour support, assessment, educational visits or participation in wider school life.

The effectiveness of adjustments will be reviewed through day-to-day practice, pupil progress and participation, EHCP and individual-plan reviews, parent/carers discussion, pupil voice and relevant professional advice.

9. Responsibilities

9.1 Proprietary Board

The Proprietary Board is responsible for ensuring that the school has an accessibility plan in place and that appropriate oversight and resources are available for its implementation.

9.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that accessibility is embedded in school practice, that actions are implemented and monitored, and that material barriers or resource requirements are escalated appropriately.

9.3 SENDCo and senior leaders

The SENDCo and senior leaders support identification of barriers, coordination of individual adjustments, review of EHCP provision and communication needs, and quality assurance of inclusive practice.

9.4 Staff

All staff are responsible for implementing agreed adjustments, using pupils' communication systems appropriately, raising barriers promptly and ensuring that disability does not unnecessarily restrict participation.

10. Monitoring accessibility

Leaders will monitor accessibility through evidence including:

- EHCP and individual-plan reviews;
- curriculum and teaching quality assurance;
- learning walks and environmental checks;
- pupil and parent/carers feedback;
- participation in enrichment, educational visits and wider school activities;
- incident, behaviour and attendance information where this identifies barriers to access;
- therapy and multidisciplinary advice;
- premises inspections and maintenance records; and
- review of the actions in the three-year plan below.

Where monitoring identifies an individual or systemic barrier, leaders will determine the required action, responsible person, timescale and evidence of impact.

11. Accessibility Plan 2026–2029

The actions below set the school's accessibility priorities for the three-year period. They are designed to remain responsive to the needs of the pupils on roll. Where an individual pupil requires an adjustment sooner than the stated review point, that adjustment will be considered and implemented without waiting for the annual review.

Priority	Objective	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence / impact
Curriculum participation	Ensure all pupils can participate meaningfully in the curriculum and wider school life.	Review accessibility through baseline assessment, EHCP implementation, pathway planning and QA. Identify barriers to learning or participation and implement reasonable adjustments. Monitor access to enrichment, visits, careers, vocational learning and Preparation for Adulthood.	Headteacher / SENDCo / Curriculum Leaders	Ongoing; reviewed termly	QA evidence shows appropriate adaptations; participation gaps are identified and acted upon; pupils access suitable pathways and wider opportunities.
Communication and information	Ensure information is accessible to pupils with differing communication and sensory needs.	Maintain current communication profiles and ensure staff use established AAC, visual, signing or other communication systems. Review classroom and key school information for accessibility. Provide alternative formats where required.	SENDCo / Class Teams / SLT	2026–2029; reviewed at least termly	Communication systems are evident in practice; pupils can understand key information and express choices, views and needs using their established methods.
Assistive technology and specialist equipment	Use technology and equipment to reduce barriers to learning and independence.	Identify equipment needs through assessment and professional advice; provide suitable assistive technology or specialist resources where reasonably required; train staff and pupils in use; review effectiveness.	SENDCo / Headteacher / Relevant Specialists	Ongoing	Equipment is available, used and reviewed; evidence shows improved access, communication, independence or participation.
Physical environment	Improve access to school facilities and reduce avoidable physical or sensory barriers.	Complete an annual accessibility review of the premises. Record and prioritise identified actions through premises planning. Consider accessibility in refurbishment, room allocation, furniture, signage, lighting, acoustics and outdoor areas.	Headteacher / Premises Lead	Annual review; actions prioritised throughout 2026–2029	Annual review completed; identified actions have owners and timescales; reasonable interim arrangements are in place where immediate structural change is not practicable.
Sensory accessibility	Reduce environmental barriers for pupils with sensory processing differences.	Review noise, lighting, visual clutter, transitions and access to regulation spaces. Use pupil-specific sensory advice and occupational therapy input where available. Adjust environments and routines where reasonable.	SENDCo / SLT / Class Teams	Ongoing; formal review annually	Pupils have access to appropriate regulation strategies and environments; identified sensory barriers are reduced.
Emergency access and evacuation	Ensure disabled pupils can evacuate or respond safely in an emergency.	Identify pupils requiring individual emergency arrangements. Maintain and review PEEPs or equivalent plans where required and ensure relevant staff understand them. Consider accessibility in drills and emergency planning.	Headteacher / Premises Lead / SENDCo	On admission and when needs change; reviewed at least annually	Current plans are in place where required; drills and reviews identify no unresolved accessibility barriers.
Staff knowledge and practice	Maintain staff confidence in making effective accessibility adjustments.	Include accessibility, reasonable adjustments, communication and relevant pupil-specific strategies in induction, CPD and coaching. Provide specialist training where required by pupil need.	Headteacher / SENDCo	Annual programme and as required	Staff practice reflects agreed adjustments; QA and supervision identify improving consistency and any further training needs.

Pupil and parent/carer voice	Ensure accessibility planning is informed by lived experience.	Seek views through EHCP reviews, pupil voice, parent/carer communication and accessible feedback methods. Use alternative communication methods for pupils who cannot reliably use speech.	SENDCo / Class Teams / SLT	Ongoing	Feedback informs adjustments and planning; records show views have been sought in an accessible way.
Admissions and transition	Identify accessibility needs before or immediately on entry and at key transitions.	Use EHCPs, professional reports, visits, transition information and family input to identify equipment, communication, environmental, medical or staffing adjustments. Review after admission and during transition.	Admissions Team / Headteacher / SENDCo	At each admission and transition	Required arrangements are identified early and are in place or actively planned; transition reviews capture emerging barriers.
Review and governance	Maintain effective oversight of the accessibility plan.	Review progress at least annually; update actions where needs or circumstances change; escalate significant resource or premises requirements; complete full review and revision by September 2029.	Headteacher / COO / Proprietary Board	Annual progress review; full review by September 2029	Progress is evidenced, actions are updated and significant barriers are escalated and addressed.

12. Publication and review

This Accessibility Policy and Plan will be made available to parents and prospective parents and will be published on the school website. The school will review progress at least annually. The plan will be formally reviewed and revised no later than September 2029, or sooner where significant changes in pupil need, premises or legal requirements make this necessary.

13. Related policies and documents

- SEND Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Individual EHCPs, communication profiles, healthcare plans, risk assessments and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans where applicable.