



NORTHGATE
High School

Accessibility Plan & Policy

Respect | Determination | Teamwork

Review period: Annual

Review by: Mr A Bluck & Mrs S Southgate

Date Reviewed: November 2025

Next Review: November 2026

Northgate High School Accessibility Plan & Policy

3 Year Plan covering 2024-2027

1. Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled students, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled students.

This plan sets out the policy of the school in relation to access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

1. Curriculum: increasing the extent to which disabled students/students can participate in the school curriculum and that all students have the opportunity to learn about and see modelled, the principles of inclusion.
2. Physical environment and access arrangements: improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services;
3. Delivery of information: improving the delivery to disabled students and adults of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

2. Definition of Disability

“A person suffers a disability 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 carry out normal day-to-day activities.” DDA

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties.

3. Northgate High School Context

Northgate High School is a mixed comprehensive school with 1715 students on roll. It is the vision of the school to ensure that the culture and ethos are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treated with respect. Students should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity. They should develop values which prepare them for and help them to develop an appreciation of life in modern Britain. Northgate High School has three core values – Respect, Determination and Teamwork. The school aims to reduce and remove barriers to learning in every area of the life of the school and is committed to delivering equal opportunities, and best provision for all students and students.

(See Equalities Policy, SEN Policy and Local Offer and Curriculum Overview).

4. Curriculum

The reasonable adjustments needed for each student are assessed at transition, on admission and through data analysis, Annual Review of students with EHCP and via an Individual Health Care Plan (see SEN Policy).

Northgate High School recognises that key elements in a successful planned and accessible approach are likely to be:

- a focus on medium term planning, at the level of schemes of work;
- a focus on differentiation and accessibility of lessons;
- a clear assessment of the current National Curriculum levels of the full range of students, particularly in relation to speaking and listening levels;
- high expectations;
- appropriate deployment of learning support;
- appropriate student grouping and use of peer support.

As such, Northgate High School reviews the use of Learning Support staffing and resources, the training needs of subject staff, deployment of TAs, how schemes of work, including PSHE, develop awareness of disability through the curriculum and access to specialist support, on a regular basis.

Disabled students need access to the 'formal' 'taught' curriculum of the school, but also to activities of the school day and beyond the school day, for example:

- recreation;
- movement around the school;
- special events: sports days, visits by speakers etc.;
- extra-curricular activities: breakfast clubs, after-school clubs;
- school trips require an assessment of student and student needs and accessible transport is available from Suffolk County Council.

Northgate High School is committed to ensuring that this takes place and reviews outcomes for disabled students, including:

- a detailed analysis of outcome data: year group progress checks, attributes for learning and end of Key Stage outcomes;
- achievements in extra-curricular activities e.g. support for access to school show rehearsals, Discovery Sports Club and extra-curricular events including sailing, horse riding and team sports such as boccia are celebrated.

5. Physical Environment

The physical environment of the school has a differential impact on access for different groups of disabled students.

Different aspects of the physical environment need to be considered in relation to different groups of students.

The Assistant Headteacher, Learning Support, undertakes an assessment of accessibility needs based on Year 6 transition information – around May/June in the academic year prior to the student joining the school.

Northgate High School complies with DDA access requirements e.g.

- First floor areas are accessible by lift
- Disabled toilets are provided in all teaching blocks and a fully-equipped changing and toilet facility enables personal care for wheelchair users
- TAs are trained in Manual Handling techniques when there is a need within the school
- Accessibility of extra-curricular provisions e.g. library on ground floor, homework clubs on ground floor

All site accessibility work will be assessed annually on the basis of need of intake and progression of students through the school. The Principal Finance Officer, Site Manager and Assistant Headteacher, Learning Support will walk the site with relevant expert support e.g. V I Access Manager as appropriate. The responsibility for progressing this work will be handed over to the Site Manager, who will report directly to the PFO.

Aspects of school environment to be considered against accessibility criteria when renovation work is undertaken, to include:

- improvements to lighting, signage, colour contrast, the acoustic environment, floor coverings;
- improvements to toilets, washing and changing facilities;
- changes to the layout of the playground and other common areas;
- the provision of ramps and lifts and improvements to doorways;
- the provision of particular furniture and equipment to improve access.

6. Delivery of Information

Information for disabled students provided in writing for students/students and parents who are not disabled might include:

- handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, information about school events, letters home, Schoolcomms

Improving the delivery of information might include making information available:

- in Braille, in large print, in simplified language, on audio-tape, through sign language, using a symbol system or pictorial system on different coloured paper.

Identifying the appropriate format must take account of:

- students' impairments – access to information may be improved for particular groups of students by particular approaches, for example: students with learning difficulties may be able to access information more easily where

it is provided in simplified language; students with language and communication difficulties may be able to access information more easily where it is provided in picture/symbol systems;

- preferences expressed by students or their parents.

7. Accessibility Plan 2024-27 – appendix Action Plan – to be revised September annually

In the academic year 2024-25, we will continue to support students with accessibility needs to fully access the school.

Ongoing training of TAs and teachers to prepare for transfer of the diverse range of needs of students will be anticipated each spring.

Key action points

- To continue to review the accessibility of the school site for visually impaired students and wheelchair users
- Continue to develop training for TAs and teachers in specific learning difficulties e.g. autism, ADHD and visual impairment and upgrade technology for increased access.
- Continue to adapt the curriculum to enhance the inclusive ethos.

AJB/SS Sept 2025

To be reviewed annually.

A coherent Fire Plan is reviewed each September and as appropriate for mid-year transfers.

APPENDIX A – Accessibility Plan– Northgate High School 2024-25

	Targets	Strategies	Estimated Cost £	To be completed by Date Personal Rep	Success Criteria
Short Term	Fire Plan in place by end of week one September	Use Primary info and form tutor feedback to finalise plan and circulate to staff	None	Sep 6 2024 SS/RJA/AJB	Fire Plan in place and circulated.
Short Term	Training Evac chair training	Training arranged, attended and in place	None	October 2024 MB	Site team and TAs able to operate chair.
Short/Medium Term	Increase accessibility to learning through the distribution of iPads to selected students, and through the use of the Read Write programme in assessments and exams.	Learning Support workshops in place to support students using assistive technology	See IT Plan	Oct 24 and throughout the year on rolling programme SJB/RJA	Increased accessibility to speech to text, read aloud, One Note, learning outcomes
Medium Term	Fit lifts with mirrors to enable wheelchair users to see behind them when alighting	Source mirrors and install	TBC	MB/SS	Increased safety and accessibility for wheelchair users.

