Accessibility Policy and Plan 2025- 2028

Under review

Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Last reviewed:	September 2025
Next review due by:	September 2026

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1. Statement of intent

James Calvert Spence College is committed to taking all steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage and therefore works closely with pupils with disabilities, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove any potential barriers to their learning experience.

At James Calvert Spence College we have three core values:

- Be Kind
- Work Hard
- Aim High

The school is active in promoting an inclusive positive environment by ensuring that every pupil is given equal opportunity to develop socially, to learn, and to enjoy school life. The school continually looks for ways to improve accessibility within the school through data collection, parents/carer questionnaires and discussions.

This policy will be implemented at all times and adhered to by all staff members, pupils, parents/carers and visitors.

2. Legal framework

2.1 This policy has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

2.2 This policy has due regard to national guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools', DFE (2014)

2.3 This policy will be used in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Administering Medication Policy

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- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Development Plan

3. Definition

A person is defined as having a disability if they have 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 effect of the Equality Act 2010 means that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Staff members will act in accordance with the school's Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan at all times.

The Headteacher and SENDCO, in conjunction with the Governing Body or a select committee, will create an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving the school's accessibility.

The Governing Body, or a select committee, will be responsible for monitoring the Accessibility Plan.

The full Governing Body will approve the Accessibility Plan before it is implemented.

All staff members are responsible for ensuring that their actions do not discriminate against any pupil, parent/carer or colleague.

The Headteacher will ensure that staff members are aware of individual pupils' disabilities or medical conditions where necessary.

During a new pupil's transition and induction at James Calvert Spence College, the pupil's Pastoral Support Officer and / or SENDCO and / or form tutor will establish whether the pupil has any disabilities or medical conditions which the school should be aware of.

The Headteacher is responsible for consulting with relevant and reputable experts if challenging situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.

The Headteacher, Governing Body and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will work closely with the LA and external agencies to effectively create and implement the school's Accessibility Plan.

The SENDCO will work closely with the directors, Headteacher and Governing Body to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are appropriately supported.

All staff members and governors will partake in whole school training on equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

Designated staff members will be trained to effectively support pupils with medical conditions, such as understanding how to administer insulin. Specialist training will be delivered to support disabled pupils as the need arises.

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5. Accessibility Plan

James Calvert Spence College's Accessibility Policy and Plan are drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010.

The Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality and Diversity Policy, as well as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy. The plan demonstrates how access will be improved for pupils with disabilities, staff, parents/carers and visitors to the school within a given timeframe.

The Accessibility Plan can be presented as either a freestanding document or as part of another document, such as the School Improvement Plan. The accessibility plan will be reviewed every three years, and an access audit will be conducted by the Executive Headteacher and Governors on an annual basis.

The plan has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the school's physical environment to enable pupils with disabilities to take advantage of the facilities and education on offer
- To improve the availability and delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors with disabilities.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to measure the necessity of making reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities where practicable. If it is not feasible to undertake all the plans/works during the lifespan of the Accessibility Plan, some items will roll forward into subsequent plans.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to advise other school planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

Both the Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

James Calvert Spence College will collaborate with the LA to effectively develop and implement the plan.

The school will provide adequate resources for implementing plans, ensuring pupils are sufficiently supported.

During Ofsted inspections, the inspectorate may include the school's Accessibility Plan as part of their review.

The LA will prepare accessibility strategies based on the same principles as the school's Accessibility Plan and may, where relevant and/or necessary, support the school with auxiliary aids and services to help the school provide adequate support to pupils with disabilities.

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability.

The DfE non-statutory guidance states that this duty can be summarised as follows:

- Where a disabled pupil is placed at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable adjustments to try and reduce/remove the disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.

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- Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

5.1 Reasonable adjustments

Factors school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment, may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route. Cost will play a major part in determining what is reasonable.

The guidance states that many pupils with a disability will have an SEN statement and auxiliary aids provided by the LA and so may not require anything further. However, if the disabled pupil does not have a statement or EHC Plan (or the statement/plan doesn't provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school (after the relevant provisions come into force).

The reasonable adjustments duties on schools are intended to complement the accessibility planning duties and the existing SEN statement provisions which are part of education legislation, under which Local Authorities have a duty to provide auxiliary aids to pupils with a statement of special educational need/ Education and Healthcare Plan (EHC Plan). In addition to the duty to consider reasonable adjustments for particular individual disabled pupils, schools will also have to consider potential adjustments which may be needed for disabled pupils generally.

Accessibility plans at James Calvert Spence College are aimed at:

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

The school will provide adequate resources for implementing plans and regularly reviews them.

James Calvert Spence College recognise there are areas on site which are not accessible for persons requiring a wheelchair and/or certain disability aids. As part of the Accessibility Plan, staff and service users will be consulted to identify areas of improvement and future developments.

6. Equal opportunities

6.1 General Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) has three main elements.

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics - between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

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The duty to have “due regard” to equality considerations means that whenever 2 significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.

6.2. Specific duties

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability.

The DfE non-statutory guidance states that this duty can be summarised as follows:

- Where something a disabled pupil is placed at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable adjustments to try and reduce/remove the disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.
- Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as

James Calvert Spence College are committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

We plan, over time, to ensure the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school. An Accessibility Plan will be drawn up to cover a three year period.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school complies with the general equality duty and the new specific duties. The equality duty now includes all those with protected characteristics, which makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief,
- sexual orientation,
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity.

James Calvert Spence College strives to ensure that all existing and potential pupils are given the same opportunities and is committed to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness.

Staff members will be aware of any pupils who are at a substantial disadvantage and will take the appropriate steps to ensure the pupil is effectively supported.

The Accessibility Plan will detail any barriers which are hindering the opportunities for pupils with SEND. The aim of the plan is to take appropriate measures to overcome these barriers, allowing all pupils equal opportunities.

Wherever possible, teaching staff will adapt their lesson plans and the curriculum to allow all pupils to reach their full potential and receive the support they need.

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James Calvert Spence College will ensure that all extracurricular activities are accessible to all pupils. The school will make all reasonable adjustments to allow pupils with SEND to participate in all school activities.

7. Admissions

James Calvert Spence College will act in accordance with the Admissions Policy.

The school will apply the same entry criteria to all pupils and potential pupils.

In the event of entry examinations, the school will support those with SEND by making any reasonable adjustments necessary, e.g. publishing exam papers in a larger font.

James Calvert Spence College will strive to not put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at the school.

All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all the opportunities available to any member of the school community.

Information will be obtained on future pupils to facilitate advanced planning.

Prospective parents/carers of statemented pupils, and pupils with SEND, are invited to a transition meeting prior to the pupil starting the school to discuss the pupil's specific needs.

8. Curriculum

James Calvert Spence College is committed to providing a healthy environment that enables full curriculum access, which values and includes all pupils regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual and emotional needs.

The Accessibility Plan is aimed at increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.

The curriculum covers teaching and learning and wider provision embracing clubs; leisure, sporting and cultural activities; and school trips.

Planning for improved access to the curriculum includes consideration of school and classroom organisation and support, timetabling, curriculum options, deployment of staff and staff information and training.

Curriculum audits can support the school to review patterns of achievement and participation by disabled pupils in different areas of the curriculum, e.g. the inclusion of physically disabled children in PE, and then to identify action to increase participation.

James Calvert Spence College is keen to ensure no pupil is excluded from any aspect of the school curriculum due to their disabilities or impairments.

The school aims to provide a differentiated curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress. Subject teachers, Directors and the SENDCO will work together to adapt a pupil's Individual Pupil Passports with advice sought from outside agencies where appropriate, to allow all pupils to reach their full potential.

Physical Education lessons will be adapted, wherever possible, to allow pupils with disabilities to participate in lessons.

Where areas of the curriculum present challenges for a pupil, these will be dealt with on an individual basis.

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The teachers, in discussion with the pupil and their parents/carers, will ensure that all adjustments possible, in line with common sense and practical application, will be made for any disability or impairment.

There are established procedures for the identification and support of pupils with SEND in place at the school and detailed pupil information on pupils with SEND are given to relevant staff to aid teaching, e.g. 'pupil passports'.

Specialist resources will be made available for pupils with visual impairments, such a large print reading books.

Learning Support Partners are deployed to implement specific literacy, numeracy and speech programmes.

9. Physical environment

James Calvert Spence College is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff members, parents/carers and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within the school premises.

9.1 Improving the physical environment of schools

This strand of the planning duty covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

The physical environment includes steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, heating, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs, interior surfaces, room decor and furniture.

Improvements to physical access may include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops, communication aids, well designed (passive) room acoustics and way-finding systems. The provision of 'quiet' areas and improvements to the physical safety of the environment, indoors and outdoors, may also enhance access for children with learning disabilities.

Improved access in existing buildings can often be achieved by rearranging room space, removing obstructions from walkways, changing the layout of classrooms, providing designated storage space or reallocating rooms to particular subject specialisms.

Physical aids to access education cover ICT equipment, desks, chairs, writing equipment, science equipment etc. e.g. through enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept keyboards, communication aids, switches, photocopying enlargement facilities, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor co-ordination and poor hand/eye skills such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

Where additional needs are identified, James Calvert Spence College will endeavour to provide aids, improvements and support where possible. James Calvert Spence College have identified areas where disabled students/users may not be able to access and have included these areas in the Accessibility Plan review in order to identify future improvements.

James Calvert Spence College has adapted entrances so as ramps are available for access.

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The school will be moving to a new site in September 2026. The school will fully comply with DDA regulations.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when new legislation/guidance concerning equality and disability is published.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will review the policy in collaboration with the SENDCO's support.

Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed or if there is a change in legislation.

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Appendix A – JCSC Accessibility Plan

Part 1: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum

	Issue	What?	Who?	When?	Outcome criteria	Review
Short term	Access to ICT facilities for pupils with visual impairments or Dyslexia	• Access to enlarged computer screens and key boards where necessary • Support for pupils to increase the size of the font on the computer screen and change the background colour.	ICT Manager ICT Manager	Sep 2025	To ensure pupils with disabilities have the same access to ICT equipment as their non- disabled peers.	Support has been provided for students with visual impairments and dyslexia to access ICT.
	Access to talk to write software to support pupils with disabilities	Dragon speak or similar software to be made available for disabled pupils to use in the classroom.	ICT Manager	Sep 2025	To support disabled pupils to record their ideas effectively in class so they are not disadvantaged compared to their peers.	Talk to write software can be used using Google. Students who need this facility are supported to use this by their IT teacher.

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	Extend access to ICT equipment in classrooms and at home for disabled students and those with literacy difficulties.			Mar 2022	To support disabled pupils to record their ideas effectively in class so they are not disadvantaged compared to their peers.	Laptops are provided for home learning where needed (following the model adapted during COVID closure) Adaptations, such as changing screen colours can be implemented when required.
Short term	Identify the sensory challenges the school environment	Support from the LA ASD Team to identify possible sensory difficulties in the classrooms	SENDCO	Jan 2025	To support disabled pupils to manage their sensory processing difficulties	ASD sensory assessment was completed in 2019. There were few adjustments needed to the physical environment to support sensory needs. Individual desks were provided, where space permits, for students with sensory needs.
Short term	Safe space to be identified for disabled pupils to access during break and lunchtimes.	Mobile classroom to be staffed at break and lunch to support access for vulnerable students or students who need a quiet or adapted space.	HLTAs	September 2025	To provide emotional support for disabled pupils during unstructured times.	One of the mobile classrooms will be the designated safe space for students from September 2025

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Short term	A Short Term in school Alternative Provision was provided for students who were unable to access mainstream lessons to provide a therapeutic approach and re-engage these students in learning.	HLTA and 2 LSPS to be redirected to work in the Alternative provision and support students. A space identified for students as a base for learning Support and guidance to be sought from HINT team to implement the best model for AP.	SENDCO	Oct 2024	The therapeutic needs of a small group of children who struggle to access mainstream lessons can be addressed and students can be reintegrated into lessons for Sept 2026.	AP was set up and accessed by 6 students in total. 4 students were successfully integrated; one student was permanently excluded and one student moved on to external AP and is awaiting a special school place.

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Medium term	Review of the: • Teaching and Learning policy • Marking and feedback policy	To review policies to ensure both policies support disabled pupils and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure disabled pupils are not disadvantaged compared to their peers.	SENDCO/ AHT for Teaching and Learning/ Deputy Head Teacher	Sep 2025		Policies are reviewed on an annual basis. Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure no disabled students are disadvantaged compared to their peers.
Medium term	Review the accessibility of information provided to pupils and parents.	Review pupil resources and letters to parents.	Deputy Headteacher / Head of Behaviour and Pastoral	Sep 2025	Ensure all written text is accessible and suitable for the target audience.	Where possible written information is supported by visuals and simplified materials for SEND students. Key documents such as behaviour policy, SEND information report is available in summary to support students and parents.

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Medium term	To improve the access to the curriculum for pupils with behaviour and concentration difficulties To improve bespoke support for students who struggle to regulate in the classroom	Whole school training in managing regulation and the relational approach. Bespoke support from HINT team at LA to establish alternative provisions X3 Drop in consultations sessions across the year with HINT for staff to problem solve and discuss individual barriers and adaptations for students. Establish a regulation on-call with LSPs trained by HINT team.	SENDCO/ Deputy Headteacher / AHT Teaching and Learning	Sep 2024 Feb 2025	Support pupils with behavioural/ concentration difficulties to remain inside of the classroom Support pupils with SEMH and Literacy difficulties to remain inside of the classroom Students are given bespoke evidence-based support to regulate themselves and return to lessons.	ADHD, ACE, Attachment training has been delivered to all staff. Training in relational approach and regulation delivered to all staff Enhanced training has been accessed by LSPs and PSOs. Training is delivered to teaching staff to support specific disabled students. All LSPs trained and provided with resources to support students to regulate.

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Long term	Review schemes of work	Review of schemes of work/ planning to identify possible challenges for disabled pupils, this includes access to extracurricular activities and residential visits.	SLT/ Subject directors	Sep 2025 On going target - Sep 2026	To support access to the curriculum for disabled pupils	SoW have been reviewed and extra-curricular activities (including careers) have been linked to curriculum delivery SoW will be reviewed to ensure they are accessible for disabled students again in 2025-26

Part 2: Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled people to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

James Calvert Spence College is a school which caters for pupils between the ages of 11 - 18 (years 7-13). The school campus has one site, Acklington Road.

It is due to move into a new building in September 2026 which will by DDA compliant according to today's regulations.

The current school building was built in the 1980s.

The main entrance of the Acklington Road site has a lowered reception area so is accessible for wheelchair users. It has accessible disabled toilet facilities, two lifts and a further lift in the sports hall. All of the classrooms and facilities are accessible by wheelchair users apart from the office spaces and staff room area. The Acklington Road Quay is accessible by a ramp and has a disabled toilet. Evac chairs are available and evacuation plans are in place for disabled staff and pupils.

The previous plan continuous to be available below and regular monitoring of the school site takes place to make adjustments where necessary. This is a short term arrangement and the plan will be rewritten when the school moves to its new site in September 2026.

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	Issue	What?	Who?	When? (target ongoing?)	Review
Short term	Increase access to the reception area	Installation of a bell to alert staff to visitor presence	Site management team	Sep 2019	Old system is defective. New bell to be installed. May 2021
	Increase the contrast between the stairs/ steps and the nosing in some areas of the school	Replace the nosing on some stairs/ steps in school to increase contrast for visually impaired people.	Site management team	Sep 2019	New nosings replaced on staircase to first floor offices. All other staircases checked and conform. Checked and monitored on a regular basis.
	Support access to the learning environment for visually impaired pupils	High visibility strip on the door way of room 32 and workshop 6	Site management Team	Sep 2019	High visibility strip can be installed on the doorways of rooms where it is missing/ worn away.
	Review of the lighting system (outside of the toilet areas)	Review of lighting to ensure it is bright enough to allow access for people with visual impairments	Site management Team	Sep 2019	Lighting has been upgraded in various locations on site with LED lighting. All other lighting is checked for suitability and monitored.

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Medium term	To support access to areas of the school such as art	Temporary ramping outside of the art department and into the English area to be replaced with permanent ramping.	Site management Team	Sep 2021	New ramps to be fitted by facilities – target date September 2021.
	To support disabled access to fire evacuation routes	Rooms 8-11 ramp to be installed in and outside of the fire doors	Site management Team	May 2021	Portable ramp to be sourced and be available on request from facilities. Timetables should be reviewed if a disabled person is attending the school site to ensure ramp access or a clear exit is available.
Long term	Increase access to disabled toilet faculties	Disabled toilet facilities to be created in the maths area and English area	Site management team	Sep 2021 Target on going	Needs to be considered as part of a refurbishment plan and capital investment.
	Replacement of the flooring in areas	Replacement of flooring to ensure is even and can be accessed by disabled people.	Site management team	Sep 2021 Target ongoing	Needs to be considered as part of a refurbishment plan and capital investment. Quotes have been received for safety flooring to replace carpets in all social areas but this is for safety and not accessibility.

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	Allow access to staff room and office space for disabled staff	Lift to be installed in the library area or access route from maths area to staff corridor to allow lift access to the staff room and office spaces	Site management Team	September 2022 Target ongoing	Needs to be considered as part of a refurbishment plan and capital investment.

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