Bowden House School and Bowden Primary

Accessibility Plan

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Agreed by the schools governing body and minuted at their meeting.
Agreed: Autumn Term 2026
Review date: Autumn Term 2027

Statement of intent

Bowden House School and Bowden Primary are committed to providing an inclusive environment in which disabled students and pupils can participate fully in education, residential provision and the wider life of the schools. This plan sets out how the schools will improve access from Autumn 2026 to August 2029. It covers access to the curriculum, the physical environment and information. It also includes an additional priority to reduce barriers for young carers and their families.

The schools will anticipate and remove barriers wherever reasonably possible, make reasonable adjustments for individuals, and consider accessibility when planning teaching, residential provision, enrichment, communication, procurement and changes to the buildings.

The statutory aims are to:

increase the extent to which disabled students and pupils can participate in the curriculum

improve the physical environment so that disabled students and pupils can take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services

improve the availability of information for disabled students and pupils in accessible formats

The plan applies to both school sites and, where relevant, the residential provision at Bowden House School. It is available on the school website and a paper copy or alternative format can be requested from the school office.

1. Policy Aims

Bowden House School and Bowden Primary are committed to providing an inclusive and accessible environment in which disabled students and pupils can participate fully in education and the wider life of the schools.

The schools aim to:

- increase the extent to which disabled students and pupils can participate in the curriculum, residential provision, educational visits, community activities, careers education, further education, training and preparation for adulthood
- improve and maintain the physical environment so that disabled students and pupils can access the education, facilities, benefits and services provided by the schools
- improve the availability of information in accessible formats for disabled students and pupils and, where appropriate, their parents and carers

- identify and remove barriers arising from physical, sensory, communication, social, emotional, mental health or long-term medical needs
- assess accessibility requirements at admission, transition and review, taking account of education, health and care plans, professional advice and the views of students, pupils and their families
- provide personalised teaching, reasonable adjustments and appropriate support to enable students and pupils to engage successfully in learning
- ensure that staff understand their responsibilities for disability equality, accessibility and the implementation of agreed reasonable adjustments
- work collaboratively with parents, carers, therapists, health professionals, the local authority and other relevant services
- provide support through the Family Support Worker for family members, including young carers, where accessibility, communication or caring responsibilities create barriers to participation
- review accessibility arrangements regularly and respond when individual needs, activities, staffing, facilities or the physical environment change.

The schools recognise that accessibility is an ongoing responsibility. Existing provision will be maintained and reviewed, and further improvements will be identified through the accessibility action plan.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This plan has been prepared with regard to Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act, 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. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice explains that long-term means a year or more and substantial means more than minor or trivial.
Schools must make reasonable adjustments to avoid substantial disadvantage to disabled students and pupils. The governing body must also have regard to the need to allocate adequate resources when implementing the accessibility plan.
The school website will publish this plan. The SEN information report will refer to and link to it. The plan should be read alongside the schools' equality, SEND, curriculum, medical, health and safety and complaints arrangements.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Full Governing Body	Approves the plan, considers resourcing, receives monitoring information and holds leaders to account for progress.
Headteacher	Ensures the plan is implemented across both schools and that accessibility is considered in strategic, staffing and premises decisions.
SENCo	Coordinates the plan, advises on reasonable adjustments, gathers stakeholder views and monitors curriculum and information access.
Site and health and safety leads	Coordinate audits and maintenance of physical access, emergency arrangements and accessibility-related premises work.
Curriculum and residential leaders	Embed accessible planning, resources, activities and review within their areas of responsibility.
Family Support Worker	Supports family members, including young carers, and helps coordinate appropriate communication, practical support and referrals.
All staff	Identify barriers, implement agreed adjustments, record concerns and seek advice promptly.

Development and consultation

The plan is based on a review of the previous accessibility plan, the physical arrangements described for both schools, the February 2026 accessibility plan model and checklist supplied to the school, and current statutory sources. During the plan period, leaders will strengthen this evidence through site audits and consultation.

Consultation and evidence will include, as appropriate:

- the views of students and pupils, including those who use reasonable adjustments
- parents and carers, including those with disabilities, illness or communication needs
- teachers, residential staff, support staff, therapists and other relevant professionals
- governors and the local authority
- EHCP reviews, individual plans, complaints, incidents, participation information and accessibility request

3. Action Plan

Progress against the actions will be reviewed termly by the SENCo and relevant leads. The action plan may be updated before the end of the three-year period when a new barrier, change in need or improvement opportunity is identified.

3.1 Increase access to the curriculum

Current practice and barrier	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Success criteria
Individual planning is already informed by EHCPs, assessment and professional advice. The quality and recording of adjustments should be consistent across education, residential and off-site provision.	Agreed adjustments are current, clear and consistently used.	Review accessibility and reasonable adjustments at admission, transition, EHCP review and when needs change. Record strategies in the appropriate individual plan and communicate them to relevant staff.	SENCo, teaching and residential leads	From Autumn 2026, at least annually and when needs change	Plans identify relevant barriers and adjustments. Staff and students/pupils can explain the support in place. Review records show adjustments have been evaluated.
The curriculum is specialist and personalised. A structured audit is needed to check participation across subjects, enrichment, residential activities, visits, careers and post-16 pathways.	Disabled students and pupils participate as fully as reasonably possible in the whole offer.	Complete an annual participation audit. Identify patterns of non-participation, consult individuals and remove avoidable barriers through planning, staffing, equipment, timetabling or alternative access.	SENCo, curriculum and residential leaders	Baseline by Spring 2027, review annually	Participation data and case reviews show that barriers are identified early and that exclusions from activities are exceptional, justified and reviewed.

Staff use adaptive and therapeutic approaches. Training needs will change as the cohort and individual needs change.	Staff have the knowledge and confidence to implement adjustments safely and effectively.	Complete an annual training-needs analysis covering disability equality, SEMH, neurodiversity, communication, sensory needs, medical conditions and assistive technology. Provide induction and targeted training where required.	Headteacher, SENCo, CPD lead	Analysis by Autumn 2026, programme reviewed annually	Training records show appropriate coverage. Learning walks, reviews and staff feedback show agreed strategies are understood and used.
Progress and outcomes are monitored, but accessibility information should be considered explicitly when interpreting attainment, attendance, behaviour and engagement.	Monitoring identifies whether barriers or adjustments affect progress and engagement.	Include accessibility and reasonable-adjustment checks in termly pupil progress and pastoral reviews. Record actions and review their impact.	SENCo, data lead, teaching leads	From Spring 2027, termly	Review records link identified barriers to actions. Leaders can evidence whether adjustments improved participation, engagement or progress.
Curriculum materials are adapted to individual need. Representation and accessibility of resources need periodic review.	Resources are readable, age-appropriate and representative of disabled people.	Audit a sample of curriculum resources for reading load, layout, contrast, alternative formats and positive representation of disability. Share a practical resource standard with staff.	Curriculum leads, SENCo	Standard by Summer 2027, sample audit annually	Audits show improved consistency. Student and pupil feedback indicates that resources are understandable and respectful.

3.2 Improve and maintain the physical environment

Current practice and barrier	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Success criteria
Bowden House School has a lift and two accessible toilets: one on the ground floor and one on the first floor. Ground-floor residential bedrooms are available, except in the post-16 unit. Bowden Primary has single-storey classrooms and one accessible toilet. These arrangements were confirmed as unchanged in September 2026.	Existing physical-access arrangements are maintained and remain available, safe and fit for purpose.	Maintain clear access to the lift, accessible toilets and circulation routes. Include these facilities in planned inspections and maintenance checks. Record and address faults promptly and consider individual access requirements at admission and review.	Site and health and safety leads, SENCo	By December 2026, repeat annually and after significant change	The lift, accessible toilets and routes remain operational and unobstructed. Inspection and maintenance records are complete, and faults are risk-assessed and resolved promptly
A full documented accessibility audit covering both sites is required.	Leaders have an accurate record of physical barriers and priorities.	Complete a joint accessibility audit covering arrival, parking and drop-off, external routes, entrances, doors, corridors, stairs, lift access, toilets, classrooms, residential spaces, lighting, acoustics, signage and evacuation arrangements.	Site and health and safety leads, SENCo	By December 2026; repeat annually and after significant change	The audit is completed for both sites, actions are prioritised by risk and impact, and evidence of completion is retained.
Emergency arrangements must reflect individual mobility, sensory, communication, medical and SEMH needs across	Every person who needs individual emergency support has a current and practicable plan.	Review the need for personal emergency evacuation plans and other individual emergency arrangements at admission and when needs or locations change.	Health and safety lead, SENCo, residential lead	Initial review by December 2026, ongoing	Required plans are in place, understood by relevant staff and reviewed after drills, incidents or changes.

education, residential and off-site contexts.		Practise and review arrangements as appropriate.			
Sensory and communication needs can be affected by noise, crowding, lighting, visual clutter and unclear wayfinding.	Learning and communal spaces reduce avoidable sensory and orientation barriers.	Use pupil/student voice and professional advice to identify priority spaces. Introduce proportionate measures such as calm routes, clear signs, visual cues, seating choices, low-arousal spaces or acoustic adjustments.	SENCo, site lead, teaching and residential leads	Priorities agreed by Spring 2027, phased through August 2029	Users report improved access to priority spaces. Reviews show that agreed measures are present and used.
Future refurbishment, equipment purchases and room changes may create or remove barriers.	Accessibility is considered before decisions are finalised.	Add an accessibility check to premises planning, procurement and refurbishment decisions. Seek specialist advice where a change could materially affect access.	Headteacher, site lead, budget holders	From Autumn 2026, ongoing	Decision records demonstrate that access was considered and avoidable new barriers were not introduced.

3.3 Improve access to information

Current practice and barrier	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Success criteria
Staff already adapt communication to individual need. A consistent protocol is needed for requesting, producing and recording alternative formats.	Students, pupils and families can obtain information in a format they can use.	Agree an accessible-information protocol covering clear language, large print, coloured backgrounds, pictorial or symbol-supported text, read-aloud, digital, audio or video formats and translation or interpretation where appropriate.	SENCo, administration lead	Protocol by Spring 2027, review annually	Staff know how to respond to requests. Requests, agreed formats and delivery are recorded and completed within a reasonable timescale agreed with the recipient.

Communication needs and preferences may change and may apply to parents or carers as well as students and pupils.	Preferred communication methods are known and used.	Ask about communication and access needs at admission and review. Record agreed preferences in the appropriate system and alert relevant staff, subject to data protection requirements.	SENCo, admissions and administration staff	From Autumn 2026, review at least annually	Records are current and sampled communications reflect the agreed method or format.
Published documents and website content may vary in readability and digital accessibility.	Priority public information is easy to find, read and use with assistive technology.	Audit priority website pages and downloadable documents, beginning with SEND, admissions, complaints, safeguarding, curriculum and this accessibility plan. Use headings, descriptive links, readable layouts and accessible source formats.	Website and policy lead, SENCo	Initial audit by Summer 2027, review when content is updated	Priority pages pass the school's document checklist, accessibility issues are logged and corrected, and accessible versions are published.
Signs and emergency information must be understandable to people with different communication or sensory needs.	Essential information can be understood quickly and independently where reasonably possible.	Review key internal signs, room labels, visitor information and emergency instructions. Improve contrast, positioning, wording and use of symbols where this would remove a barrier.	Site lead, health and safety lead, SENCo	Audit by Spring 2027, improvements phased through Summer 2028	Priority signs and instructions are clear, consistently placed and positively evaluated through user feedback or walkthroughs.

3.4 Additional support for young carers and their families

Current practice and barrier	Objective	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Success criteria
The Family Support Worker supports family members, including young carers. Young carers may face attendance, punctuality, emotional, communication or practical barriers, and their needs may not always be disclosed.	Young carers are identified sensitively and offered coordinated, appropriate support.	Confirm and communicate a confidential route through the Family Support Worker for students, pupils and families to request help. Include proportionate prompts within admission and pastoral review processes.	Family Support Worker, DSL, SENCo	Route confirmed by December 2026, ongoing support thereafter	The referral route is communicated. Identified young carers have an agreed support plan where needed and know whom to contact.
Parents or carers with disability or illness may experience barriers to meetings, events or home-school communication.	Families can participate in school communication and decision-making.	Offer reasonable flexibility such as remote or telephone meetings, adjusted timing, accessible venues, alternative formats and liaison with relevant services, according to assessed need.	Family Support Worker, SENCo, pastoral leads	From Autumn 2026, ongoing	Family preferences are recorded and reasonable options are offered. Feedback and complaints identify no unaddressed recurring barrier.
Support needs may span school, residential, health and local authority services.	Support is coordinated and does not rely on the young person repeatedly explaining their circumstances.	With appropriate consent and safeguarding oversight, coordinate information and referrals with the family, local authority and relevant services. Review the impact on attendance, wellbeing and learning.	Family Support Worker, DSL, SENCo	From Spring 2027, review at least termly for active cases	Active cases show clear ownership, agreed actions and review dates. Referrals and outcomes are recorded securely.

4. Monitoring

The SENCo will coordinate termly monitoring of the action plan with the responsible leads. Progress will be reported to the Headteacher and the appropriate governing body meeting or committee. Monitoring will consider completion of actions and their effect on access, participation and experience.

Evidence may include:

- completed site and curriculum audits
- records of reasonable adjustments and review
- participation, attendance, progress and engagement information
- training and maintenance records
- feedback from students, pupils, parents, carers and staff
- accessibility requests, complaints, incidents and learning from them

The plan will be reviewed in full at least every three years and may be amended sooner following consultation, a significant change to the premises or provision, a new access need, a complaint, an incident or updated legal or statutory guidance. Material amendments will be approved through the school's governance arrangements, and the current plan will remain published.

5. Links to other Policies

- SEND policy and SEN information report
- Equality information and objectives
- Curriculum information
- Admissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Medicines administration policy
- Health and safety policy and relevant risk assessments
- Emergency and evacuation arrangements
- Complaints policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices