



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2026–2029

Longwill School for the Deaf

A small, sign-bilingual primary school for Deaf children

Plan period	July 2026 – August 2029
Document status	Governing body approval
Plan owner	Headteacher
Approved by	Longwill Governing Body
Approval date	Pending governing body approval
Review cycle	Progress reviewed annually; full plan renewed by July 2029
Publication	School website; accessible formats available on request

This plan is available in alternative formats on request.

1. Purpose of this plan

This Accessibility Plan sets out how Longwill School for the Deaf will improve access for disabled pupils over the 2026–2029 planning cycle. It is a working document: actions will be monitored, reported to governors and updated when needs, guidance or the school environment change.

The three statutory aims

The school will: (1) increase disabled pupils' participation in the curriculum; (2) improve the physical environment so disabled pupils can take greater advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services; and (3) improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils.

The plan applies to education and the wider life of the school, including enrichment, visits, clubs, assemblies, performances, transitions, family engagement, digital services and emergency arrangements.

1.1 Statutory framework

This plan has been prepared with regard to the Equality Act 2010, including the school accessibility planning duty in Schedule 10; the Children and Families Act 2014; the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014; the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years; and current Department for Education guidance for maintained schools.

Under the Equality Act, disability is defined by reference to a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The school will not wait for a formal diagnosis where there is sufficient evidence of a need for an adjustment.

The school must make reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids and services where this is reasonable and necessary to avoid substantial disadvantage. Decisions will be individual, anticipatory and evidence informed. No pupil or family will be charged for a reasonable adjustment.

Related but separate duties

This Accessibility Plan is not the school's Equality Information and Objectives or its SEND Information Report. These documents should be consistent, cross-referenced and reviewed together, but each has a distinct statutory purpose.

2. Longwill context and vision

Longwill is a small foundation special primary school for Deaf children aged 2–11. The school follows the National Curriculum within a specialist, sign-bilingual approach in which British Sign Language (BSL) and English are used in parallel. Accessibility at Longwill therefore means more than entry to a building: it includes full access to language, learning, relationships, information, Deaf identity and participation.

Our purpose is to equip Deaf children with the knowledge, skills and self-belief to lead happy, independent and fulfilling lives. The school's CIRCLE values—Curiosity; Independence; Respect and Resilience; Community; Learning; and Equality—guide the implementation of this plan.

2.1 Our accessibility commitments

- Place Deaf children's language access, identity, safety and belonging at the centre of planning.
- Anticipate barriers and remove them as early as possible, including before admission, transition, trips, events and procurement decisions.
- Make reasonable adjustments that are tailored to the individual pupil and their normal way of communicating and working.
- Seek pupil and family views in accessible ways, including BSL or interpretation where needed, and show how feedback has influenced action.
- Design communications and digital content so they are accessible from the outset, rather than relying only on changes after a problem arises.
- Use evidence, review impact and direct resources to the barriers that create the greatest disadvantage.

2.2 Children's rights

The plan supports the school's Rights Respecting ethos. In particular, it reflects the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Article 2 (non-discrimination), Article 12 (the child's views), Article 23 (disabled children's participation and independence), Article 28 (the right to education), Article 29 (the aims of education) and Article 30 (the right to use one's language and culture).

3. Identifying and removing barriers

Accessibility planning is part of everyday school leadership, not a one-off premises exercise. The school will consider barriers at whole-school level and for individual pupils, staff, families and visitors. The following process will be used:

1. Identify: draw on pupil profiles and EHCPs, family and pupil voice, staff observations, site and digital audits, incidents, complaints, attendance and participation information.
2. Plan: agree the adjustment, responsible lead, resources, timescale and evidence of success; seek specialist advice where needed.
3. Implement: communicate the adjustment clearly, provide training and ensure it follows the pupil through lessons, activities, visits and transitions.
4. Review: check the pupil's experience and participation, not only whether an action was completed; amend promptly if the adjustment is ineffective.

3.1 Reasonable-adjustment decisions

When deciding what is reasonable, the school will consider the effectiveness of the adjustment, the pupil's views and needs, practicability, health and safety, cost and available resources, disruption, and the availability of external support. Cost alone will not determine the decision. Where a preferred adjustment is not reasonable, the school will document the reasons and consider an effective alternative.

Individual arrangements will be recorded in the pupil's plan or profile where appropriate. They will be reviewed at admission, transition, annual review and whenever needs or circumstances change.

3.2 Consultation and information used

Planning and annual review should draw on:

- pupil voice gathered through accessible and sign-supported methods;
- parents' and carers' communication preferences and feedback;
- teachers of Deaf children and the wider multi-disciplinary team;
- governors, staff, health and safety advisers and premises specialists;
- occupational therapy, physiotherapy, audiology and other specialist advice where relevant;
- complaints, incidents, near misses, participation and attendance patterns; and
- current statutory guidance and accessibility standards.

4. Current strengths and baseline

The previous plan and the school's published information identify a strong specialist foundation on which to build. This includes a sign-bilingual curriculum, BSL and English communication, a focus on Deaf identity and independence, specialist staff, pupil voice and a Rights Respecting ethos.

The 2023 plan also recorded lifts, ramps, accessible parking, personal-care facilities, Deaf alerting equipment, evacuation chairs and access work to outdoor areas. Because premises and equipment change over time, the 2026 baseline will verify the condition, coverage, testing arrangements and practical usability of each feature rather than treating the earlier record as a current audit.

Area	Current foundation
Curriculum and participation	Specialist sign-bilingual teaching; BSL and English used in parallel; Deaf identity and independence embedded in school life; personalised support and specialist assessment.
Physical environment	Existing adaptations and alerting systems recorded in the previous plan; specialist knowledge of visual access, communication and emergency arrangements.
Information and communication	BSL-informed family communication, accessible meeting support where needed, Microsoft 365 as the main digital platform, and an established school website and policy publication route.

5. Roles, accountability and resources

Who	Key responsibility
Governing Body	Approve and oversee the plan; receive annual progress and impact information; consider accessibility in strategic decisions and resource allocation.
Headteacher	Own the plan, assign leads and resources, ensure consultation and report progress and material risks to governors.
Senior leaders and SEND leadership	Coordinate curriculum access and reasonable adjustments; assure quality; ensure pupil and family voice informs decisions.
School Business Manager / site and digital leads	Coordinate premises, emergency, procurement, website and digital-accessibility actions; keep evidence of checks and works.
All staff	Implement agreed adjustments, create accessible learning and communication, raise barriers promptly and complete relevant training.
Pupils and families	Contribute experience and feedback in their preferred communication format; take part in reviews where appropriate.

5.1 Resourcing and evidence

Actions will be included in relevant improvement, premises, health and safety, curriculum and digital plans. Low-cost adjustments should be made promptly. Higher-cost work will be risk ranked and considered through budget and capital planning. Evidence may include audit records, photographs, test logs, training records, pupil and family feedback, accessibility-checker reports, participation data, work samples, governor minutes and completed procurement checks.

6. Action plan 2026–2029

The actions below are the school's forward priorities. Leads may delegate tasks but remain accountable for completion and evidence. Timescales should be brought forward where an individual pupil's access or safety requires earlier action.

How progress will be judged

Success means that barriers are reduced and participation improves. Completion of a task, purchase or training session is not sufficient on its own; impact will be checked with pupils, families and staff and through relevant evidence.

Priority 1 — Improve the physical environment

Action	Lead	Timescale	Success measures / evidence
Complete a documented whole-site accessibility audit covering routes, thresholds, lifts, ramps, parking, toilets and personal care, learning and meeting spaces, outdoor and Forest School areas, lighting, acoustics, sightlines, signage, alerting and visitor access. Produce a risk-ranked, costed schedule.	Headteacher; SBM; site lead	Autumn 2026; annual check	Audit signed off; priorities costed and scheduled; urgent barriers controlled; progress reported to governors.
Map, verify and test visual, vibrating and other Deaf alerting and emergency communication across classrooms, toilets, corridors, playgrounds, outdoor areas, isolated rooms and visitor spaces. Record faults, responses and drills.	H&S lead; site lead	Termly and after changes	Complete coverage map; termly test log; faults closed within agreed times; pupil and staff feedback confirms alerts are understood.
Review lighting, glare, background noise, acoustics and signed/spoken sightlines in teaching, therapy and meeting spaces. Make quick adjustments and include larger works in the premises plan.	SLT; site lead; teachers of Deaf children	Audit by Dec 2026; annual review	Room checklist completed; agreed improvements delivered; classroom observations show clear visual and communication access.
Maintain accessible routes and facilities, including lifts, ramps, thresholds, contrasting step edges, accessible parking, personal-care spaces and outdoor access. Use a clear reporting and response process.	SBM; site lead	Ongoing; termly inspection	Inspection and maintenance records current; routes remain unobstructed; defects are risk assessed and closed within agreed times.
Prepare and review Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for pupils and staff who need them, with suitable visitor and contractor arrangements. Include trips and temporary changes; practise plans appropriately.	H&S lead; DSL; class teams	At admission; annually; when needs change	Current plans are readily available to relevant staff; drills demonstrate safe, understood evacuation; learning is recorded and acted on.

Priority 2 — Increase curriculum and wider participation

Action	Lead	Timescale	Success measures / evidence
Review curriculum planning and delivery for BSL–English sign-bilingual access, language demands, visual explanation, pre-teaching, specialist support, assistive technology and independence. Sample practice and outcomes each term.	Curriculum lead; SLT; teachers of Deaf children	From Autumn 2026; termly	Planning and work scrutiny show consistent access; observations confirm pupils can follow, contribute and work increasingly independently.
Ensure audio and video used for learning have accurate captions or transcripts and an accessible visual presentation. Provide an effective alternative where a resource cannot be made accessible.	Digital lead; curriculum leads	Standard in place by Mar 2027; ongoing	Resource checks show compliance; exceptions and alternatives are recorded; pupils report reliable access to multimedia learning.
Review reasonable adjustments for national, statutory and internal assessment using current guidance and each pupil's normal way of working. Ensure arrangements are practised and do not create a new communication barrier.	Assessment lead; class teams	Annually and before each assessment cycle	Arrangements are timely, evidenced and applied accurately; pupils understand them; post-assessment review identifies any improvement needed.

Action	Lead	Timescale	Success measures / evidence
Audit access to trips, clubs, PE, performances, assemblies, Forest School, residential opportunities and family events. Identify barriers before booking or planning and record the adjustment.	EVC; activity and curriculum leads	Termly; before each activity	Participation is not reduced by avoidable access barriers; planning records adjustments; non-participation is reviewed and addressed.
Gather pupil views about communication, the environment, learning and participation through accessible, sign-supported methods. Report themes, decisions and completed actions to pupils and governors.	Pupil voice lead; SLT	At least twice yearly	Representative feedback is recorded; leaders can show what changed; pupils know how to raise an access concern.
Deliver a planned staff-development programme covering sign-bilingual pedagogy, BSL–English access, sensory and SEMH needs, assistive and hearing technology, reasonable adjustments and inclusive emergency communication.	Headteacher; CPD lead	Annual programme	Training matrix is current; induction covers core expectations; observations and staff confidence checks show learning is applied.

Priority 3 — Improve accessible information and digital communication

Action	Lead	Timescale	Success measures / evidence
Record and review the communication and access preferences of pupils, families, staff and regular visitors. Use them for meetings, events, consultations, routine contact and emergency information.	Office lead; class teams; SLT	Autumn 2026; review annually	Preferences are current, securely recorded and routinely used; families confirm communication is timely and understandable.
Create accessible Microsoft 365 templates and a pre-publication check for documents and presentations: heading styles, readable layout and contrast, meaningful links, alt text, accessible tables, captions or transcripts, and the Microsoft Accessibility Checker.	Digital lead; office lead	Templates by Mar 2027; ongoing	Core templates are in use; sampled files pass the agreed checks; staff can explain and apply the standard.
Review the school website annually for accessibility and keep the accessibility statement current. Prioritise essential policies, forms, contact routes and online administrative tasks; publish a clear route for requesting another format.	SBM; digital lead; web provider	First review by Jul 2027; annually	Statement is dated and accurate; priority issues have owners and dates; requests for alternative formats are logged and met promptly.
Prioritise BSL, captioned, plain-English or other accessible versions of key family information, policies and consultations. Maintain a register showing format, publication date and review date.	SLT; office and communications leads	Priority list by Dec 2026; phased through 2026–28	High-priority information is available in agreed formats; families know where to find it; the register is reviewed each term.
Provide accessible alternatives for urgent messages, meetings and events, including BSL or interpreting, live captions, visual or plain-language information and printed or digital alternatives as required.	Office lead; SLT	Ongoing	Event and emergency plans identify communication support; missed or inaccessible messages are reviewed; feedback confirms access.
Add accessibility requirements to procurement and commissioning for new digital services, hardware, learning content, signage and premises work. Obtain evidence and test compatibility with assistive and hearing technology where relevant.	SBM; digital lead; SEND lead	From Autumn 2026	Procurement records include accessibility checks; users are involved where appropriate; significant barriers are resolved before purchase or documented with mitigation.

7. Monitoring, review and publication

The Headteacher will maintain an evidence log and provide a progress report to the Governing Body at least annually. Governors will consider delivery, impact, outstanding risks, resources and any adjustment needed to the action plan. Material access or safety issues will be escalated without waiting for the annual review.

The school will publish the current approved plan on its website. The published version will show the approval and review dates. A paper copy, accessible electronic version, BSL-supported explanation or other reasonable format will be provided on request. Requests should be made through the school office.

7.1 Annual review record

Review point	Progress and evidence	Further action / change	Reported to governors
July 2027			
July 2028			
July 2029 / renewal			

8. Related school documents

- Equality Information and Objectives
- SEND Information Report and SEND Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy, fire risk assessment and emergency plans
- Curriculum, Teaching and Learning and Assessment policies
- Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Attendance and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policies
- Educational Visits, Complaints, Admissions and Data Protection policies
- Website Accessibility Statement and digital / acceptable-use arrangements

9. Key statutory and guidance sources

- [Equality Act 2010 — Schedule 10](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [What maintained schools must publish online](#)
- [DfE digital accessibility standard for schools and colleges](#)
- [GOV.UK model accessibility statement](#)
- [Fire safety risk assessment: means of escape for disabled people](#)
- [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

10. School contact

Longwill School for the Deaf, Bell Hill, Birmingham B31 1LD

Website: www.longwill.bham.sch.uk

Questions, access concerns or requests for an alternative format should be directed to the school office or Headteacher using the current contact details published on the school website.