



THORNGUMBALD
PRIMARY

Equality and Accessibility Use Policy

Issue Date: Autumn 2026
Review Date: Autumn 2028

Our Vision

At Thorngumbald Primary School, we believe that every child has strengths, interests, experiences and potential.

Equality does not mean treating every child in exactly the same way. It means recognising that children are different, understanding the barriers they may experience and making sure that those barriers do not prevent them from participating, learning, belonging and succeeding.

We want every child to feel valued, included and able to flourish. We recognise and celebrate difference and seek to create a school community in which children learn to understand themselves and others, show respect and curiosity, and recognise the contribution that every individual can make.

Our approach is rooted in strong relationships. We want children to know that they are known, valued and cared for, that their voice matters and that they have a secure sense of belonging.

We are ambitious for every child. Where children experience barriers, we consider what needs to change, what support may be needed and what reasonable adjustments can be made so that they can access learning and the wider life of the school.

Our curriculum and wider school life provide opportunities for children to develop an age-appropriate understanding of equality, diversity and difference. We actively challenge prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping and bullying.

Above all, we want every child at Thorngumbald to know:

You are loved.

You belong.

You can shine.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out how Thorngumbald Primary School meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

Equality is not a standalone initiative at Thorngumbald. It is part of the way we:

- Teach and support children;
- Build relationships;
- Remove barriers to participation;
- Make reasonable adjustments;
- Plan our curriculum and wider opportunities;
- Respond to behaviour, bullying and prejudice;
- Work with families;
- Make decisions and allocate resources.

This policy applies to pupils, prospective pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors.

It should be read alongside relevant school policies and plans, including the SEND Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Accessibility Plan and Pupil Premium Strategy.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from unlawful discrimination and places duties on schools in relation to equality.

The school will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils or prospective pupils in relation to admissions, the provision of education, access to benefits, facilities or services, exclusion or any other detriment.

The school will also meet its equality responsibilities in relation to staff, parents, carers and other members of the school community.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine protected characteristics:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation.

The application of the Act differs according to the context. The protected characteristics relevant to the school's pupil provisions are disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The school will keep its practice under review in response to relevant changes in legislation and statutory guidance.

Our Approach to Equality

We recognise that children and families may experience different barriers.

Some barriers relate directly to protected characteristics. Others may relate to SEND, disadvantage, family circumstances, mobility or other aspects of a child's individual experience.

Not every difference or disadvantage is an equality issue under the Equality Act. However, our commitment to inclusion means that we seek to understand and respond to barriers wherever they affect a child's ability to participate, learn, belong or flourish.

We therefore seek to:

Recognise

Understand individual strengths, needs, experiences and circumstances.

Remove barriers

Consider what can reasonably be changed, adapted or provided to enable participation and access.

Include

Ensure children have meaningful opportunities to participate in learning and the wider life of school.

Challenge

Challenge prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, harassment and bullying.

Belong

Create a culture in which children and adults feel known, valued and part of our school community.

We recognise that fairness does not always mean doing the same thing for everyone. Appropriate support, reasonable adjustments and different approaches may be necessary to ensure genuine equality of opportunity.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

Thorngumbald Primary School is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

In carrying out our functions, we have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In particular, we consider whether our decisions and practices:

- remove or minimise disadvantages;
- meet different needs;
- enable participation;
- challenge prejudice and stereotypes;
- promote understanding and respect.

Equality considerations form part of our decision-making and school improvement processes.

Reasonable Adjustments and Disability

Thorngumbald Primary School recognises its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required.

We will take reasonable steps to avoid a disabled pupil being placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with a non-disabled pupil.

Adjustments will be considered in response to individual needs and may relate to:

- Teaching and learning;
- Communication;
- Routines and expectations;
- The physical environment;
- Access to activities and experiences;
- Sensory needs;
- The use of resources or equipment.

Reasonable adjustments are considered alongside, but are distinct from, provision made under the SEND framework.

We work with pupils and families to understand barriers and identify appropriate support wherever possible.

Our Accessibility Plan 2026–2029 sets out our priorities for:

- Increasing access to the curriculum;
- Improving access to the physical environment;
- Improving access to information.

The Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

Equality Objectives 2026-2029

Our equality objectives have been developed with regard to our school context, available evidence and the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Equality Objective 1: Belonging, participation and opportunity

To ensure that children with protected characteristics, particularly disabled pupils, are able to participate fully in the life of the school and experience a strong sense of belonging.

We will:

- Identify and respond to barriers to participation;
- Review access to curriculum, enrichment, trips, residentials, clubs and wider opportunities;
- Make reasonable adjustments where required;
- Listen to pupil voice;
- Recognise and celebrate children's strengths and contributions.

We will monitor: participation, pupil voice, attendance and engagement, reasonable adjustments and access to wider opportunities.

Equality Objective 2: Understanding, respect and representation

To develop children's understanding of equality, difference and diversity so that pupils are equipped to recognise prejudice, challenge stereotypes and treat others with respect.

We will:

- Ensure appropriate representation within the curriculum;
- Provide age-appropriate opportunities to explore difference and diversity;
- Challenge stereotypes and prejudice;
- Monitor discriminatory language and prejudice-related incidents;
- Promote respectful relationships across our school community.

We will monitor: curriculum provision, pupil voice, behaviour and bullying information, discriminatory incidents and staff observations.

Equality Objective 3: Accessible communication and partnership

To ensure that children, parents and carers are able to access important school information and participate in school life, with reasonable adjustments and alternative formats provided where needed.

We will:

- Consider accessibility when communicating with families;
- Provide alternative formats where reasonably required;
- Consider individual communication needs;
- Listen to family feedback;
- Review the accessibility of key written and digital information.

We will monitor: family feedback, accessibility requests, communication reviews and the use of alternative formats.

Progress towards these objectives will be reviewed annually and reported through our published equality information.

Curriculum, Behaviour and School Culture

Equality is embedded within our curriculum and wider school culture.

Through teaching and school life, pupils are supported to:

- Understand and respect difference;
- Recognise unfairness and prejudice;
- Develop empathy;
- Challenge stereotypes;
- Understand different experiences and perspectives;

- Develop respectful relationships;
- Contribute positively to their community.

We do not tolerate bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Where incidents involving prejudice or a protected characteristic occur, they will be taken seriously and addressed in line with our Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Safeguarding procedures.

We recognise that behaviour is communication, and that some children need support to regulate and understand their behaviour. This does not prevent the school from responding appropriately where behaviour causes harm or involves discriminatory language or conduct.

Equality of Opportunity

The school seeks to ensure that pupils can access the full life of the school, including:

- The curriculum;
- Educational visits;
- Residential experiences;
- Clubs and enrichment;
- Sporting opportunities;
- Leadership opportunities;
- Celebrations and wider school events.

We monitor relevant information to help us identify potential barriers or patterns affecting particular groups.

Where an inequality or barrier is identified, we consider what action is reasonable and proportionate and how we will evaluate its impact.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Approve and review this policy and the Equality Objectives;
- Have due regard to equality when exercising its functions;
- Monitor the school's equality work;
- Receive annual information about progress towards the Equality Objectives;
- Challenge and support leaders appropriately.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the school meets its equality duties;
- Implement and monitor the Equality Objectives;

- Ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered;
- Provide governors with relevant equality information;
- Ensure that concerns relating to discrimination are addressed appropriately;
- Ensure that equality is considered within school policies and decision-making;
- Publish required equality information.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting equality and inclusion;
- Treating pupils, families and colleagues with dignity and respect;
- Challenging prejudice and discriminatory behaviour;
- Identifying and reducing barriers to participation;
- Implementing reasonable adjustments;
- Reporting concerns appropriately.

Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Treat others with respect;
- Value difference;
- Challenge unkindness, prejudice and discrimination appropriately;
- Seek help when they or someone else is experiencing discrimination or bullying;
- Contribute to an inclusive school community.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the school, model respectful behaviour and raise equality concerns appropriately.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Equality is monitored through our normal school systems, including:

- Pupil progress and attainment;
- Attendance;
- Behaviour and bullying;
- Participation and enrichment;
- Pupil voice;
- Parent and carer feedback;
- SEND and accessibility reviews;
- Safeguarding information;
- Equality-related incidents.

We will use available, proportionate and non-confidential information to identify potential inequalities and inform our actions.

The school will publish information annually demonstrating how it is meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty and will publish progress towards its Equality Objectives.

Equality Objectives will be reviewed and renewed at least every four years.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner where legislation, statutory guidance or school circumstances require.

Related Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Accessibility Plan 2026–2029
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Pupil Premium Strategy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has regard to:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- relevant Department for Education statutory guidance;
- Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance for schools in England;
- relevant Ofsted guidance concerning equality duties in education.

The school will take account of relevant updates to legislation and statutory guidance when reviewing this policy.

Appendix 1: Thorngumbald Primary School Accessibility Plan 2026-2029

Introduction

Thorngumbald Primary School is committed to ensuring that disabled pupils can participate fully in school life.

The Accessibility Plan forms part of the school's wider approach to equality and inclusion and has been developed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and Schedule 10.

The plan covers three areas:

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

The plan will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Actions may be adapted in response to changes in pupil need, school provision, staffing, resources, building works or relevant legislation.

Aim 1: Increase access to the curriculum

Intended outcome	Actions	Timescale	Responsibility	Evidence/Review
Disabled pupils are able to access learning and participate meaningfully in lessons	Use adaptive teaching, appropriate resources, visual support, alternative recording methods and reasonable adjustments	Ongoing	HT / teachers / SENDCo	Pupil Progress, observations, pupil voice
Disabled pupils are able to participate in the wider curriculum	Review curriculum visits, clubs, sporting activities and enrichment opportunities for accessibility	Annually	SLT/Teachers	Participation data and pupil voice
Barriers to participation are identified early	Consider accessibility as part of planning for individual pupils and transition	Ongoing	SENDCo/Teachers	Pupil plans and transition information
Staff have confidence in supporting disabled pupils	Provide appropriate training and professional development	Annually	HT / SENDCo	Staff feedback and monitoring

Individual reasonable adjustments are implemented consistently	Record, communicate and review adjustments where appropriate	Ongoing	SENDCo / Teachers	Review records / pupil voice
--	--	---------	-------------------	------------------------------

Aim 2: Improve Physical Environment

Intended outcome	Actions	Timescale	Responsibility	Evidence/Review
Disabled pupils can move safely around school	Review access routes and identify physical barriers	Annually	HT / SBM / Caretaker	Accessibility Review
The environment supports different sensory and physical needs	Consider lighting, acoustics, movement, quiet spaces and sensory demands when reviewing environments	Ongoing	SLT/SENDCO/Caretaker	Environmental review
Reasonable environmental adjustments are made where required	Respond to individual access needs and make reasonable adjustments	As required	HT/SBM	Individual Review
Emergency arrangements take account of disabled pupils	Review emergency and evacuation arrangements for individual pupils where necessary	Annually as required	HT/DSL/SBM	Emergency Planning
New building or environmental developments consider accessibility	Include accessibility within planning and procurement decisions	Ongoing	HT/Govs/SBM	Project Review

Aim 3: Improve access to information

Intended outcome	Actions	Timescale	Responsibility	Evidence/Review
Families can access important school information	Provide reasonable alternative formats where required	Ongoing	Admin/SLT	Requests and Feedback
Information is clear and accessible	Consider readability, layout and accessibility	Ongoing	All	Communication Review

	when producing school communications			
Pupils can access information needed for learning	Use appropriate visual, digital, audio or alternative formats where required	Ongoing	Teachers/SEN DCo	Pupil Voice
Communication needs are identified	Ask families and pupils about communication preferences and barriers where appropriate	Ongoing	SENDCo/Teachers/Admin	Pupil and Family Feedback
Digital communication is accessible	Review key online information and school platforms as part of annual accessibility monitoring	Annually	HT/Admin	Accessibility Review