



Disability, Equality & Accessibility Policy 2026-27

Our school's ethos relating to equality

Longridge School is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all learners, staff and those receiving additional services from the school. We strive to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel safe to disclose any disability or difference which they feel could impact on their ability to participate fully in school life. We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, teach at, or visit Longridge School.

The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA). The Equality Act states that it. 'Is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a student by treating them less favourably because of their –

- Gender
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

The Act defines four types of unlawful behaviour –

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student:

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for students,
- in the way it provides students access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a student or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Whilst the act is very clear that schools should not treat people differently because of the factors listed above there is one clear exception; in the case of disability the Act is clear that a disabled person must often be treated more favourably in order that they can benefit from what the school has to offer to the same level as those without a disability.

The definition of a disability as defined in the Act is –

‘Physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.’

Reasonable adjustment

The Act places responsibility on a school to make reasonable adjustments where something in the school places a disabled learner at a disadvantage, including using auxiliary aid or service if this would alleviate the disadvantage. The Act also requires schools to have “due regard” for equality issues when making significant decisions or developing policies.

School’s duties around accessibility for the disabled

Schools must implement accessibility plans which aim to –

- Increase the extent to which disabled learners can participate in the classroom.
- Improve the physical environment.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled learners.

When providing newsletters and information for parents and carers, Longridge school will make this information available in an accessible format, if requested so that parents or carers who may be, for example, visually impaired, can access the information. Additionally, events for parents and carers such as open evenings, meetings with teachers, will be held in accessible parts of the building.

Compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty

Longridge School is a learning environment designed to cater for individual needs. Our compliance can therefore be met by working individually with each referred student and those adults supporting him/her to ensure their needs are met at the point of referral. Statements of SEN/EHCP’s can be vital in identifying, clarifying and responding to individual student’s educational needs.

The school does not contain sufficient numbers for statistical analysis of the performance of certain student groups. None the less academic achievement trends will be monitored in order to consider whether there are any underperforming categories. Through its whole curriculum and in particular PSHE, English Literature and RE, the schools will foster improved understanding of difference and good relations. Students and staff have the opportunity to raise equality concerns and issues for further discussion and exploration through student council meetings and staff meetings respectively.

Supporting Transgender individuals

The Equality Act 2010 ensures legal protection against direct or indirect discrimination for everyone under the 9 protected characteristics defined in the Act. Gender reassignment is one of the protected characteristics.

At Longridge School, we are committed to ensuring that pupils who are questioning their gender are treated with dignity, respect and compassion and are protected from discrimination, harassment and bullying. We will promote equality through:

- providing an inclusive curriculum which challenges gender stereotypes and promotes respect for individual differences and protected characteristics;
- ensuring staff understand their responsibilities under equality and safeguarding legislation and current statutory guidance;
- responding sensitively and individually to pupils who are questioning their gender, taking account of their wellbeing, safeguarding needs, neurodiversity and individual circumstances;
- working with parents/carers and relevant professionals, where appropriate, when considering requests for support; and
- ensuring that discrimination, harassment or bullying relating to sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or gender questioning is not tolerated.

In supporting pupil who are questioning their gender, Longridge School will:

- listen carefully to the pupil's views and feelings, recognising their individual communication needs, neurodiversity and level of understanding;
- involve parents/carers in decisions about requests relating to social transition, unless there is a safeguarding reason why doing so would place the pupil at risk;
- take a careful, individualised approach to requests for changes such as names, pronouns, uniform or other aspects of social transition, considering the pupil's welfare and best interests and, where appropriate, relevant clinical or professional advice;
- ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and relevant senior leaders are involved in decision-making where appropriate and that agreed decisions are clearly recorded and reviewed;
- maintain accurate statutory school records and ensure that information required by the Department for Education and other statutory bodies is recorded in accordance with current requirements;
- ensure that arrangements for toilets, changing facilities, PE, residential accommodation and overnight educational visits comply with statutory requirements and current safeguarding guidance, while seeking appropriate arrangements that protect the privacy, dignity and wellbeing of the individual pupil;
- ensure that pupils are protected from bullying, harassment and discrimination, including on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment; and
- ensure that support remains responsive to the pupil's individual circumstances, recognising that their needs and wishes may change over time.

The school will maintain accurate statutory pupil records and will ensure that names, sex and other personal information are recorded and submitted to the Department for Education, examination bodies and other statutory organisations in accordance with current

requirements. Where a pupil uses a preferred name, the school will consider how this can be accommodated appropriately while maintaining accurate statutory records.

All toilets are single unisex facilities at Longridge School and all students are given respect and privacy when changing for PE activities.

Equality for staff

The Act requires that a school must not discriminate against an employee or a potential employee. Schools must make reasonable adjustments in relation to employees as they do for their students. Wherever possible will seek to make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities which may include –

- Altering working hours
- Changing the location of the person's main area of work
- Allowing absences during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment
- Examining the duties allocated to a disabled member of staff to see where additional support may be required
- Supplying additional training
- Acquiring or making changes to equipment
- Altering premises
- Transferring the person to fill an existing vacancy, for example: if a teacher becomes disabled and there is no reasonable adjustment that can enable them to continue in their current post, they might be considered for another suitable post

Increasing access in the classroom

Longridge school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled students by –

- Adapting the curriculum to suit each individual learner.
- Developing a vision and values based on an inclusive ethos.
- Encouraging a positive attitude from all staff to overcome barriers for disabled learners.
- Liaising effectively with parents, carers and specialists who can offer advice and support about what is effective.
- Allowing learners to have a meaningful voice and to be consulted effectively.
- Having a positive approach to managing behavior.
- Ensuring effective staff training and development.
- Providing an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil where it is reasonable to do so and such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils
- Building disability into day-to-day resourcing arrangements.
- Adopting a sensitive approach to meeting the specific needs of learners.
- Making available role models and positive images of disability.

- Using access arrangements appropriately in supporting learners to take examinations.

Longridge School strives to create a happy, safe and inclusive environment which promotes independent, healthy and confident learners. We encourage all our learners, including those with a disability, to aspire to high standards, become economically aware, and make a positive contribution to a wider community.

Longridge School seeks to challenge inequality through –

- Promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, race, disability, religion, or sexual orientation, and making reasonable adjustments to the curriculum where required to cater for the needs of all learners.
- Setting high standards and targets for all learners.
- Providing a safe and secure learning environment for all learners.
- Developing learner collaboration and independent learning opportunities.
- Making sure that all learners have opportunities to develop positive self-esteem.
- Encouraging all learners to become literate and numerate, in order to communicate effectively.
- Assessing learners for access arrangements as appropriate
- Promoting positive attitudes in students, to help them to develop socially, morally and spiritually, so that they can make positive and safe choices.
- Encouraging awareness and acceptance of disability, both in and out of the classroom.
- Ensuring that each learner is treated as an individual and specific needs are met.

Improving the physical environment

Whilst the school building and all its room are fully accessible, there is still some work required regarding the physical environment at Longridge School;

- Redevelopment of the outdoor green spaces

Improving the availability of accessible information

Longridge School will strive to make all of their information available to each individual and assess personal need as learners are referred to the school. Parents and carers should inform the school if they have any difficulties accessing information, so that necessary adjustments can be made.

In such a small environment all responses are bespoke and individualised and therefore we are in a strong position to ensure that individuals do not experience difficulties with accessing information or physical spaces.

Equality Objective 2026/2027

To ensure that all students can participate meaningfully and equitably in learning and the wider life of the school by identifying and reducing physical, sensory, communication and social barriers, and providing effective, individualised reasonable adjustments.

Response to Equality Issues 2025/2026

- N/A

Last reviewed	August 2026
Next review due	September 2029
Reviewed by	Headteacher