St Hugh's School

Accessibility Plan

2026-2029

Reviewed autumn 2026 Next review autumn 2029

PLAN INFORMATION

Plan period	Autumn 2026 - Autumn 2029
Responsible body	Governing Body
Publication	School website
Formal review due	Autumn 2029

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1. Purpose and statutory context

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are required to prepare and implement an Accessibility Plan and keep it under review. The plan is reviewed formally at least every three years and sets out how the school will improve accessibility over time.

This plan covers the three statutory areas of accessibility:

- increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment so disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services; and
- improving the availability and accessibility of information for disabled students and, where appropriate, parents/carers and visitors.

St Hugh's will make reasonable adjustments in response to individual need and will seek to anticipate barriers wherever practicable. The plan is intended to complement the school's wider equality, SEND, curriculum, communication, health and safety and safeguarding arrangements rather than duplicate them.

2. Our accessibility vision

St Hugh's is an 11-16 specialist school for students with a wide range of learning, communication, sensory, physical and medical needs. Accessibility is therefore embedded within the school's everyday curriculum, environment, communication systems and specialist provision.

Our ethos, 'Learning together, learning for life', is reflected in a commitment to an environment in which students feel safe, valued and able to participate as fully and independently as possible. We aim to remove or reduce barriers through personalised planning, appropriate specialist support, accessible communication, environmental adaptation and collaboration with families and external professionals.

Accessibility arrangements are considered in relation to current students and prospective students, and are reviewed when needs, facilities, technology or statutory expectations change.

3. Current good practice and access audit

3.1 Physical access and movement

- The school is a single-storey building with wide internal corridors and multiple external access points.
- Building entrances are flat or ramped and are fitted with wide doors. Secure fob-controlled gates and doors support safe access across the site.
- On site accessible parking is provided and coordinated to accommodate individual visitor requirements.
- The main entrance has a secure reception area and a low reception hatch accessible to wheelchair users.
- Electronic doors and access systems are used to support independence where appropriate.
- Hoisting equipment and ceiling tracking are available to support students with physical and transfer needs.

3.2 Toileting, hygiene and personal care

- Accessible toilet facilities are provided at the front of school, near the PE changing area and outside rooms 1 and 2.
- Accessible toilets include handrails and emergency pull cords.
- A dedicated hygiene suite provides adapted bathroom and changing facilities for students who require additional personal-care support.

3.3 Specialist sensory, physical and therapeutic provision

- A hydrotherapy pool supports physical, sensory and therapeutic programmes, with maintenance, hygiene and safety procedures overseen through the Hydrotherapy Policy.
- Rebound Therapy, including the indoor sunken trampoline, provides structured opportunities for movement, physical development, sensory regulation, communication and therapeutic exercise.
- The school has a large sensory room, a Sensory Multi-Media Studio and two Senso-cubes to support sensory regulation, engagement and individual programmes.
- Outdoor provision includes sensory and play equipment, all-weather musical instruments and sensory-garden areas that provide opportunities for regulation, interaction and adult-living skills.

3.4 Curriculum access

- The school's three-pathway curriculum model (pre-formal, semi-formal and formal) is centred on students' individual needs and EHCPs. Curriculum content, teaching approaches, resources and outcomes are adapted so that students can access a broad and balanced curriculum from their individual starting points.
- Personalised learning and EHCP outcomes inform planning and review.
- Specialist equipment, seating, ICT and assistive technology are sourced where required, including through occupational therapy and other professional advice.
- Teaching uses multi-sensory approaches and appropriate levels of adult support.
- Staff training is identified in response to the needs of individual students and wider school priorities.
- Transition planning for new students is used to identify access, equipment, communication and training requirements before or soon after admission.

3.5 Communication and access to information

St Hugh's uses a total communication approach. Students have access to communication systems appropriate to their individual needs throughout the school day. Approaches may include speech, Makaton, on-body signing, picture exchange, symbols, photographs, objects of reference, communication books and low- or high-tech communication aids.

Written and digital information is adapted where required. The school will make reasonable adjustments for parents/carers and visitors who require information or meetings in an alternative or more accessible form, including signing/interpreting or translation where appropriate.

3.6 Accessible visual and sensory environment

The school's Display Policy supports an accessible learning environment. Displays are intended to be purposeful, age appropriate and sensitive to students' sensory,

communicative, cognitive and emotional needs. Neutral backgrounds are used for shared displays, classroom walls are kept free from unnecessary visual information, and signage and visual supports are used to promote understanding and independence.

3.7 Safety and emergency arrangements

- Internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly identified.
- External refuge areas are identified on the yard/ball-court area.
- Individual medical, moving and handling and emergency arrangements are developed where a student's needs require them.
- Specialist facilities and equipment are subject to appropriate maintenance, servicing, risk assessment and staff training.
- Wider site security and emergency-planning requirements are managed through the school's established safeguarding, health and safety and premises arrangements, with accessibility considered when physical security measures are introduced or changed.

4. Improvements completed during the previous plan period (Baseline 2026)

The following improvements form part of the school's current accessibility baseline for 2026:

- The large sensory room has been updated and upgraded.
- Works have been completed to the hydrotherapy pool to bring the facility up to modern specification and requirements.
- Two Senso-cubes have been purchased and introduced, together with associated interactive technology updates to broaden sensory regulation opportunities across the school.
- The outdoor sensory garden outside Room 4 has been improved, including the addition of a sensory tunnel and swing seat.
- One complex-needs teaching space has been substantially upgraded to include an accessible kitchen and adapted environment supporting sensory, physical and life-skills development.
- Existing accessible entrances, parking, toilet facilities, hygiene provision, hoisting/ceiling tracking and electronic access systems continue to support physical access and independence.
- Flooring improvements made in Rooms 2 and 4 to enhance safety, accessibility, and overall provision for students

These completed improvements are recorded as evidence of implementation from the previous planning period. Future actions below focus on maintaining this provision, identifying emerging barriers and prioritising proportionate improvements over 2026-2029.

5. Management, monitoring and review

- The Governing Body retains responsibility for ensuring that the school has an Accessibility Plan and that it is implemented and reviewed.
- The Senior Leadership Team will coordinate implementation and ensure that accessibility is considered within curriculum, premises, staffing, transition and resource planning.

- The Policy and Standards Committee will receive relevant updates through the school's normal governance reporting arrangements, including where a significant accessibility issue or development requires governor oversight.
- Relevant specialist leads, the Business/Site team, class teams and external professionals will contribute through their existing roles, procedures and review arrangements.

This plan covers Autumn 2026 to Autumn 2029. Accessibility will be monitored through established leadership, curriculum, health and safety, premises, policy and governance arrangements rather than through a separate annual accessibility audit or monitoring cycle. The plan may be updated during the three-year period where a significant accessibility need or development is identified, with a full formal review by Autumn 2029.

Accessibility needs identified through transition, EHCP/PAP review, therapy and medical planning, curriculum monitoring, student/family feedback, premises processes or staff observation will be considered through the relevant existing school system, with reasonable adjustments made where required.

6. Accessibility Action Plan 2026-2029

The priorities below are deliberately high level. They are delivered through the school's existing curriculum, EHCP/PAP, communication, premises, health and safety, safeguarding and governance arrangements rather than through a separate accessibility monitoring cycle. Actions are taken on an ongoing or needs-led basis during the plan period.

Strategic priority	Approach during 2026-2029	Monitoring through existing arrangements
Curriculum participation	Maintain personalised curriculum access, reasonable adjustments, specialist resources and staff training in response to identified student need.	Existing curriculum QA, EHCP/PAP, transition and subject-leadership arrangements.
Physical and sensory environment	Maintain existing accessible facilities and specialist provision. Address physical or sensory barriers proportionately when identified through normal premises, health and safety, therapy, medical or individual planning processes.	Existing premises, health and safety, therapy/medical and SLT arrangements.
Information and communication	Maintain the total communication approach and provide accessible information, AAC, alternative formats or communication support according to individual student, family or visitor need.	Existing Communication Policy, home-school communication, curriculum and website/policy review arrangements.
Security and access developments	Complete current perimeter-fencing works while maintaining appropriate accessible routes and gate access. Any future reception or access-control changes will consider accessibility and independence at design and implementation stage.	Existing safeguarding, premises-project and health and safety oversight.
Emerging accessibility needs	Respond to significant accessibility needs identified through transition, EHCP/PAP review, therapy or medical advice, student/family feedback, staff observation or changes to the site.	Addressed through the relevant existing school process; significant matters escalated to SLT/Governors as required.

7. Linked policies and documents

This plan should be read alongside the school's current policies and procedures, including:

- Curriculum Policy
- Whole School Communication Policy
- Home-School Communication Policy (including Parent Code of Conduct)
- Display Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy / Equality Objectives
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behaviour Management / Positive Behaviour Support arrangements
- Health and Safety Policy
- Hydrotherapy Policy
- Rebound Therapy Policy
- Medical, moving and handling, safeguarding, site-security and emergency/evacuation arrangements relevant to the school and individual students
- School Improvement Plan and relevant premises/resource plans.

This Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website. It will remain responsive to significant changes during the plan period through the existing school processes described above and will be formally reviewed no later than Autumn 2029.