

FreshSteps Accessibility Policy 25-28

1. Aims

Under the **Equality Act 2010**, schools are required to have an accessibility plan. At FreshSteps, the purpose of our plan is to:

- **Increase participation:** Ensure disabled pupils can access and fully participate in the curriculum.
- **Improve the physical environment:** Enhance school facilities to ensure pupils, staff, and visitors with disabilities can take full advantage of education, services, and benefits.
- **Improve access to information:** Ensure information is available in accessible formats for pupils, staff, and visitors with disabilities.
- **Monitor and evaluate progress:** Evaluate the success of the accessibility action plan and report to parents and stakeholders.

We are committed to building a culture of inclusion and diversity where everyone feels empowered to disclose a disability and participate fully in school life. Data on the progress of disabled pupils will be used to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure the school environment remains as accessible as possible.

We believe diversity is a strength to be respected and celebrated by all who learn, teach, and visit FreshSteps.

The accessibility plan will be published on the school website, with paper copies available on request. Staff will be trained in equality and disability awareness, and we will work in partnership with relevant agencies to deliver and review the plan.

Concerns relating to accessibility will be addressed through the school's complaints procedure. We will involve a range of stakeholders—including pupils, parents, staff, and board members—in the development and review of this policy.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy complies with:

- **Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010**
- **The SEND Code of Practice (2015)**
- **Department for Education guidance on the Equality Act 2010 for schools**
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)** requiring schools to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations

The **Equality Act 2010** defines disability as a physical or mental impairment with a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

- *Long-term*: a year or more
- *Substantial*: more than minor or trivial
- Includes: sensory impairments (sight, hearing), and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

Schools must make *reasonable adjustments* to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

3. Vision and Values

FreshSteps is committed to:

- Promoting equality of education and opportunity for all pupils and staff.
- Developing a culture where disability is understood, respected, and celebrated.
- Ensuring inclusive teaching practices that enable every child to thrive.
- Embedding diversity and disability awareness across the curriculum and school community.

4. Gathering and Using Information

We collect information on disability as part of our **School Development Plan** and self-evaluation. This evidence informs accessibility objectives and helps us review progress.

5. Involvement and Consultation

We involve disabled pupils, parents, staff, and service users in shaping the Accessibility Plan. Consultation may take place through:

- Focus groups
- Questionnaires
- Feedback slips
- Drop-in sessions

6. Employment

As an employer, FreshSteps is committed to:

- Eliminating discrimination and harassment in employment practice.
- Ensuring equal opportunity in recruitment, retention, and training.
- Supporting staff with disabilities through reasonable adjustments.
- Promoting flexible working where possible.
- Monitoring incidents of bullying or harassment and taking appropriate action.

We will take specialist advice as needed to ensure staff with disabilities can work effectively.

7. Accessibility Action Plan

Our plan focuses on three key areas:

1. Curriculum Access

- Training staff in inclusive teaching strategies
- Ensuring resources reflect and represent disability positively
- Supporting pupils and parents in understanding learning needs

2. Physical Environment

- Improving access to school buildings and facilities
- Reviewing emergency evacuation procedures
- Ensuring classrooms, toilets, and communal areas are accessible

3. Information Access

- Providing information in alternative formats (e.g., large print, braille, audio, digital)
- Ensuring signage and communication methods are accessible

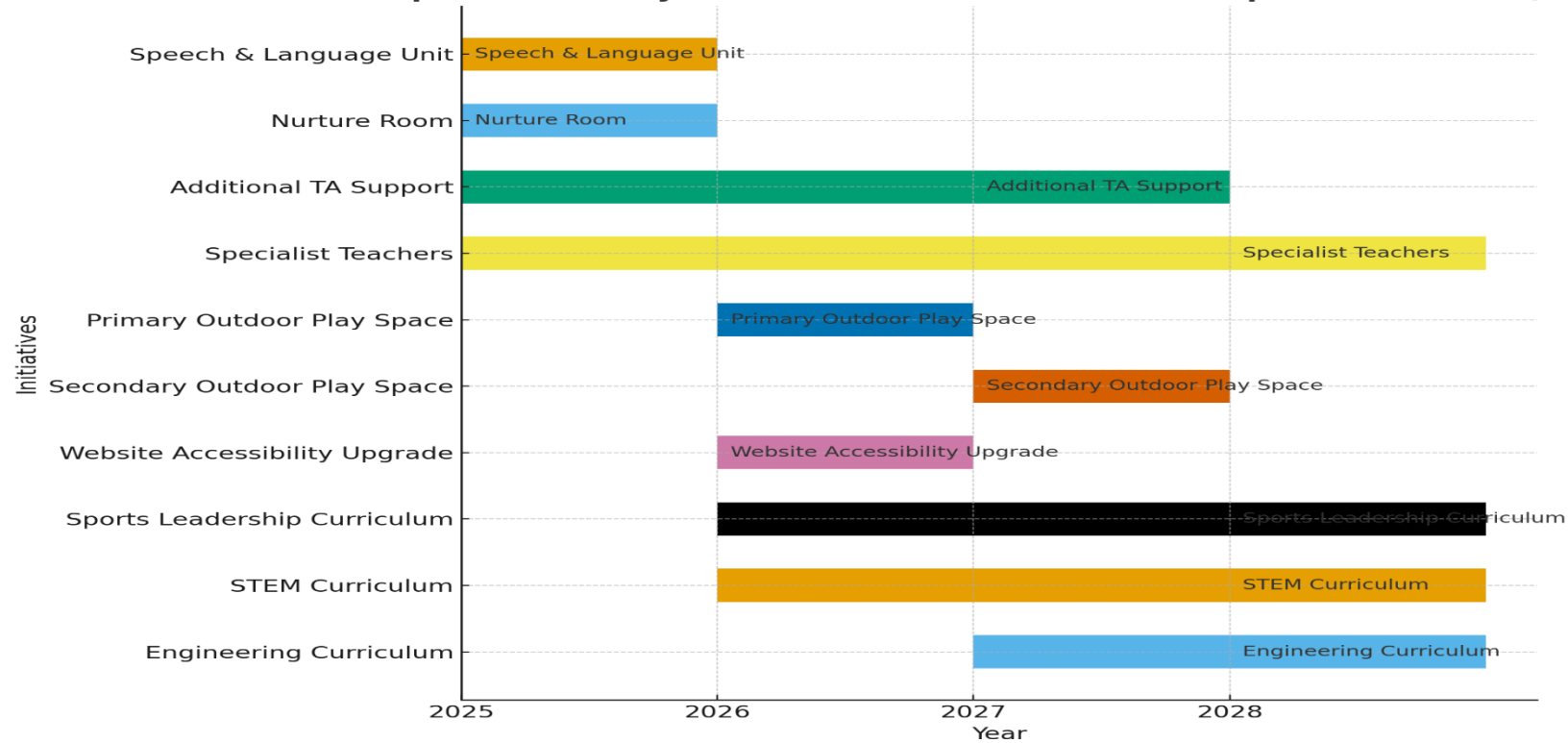
FreshSteps Accessibility & Curriculum Development Action Plan 2025–2028

Objective	Action Steps	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria / Monitoring
Curriculum Access	Extend curriculum provision to the new Speech & Language Unit , ensuring targeted interventions and access to mainstream learning.	Intervention lead	Launch in 2025, review annually	Speech & language pupils show improved academic and therapy outcomes.
	Develop the new Nurture Room to support emotional wellbeing, behaviour, and readiness to learn.	Intervention Lead/SENCO	From Autumn 2025	Reduction in behaviour incidents; improved attendance and engagement.

Objective	Action Steps	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria / Monitoring
	Recruit and phase in additional TAs across all year groups to provide targeted support.	HT / SLT	2025–2027	Pupil/teacher ratios improved; SEND progress data shows measurable impact.
	Recruit specialist teachers (e.g., SEND, speech therapy, dyslexia, autism) over a 3-year plan.	SLT / HR / Governors	2025–2028	At least 3 new specialists in place; external review shows stronger SEND provision.
	Introduce Sports Leadership curriculum strand to promote inclusion, physical development, and leadership opportunities.	PE Lead / SLT	2026–2028	Pupils with and without SEND access leadership pathways; accreditation opportunities achieved.
	Introduce STEM curriculum to ensure inclusive access to science, technology, engineering, and maths projects.	Curriculum Leads	2026–2028	Pupils engaged in STEM clubs/competitions; increase in uptake for GCSE STEM pathways.
	Develop an Engineering curriculum strand at secondary level to support practical learning, vocational pathways, and SEND inclusion.	Curriculum Lead/ SLT	2027–2028	Engineering modules introduced; evidence of pupil progress and engagement. With Team Sport Harlow
Physical Environment	Create a dedicated outdoor play space for Primary pupils with inclusive equipment.	HT	By Summer 2026	Inclusive outdoor facilities in place; observed improvements in social and physical wellbeing.
	Develop a secondary outdoor recreation/play space , designed for accessibility and social inclusion.	HT	By Summer 2027	Secondary pupils report improved wellbeing and access; monitored through surveys.
	Ensure new spaces (Speech & Language Unit, Nurture Room) are fully accessible and compliant.	Intervention Lead Site Manager / SENCO	2025	Independent accessibility audit passed.

Objective	Action Steps	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria / Monitoring
Information Access	Update emergency evacuation plans with personalised evacuation plans (PEEPs) where required.	Health & Safety Lead	Annual review	Evacuation drills demonstrate safe and inclusive procedures.
	Provide school information (letters, policies, reports) in accessible formats (large print, braille, audio, digital).	Admin Team	Ongoing	Requests fulfilled within 5 days; positive feedback from parents/carers.
	Improve school website accessibility to meet WCAG 2.2 AA standards , ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies.	IT Lead	By Summer 2026	Website audit confirms compliance.
	Train staff in accessible communication methods (plain English, visual supports, assistive tech).	SENCO / Inclusion Lead	Annual training cycle	Staff demonstrate inclusive communication; increased pupil/parent engagement.

FreshSteps Accessibility Action Plan & Curriculum Development Timeline (2025-2028)



This table integrates both **accessibility priorities** (buildings, staffing, inclusion) and **curriculum expansion** (Sports Leadership, STEM, Engineering).

FreshSteps Accessibility & Curriculum Development Plan 2025–2028

Executive Summary

At FreshSteps, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil has access to an inclusive, aspirational, and supportive education. Our Accessibility & Curriculum Development Plan (2025–2028) sets out clear priorities that align with the **Equality Act 2010**, the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)**, and our values of diversity, equity, and opportunity for all.

Key Priorities

1. Curriculum Access

- Establishing a new **Speech & Language Unit** to provide targeted intervention and integration into mainstream learning.
- Creating a **Nurture Room** to support emotional wellbeing, behaviour, and readiness to learn.
- Recruiting **additional Teaching Assistants (TAs)** across classrooms for enhanced support.
- Phasing in more **specialist teachers** (SEND, speech, dyslexia, autism) to strengthen provision.
- Expanding curriculum opportunities through new **Sports Leadership, STEM, and Engineering pathways** to ensure all pupils have access to ambitious, inclusive learning experiences.

2. Physical Environment

- Developing **dedicated outdoor play and recreational spaces** for both Primary and Secondary pupils, designed with accessibility at the core.
- Ensuring all new and existing facilities (including the Speech & Language Unit and Nurture Room) meet accessibility standards.
- Updating **emergency evacuation procedures** and ensuring personalised evacuation plans for staff and pupils where needed.

3. Information Access

- Providing all school information in **accessible formats** (large print, braille, audio, digital).
- Upgrading the school website to meet **WCAG 2.2 AA standards**.
- Training staff in **inclusive communication strategies** to strengthen engagement with pupils and families.

Our Vision

By 2028, FreshSteps will be a school where:

- Every child, regardless of need, can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.
- The curriculum reflects diversity and offers meaningful pathways into further education, employment, and independent living.
- Our physical environment is fully accessible and inclusive.
- Staff are equipped and empowered to deliver high-quality, inclusive teaching.
- Parents and pupils feel their voices shape the school's growth and priorities.

Review, Monitoring & Accountability

- Progress will be monitored **termly** by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and reported to governors.
- The plan will be reviewed in consultation with **pupils, parents, staff, and governors**.
- A full strategic review will take place in **2028**.
- Policies will be reviewed to assess their impact on participation and outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers, staff, and community members. Full plan **review every 3 years** (next due 2028).
- **Stakeholder consultation** (pupils, parents, staff, governors) at each review stage.