

Accessibility Policy

Policy Name: Equality and Accessibility Policy

1. Introduction

Illuminate Care Group is committed to creating an inclusive environment that values diversity and ensures equality of opportunity for all. We strive to eliminate discrimination, promote fairness, and actively remove barriers to accessibility across our services. Our approach aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation, ensuring compliance and promoting best practices.

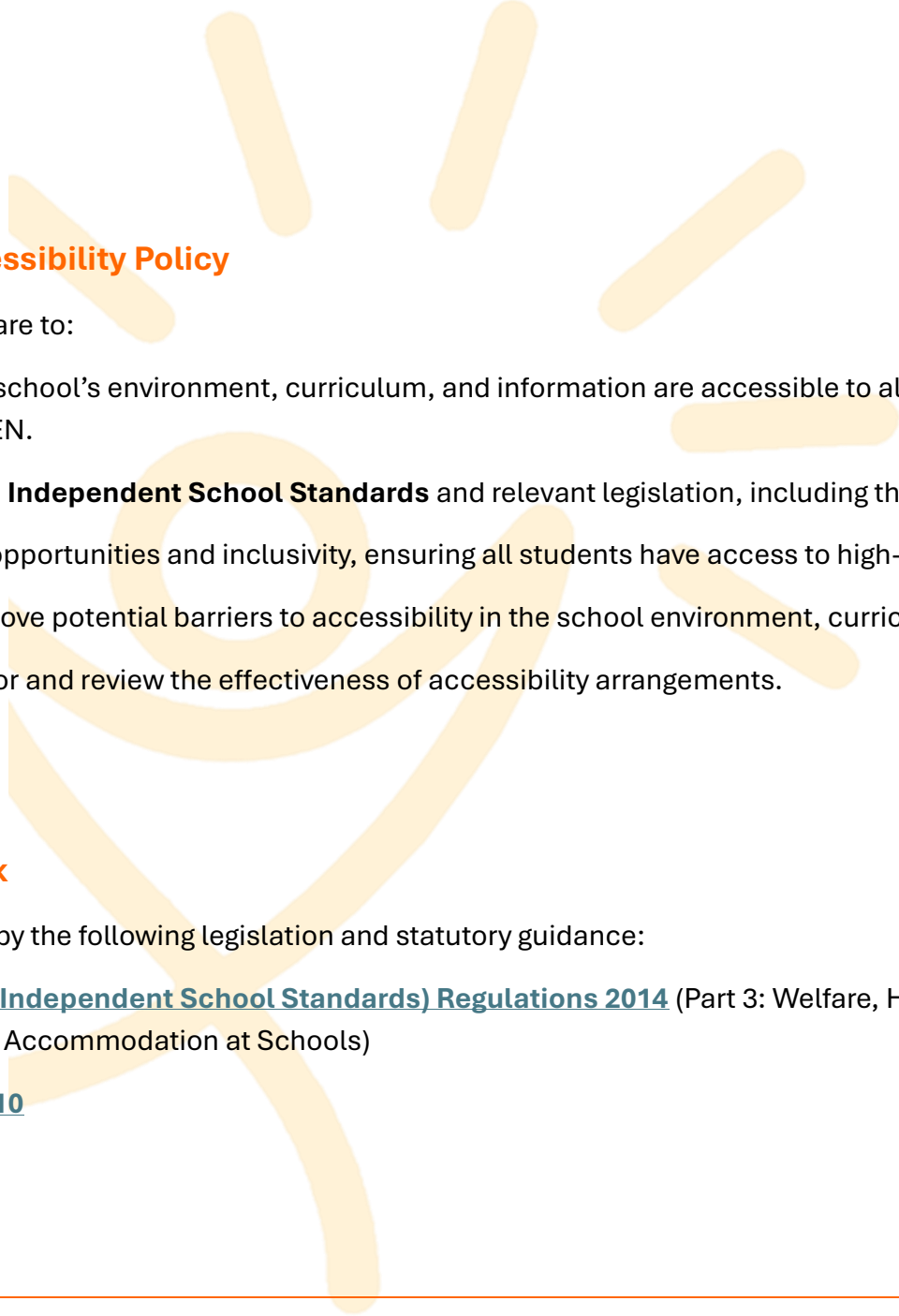
Aims and Objectives

1. **Equality:** To ensure everyone is treated with dignity and respect, irrespective of their age, disability, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
2. **Accessibility:** To provide environments, services, and opportunities that are accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities.
3. **Inclusion:** To actively promote inclusive practices within our workforce, services, and the communities we serve.

This policy outlines our approach to ensuring physical, curricular, and informational accessibility, creating a learning environment that meets the needs of every student.

This policy complies with the **Independent School Standards**, including **Part 3: Welfare, Health, and Safety of Pupils** and **Part 5: Premises of and Accommodation at Schools**, as well as the **Equality Act 2010**, **GOV.uk guidance on Equality and Accessibility** regulations and the **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015**.

It is underpinned by our **T.R.I.B.E.** values—**Trust, Resilience, Independence, Belonging, and Excellence**—which emphasize inclusivity and support for all students.



2. Aims of the Accessibility Policy

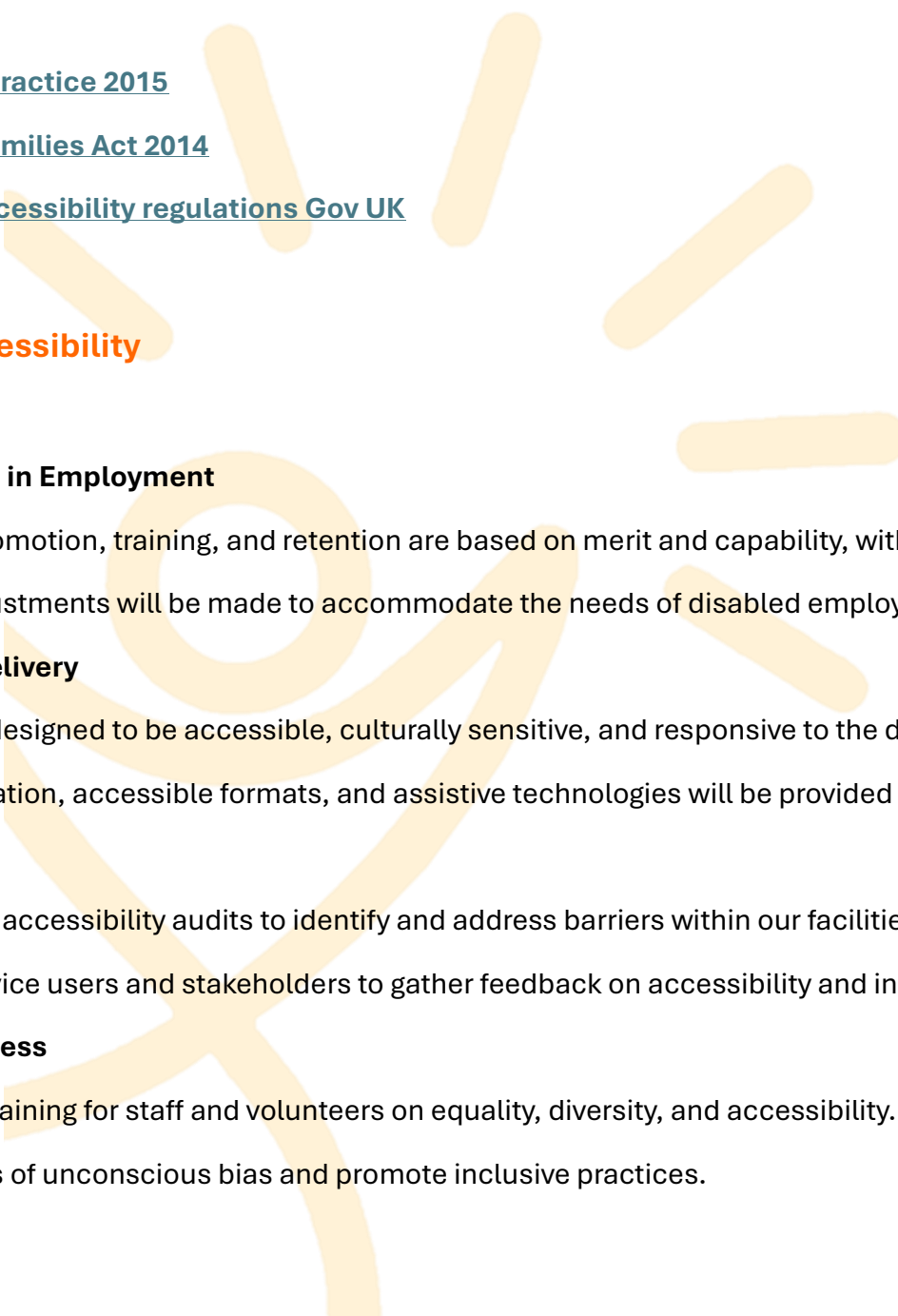
The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure that the school's environment, curriculum, and information are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities or SEN.
- Comply with the **Independent School Standards** and relevant legislation, including the **Equality Act 2010**.
- Promote equal opportunities and inclusivity, ensuring all students have access to high-quality education.
- Identify and remove potential barriers to accessibility in the school environment, curriculum, and communication methods.
- Regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of accessibility arrangements.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

1. [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) (Part 3: Welfare, Health, and Safety of Pupils; Part 5: Premises of and Accommodation at Schools)
2. [Equality Act 2010](#)

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3. [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)
 4. [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
 5. [Equality and accessibility regulations Gov UK](#)

4. Key Areas of Accessibility

Policy in Practice

1. Equal Opportunities in Employment

- Recruitment, promotion, training, and retention are based on merit and capability, with no bias or discrimination.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled employees.

2. Inclusive Service Delivery

- All services are designed to be accessible, culturally sensitive, and responsive to the diverse needs of service users.
- Language translation, accessible formats, and assistive technologies will be provided where necessary.

3. Addressing Barriers

- Conduct regular accessibility audits to identify and address barriers within our facilities, materials, and services.
- Engage with service users and stakeholders to gather feedback on accessibility and inclusivity.

4. Training and Awareness

- Deliver regular training for staff and volunteers on equality, diversity, and accessibility.
- Raise awareness of unconscious bias and promote inclusive practices.

5. Anti-Discrimination

- Zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, victimization, or bullying.
- Clear procedures are in place to report, investigate, and resolve any such incidents promptly.

4.1. Physical Accessibility

Objective: To ensure that the care and school premises are safe, accessible, and comfortable for all students, staff, and visitors, including those with physical disabilities.

- **Accessible Entrances and Exits:** All main entrances and exits are wheelchair accessible, with ramps or lifts where necessary.
- **Facilities and Restrooms:** Accessible restroom facilities are available, equipped with appropriate supports and space for mobility aids.
- **Classroom and Layout Modifications:** Classrooms are arranged to allow easy movement and clear access for students with mobility needs. Desks, seating, and classroom equipment are adapted to accommodate individual requirements.
- **Emergency Evacuation Procedures:** Emergency evacuation plans include provisions for students and staff with physical disabilities. Staff receive training to support safe evacuation for all individuals in case of emergency.
- **Maintenance of Facilities:** Regular maintenance and inspections ensure that physical access points, ramps, lifts, and accessible restrooms are functional and meet safety standards.

4.2. Curriculum Accessibility

Objective: To provide a curriculum that is inclusive, adaptable, and accessible for students with diverse learning needs.

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and materials, adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of students with SEN and disabilities.
- **Individual Learning Plans (ILPs):** Each student has an ILP, which includes specific learning objectives, accommodations, and strategies tailored to their unique needs. These plans are reviewed regularly to ensure ongoing support and adjustment.
- **Access to Specialist Support:** Students with disabilities or SEN have access to specialist support, such as learning aids, one-to-one assistance, or therapies (e.g., CBT, music therapy), based on their individual requirements.
- **Life Skills and Social Development:** In addition to academic learning, we emphasize life skills, social interaction, and emotional regulation as part of the curriculum, creating a well-rounded educational experience that meets each student's developmental needs.

4.3. Information Accessibility

Objective: To ensure that information is accessible to all students, parents, carers, and staff, using clear, adaptable formats for communication.

- **Accessible Formats:** Key information is provided in accessible formats (e.g., large print, audio versions, or simplified language) for those with visual impairments, learning difficulties, or other needs.
- **Assistive Technology:** Where needed, students have access to assistive technology, such as screen readers, voice-to-text software, or adaptive devices, to support communication and information processing.
- **Alternative Communication Methods:** Teachers and staff use alternative communication methods, such as visual aids, symbols, or simplified instructions, to ensure understanding among students with communication needs.
- **Parent and Carer Communication:** We ensure that information shared with parents and carers, including reports, updates, and school events, is accessible. Alternative methods, such as in-person meetings or translated materials, are provided as needed.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT is responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of the Accessibility Policy.
- Ensuring compliance with the **Independent School Standards** and legal requirements.
- Reviewing the accessibility plan regularly and making adjustments as needed.
- Providing resources and support for accessibility improvements.

5.2. Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Implementing accessibility strategies within their classrooms and interactions with students.
- Adapting their teaching methods and materials to support the diverse needs of their students.
- Being proactive in identifying potential accessibility issues and reporting them to the SLT.

5.3. Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Developing and monitoring Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for students with disabilities or SEN.
- Coordinating specialist support and interventions for students with specific accessibility needs.
- Providing guidance and training to staff on accessibility and inclusion.

5.4. Committee

The committee is responsible for:

- Approving the Accessibility Policy and ensuring that it meets statutory requirements.
- Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the policy and any accessibility improvements made within the school.

5.5. staffing structures

Senior Management Team: Ensures the implementation, monitoring, and review of the policy.

Line Managers: Promote equality and accessibility within their teams and address concerns promptly.

Employees and Volunteers: Demonstrate inclusive behavior, adhere to the policy, and report instances of inequality or inaccessibility.

Service Users and Stakeholders: Respect the diversity of others and participate in creating a safe, inclusive environment.

6. Accessibility Planning

Illuminate Care maintains an **Accessibility Plan** which is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and the committee.

The Accessibility Plan outlines several key terms and alignments with regulations:

- **Short-Term Actions:** Immediate changes or adaptations to improve accessibility, such as adjusting classroom layouts, providing learning aids, or communicating with parents in alternative formats.
- **Medium-Term Goals:** Projects or improvements to be completed within one to three years, such as increasing the availability of accessible resources or installing additional accessible facilities.
- **Long-Term Vision:** Strategic goals for maintaining and enhancing accessibility, including facility upgrades, expansion of specialist support, and investment in staff training.

This **Equality and Accessibility Policy** aligns with several key standards set by **OFSTED** for supported accommodation and residential care.

Specifically, it supports the following care standards:

Relevant OFSTED Care Standards:

1. Promoting Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- **Standard:** Providers must create an inclusive and supportive environment that actively promotes equality, celebrates diversity, and ensures all young people feel valued and respected.
- **Alignment:** The policy ensures non-discriminatory practices in both service delivery and employment, making accommodations for diverse needs, including disabilities, cultural differences, and language barriers.

Meeting Individual Needs

- **Standard:** The accommodation must meet the individual needs of young people, supporting their emotional well-being, health, and personal development.
- **Alignment:** By addressing accessibility and ensuring tailored support for individuals, the policy ensures services are equitable and cater to the specific needs of each young person.

Positive Relationships and Participation

- **Standard:** Young people should be encouraged to participate in decision-making processes and build positive relationships with peers and staff.

- **Alignment:** Inclusive practices and accessible environments foster participation, ensuring all young people, regardless of background or ability, have equal opportunities to contribute.

Safeguarding and Protection

- **Standard:** Young people must be protected from discrimination, bullying, and other forms of harm.
- **Alignment:** The zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and clear reporting mechanisms for complaints promote a safe, respectful environment.

Leadership and Management

- **Standard:** Leaders and managers must ensure that staff are trained and supported to deliver high-quality, inclusive care that meets legal and regulatory requirements.
- **Alignment:** The policy includes provisions for staff training on equality, diversity, and accessibility, ensuring compliance and fostering an inclusive culture.

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010

- **Standard:** Providers must ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination in education, employment, and the provision of goods and services.
- **Alignment:** The policy directly references and adheres to the principles of the Equality Act, ensuring legal compliance.

How This Policy Supports OFSTED Judgements

The Equality and Accessibility Policy contributes to **good** or **outstanding** OFSTED ratings by demonstrating:

- A commitment to equality and inclusion, which supports **Personal Development** outcomes.
- A well-structured leadership approach that ensures all staff understand and uphold inclusive practices, meeting the **Leadership and Management** standard.
- Active engagement with young people in a way that promotes well-being, safety, and belonging, impacting the overall quality of care.

7. Monitoring and Review (See appendix 1)

The effectiveness of this Accessibility Policy and the Accessibility Plan is monitored by:

- **Annual Review:** The SLT and Committee review the Accessibility Plan and policy annually to ensure compliance with legislation and that the school's practices continue to meet the needs of the school community.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to provide feedback on accessibility issues and improvements. This input is taken into consideration when updating the policy or Accessibility Plan.
- **Training and Development:** Staff receive regular training to ensure they are aware of and skilled in implementing accessibility practices, with additional support for those working directly with students who have disabilities or SEN.

8. Inclusion and Equality

Our commitment to accessibility is part of a broader commitment to **equality and inclusion** in line with the **Equality Act 2010**. We aim to create an environment where every student has equal access to learning, support, and participation in school activities. Reasonable adjustments are made to remove barriers, ensuring that all students can engage fully in the educational opportunities provided.

9. Communication of the Policy

This Accessibility Policy is available to all members of the school community through:

- The school / Company website.
- Copies available upon request from the school office, staff portal and HR office.
- In alternative formats upon request, ensuring accessibility for all individuals.

9.1 Complaints and Reporting Procedures

Illuminate Care Group takes all complaints seriously and encourages individuals to report concerns related to equality or accessibility:

1. **Reporting:** Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing to a line manager or designated complaints officer.
2. **Investigation:** A thorough and impartial investigation will be conducted within specified timeframes.
3. **Resolution:** Outcomes and actions will be communicated to the complainant, and steps will be taken to prevent recurrence.

10. Conclusion

At **Illuminate Care**, we are dedicated to creating a supportive and accessible learning environment for all young people, staff and visitors alike. Through this policy, we aim to continually improve our facilities, curriculum, and communication methods, ensuring that each student can access a high-quality care education that meets their individual needs.

Policy Approved by:

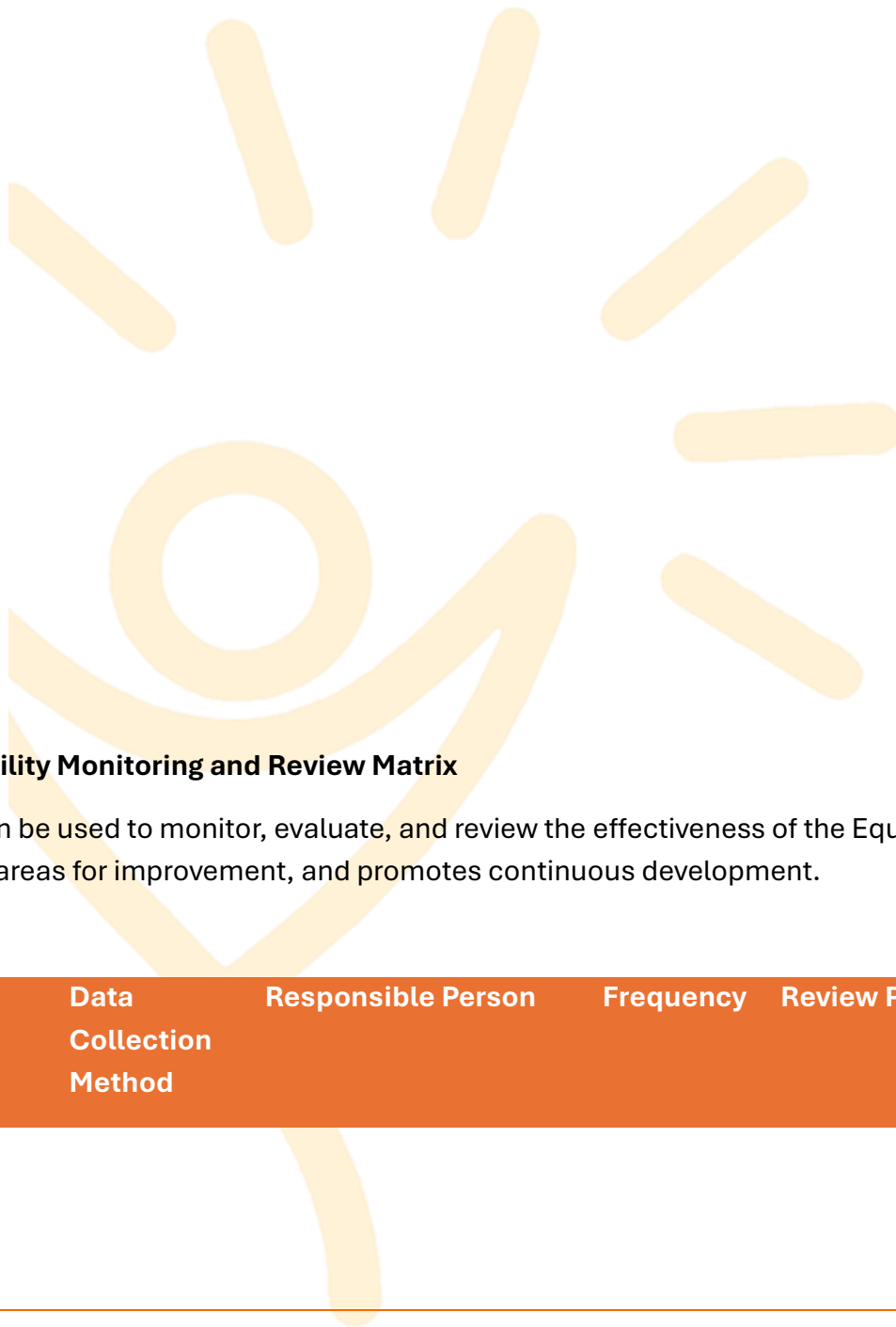
Name _____ **Date:** _____

Position _____ **Date:** _____

Signatures

_____ | **Date:** _____ |

This Accessibility and Equalities Policy ensures that Illuminate Care group provides an inclusive and accessible care and educational experience, meeting the needs of all students in line with the Care standards, the Independent School Standards and relevant legislation.



Appendix 1

Equality and Accessibility Monitoring and Review Matrix

The following matrix can be used to monitor, evaluate, and review the effectiveness of the Equality and Accessibility Policy. This ensures compliance, identifies areas for improvement, and promotes continuous development.

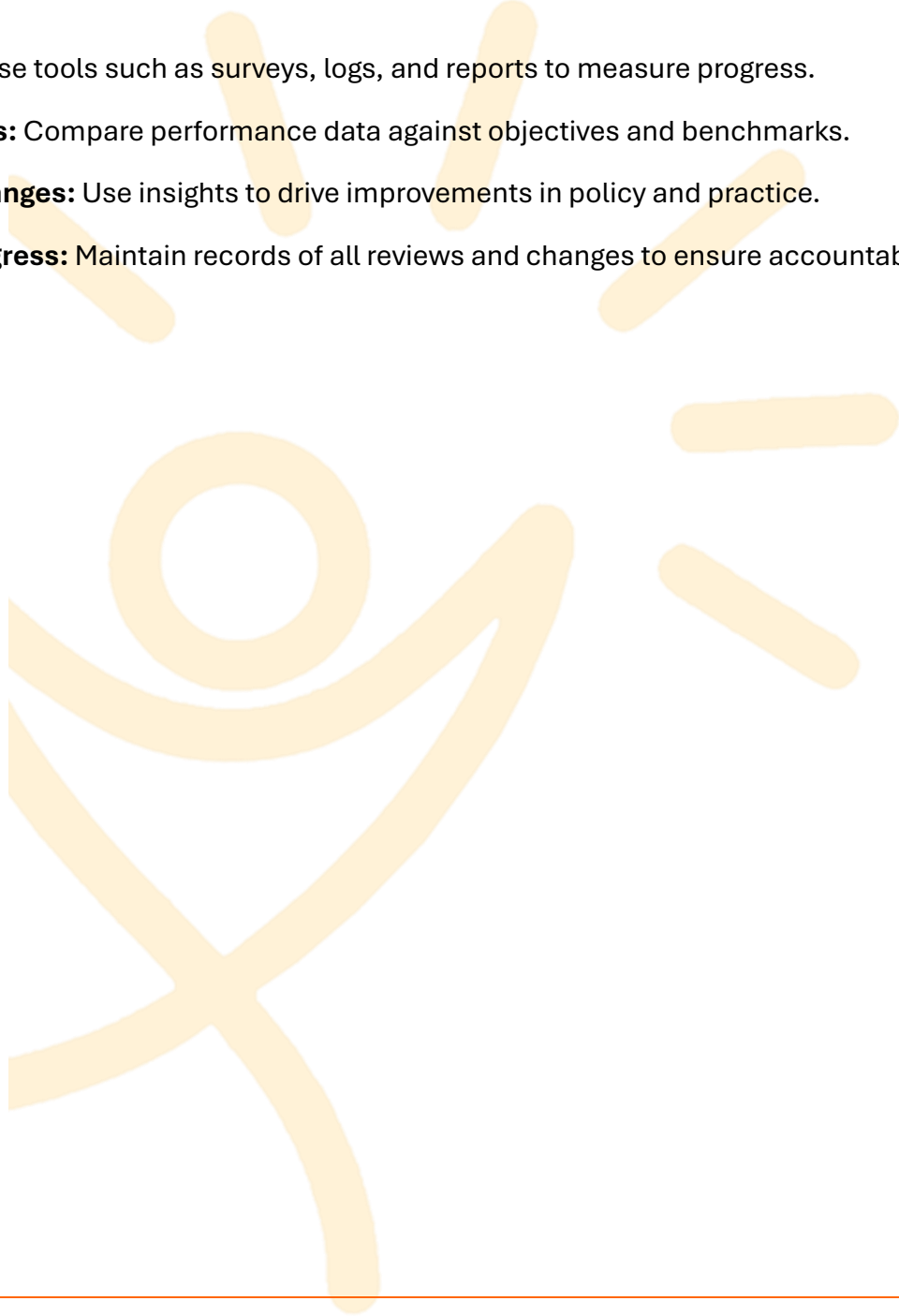
Objective	(KPI)	Data Collection Method	Responsible Person	Frequency	Review Process	Actions for Improvement
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Policy Implementation	Policy communicated to all staff and stakeholders.	Training attendance logs, policy sign-off	HR and Management Team	Annually	Review feedback and training evaluations.	Update training materials as needed.
Awareness and Training	% of staff completing equality and accessibility training.	Training records, staff surveys	HR Department	Quarterly	Analyse completion rates and training impact.	Schedule refresher sessions if needed.
Accessibility of Services	Feedback from service users on accessibility of services.	User satisfaction surveys, complaints log	Service Delivery Team	Bi-annually	Review and respond to feedback trends.	Implement changes based on feedback.
Complaints Related to Equality	Number and nature of complaints regarding equality or accessibility.	Complaints log, incident reports	Complaints Officer	Monthly	Investigate and resolve complaints promptly.	Address root causes and implement changes.
Physical Accessibility	% of facilities assessed and compliant with	Accessibility audits	Facilities Manager	Annually	Review audit outcomes and compliance reports.	Upgrade facilities as needed.

	accessibility standards.					
Diversity of Workforce	Diversity metrics (gender, ethnicity, disability) compared to benchmarks.	Recruitment records, HR reports	HR Department	Bi-annually	Analyze diversity trends.	Adjust recruitment practices if necessary.
Inclusive Practice	% of service users participating in decision-making activities.	Meeting minutes, feedback forms	Service Delivery Team	Quarterly	Evaluate participation rates and feedback.	Enhance inclusion strategies if needed.
Policy Review	Policy reviewed and updated based on legal or operational changes.	Policy review logs	Senior Management Team	Annually	Assess changes in legislation or best practice.	Update the policy as required.

How to Use the Matrix

1. **Set Baselines:** Define current performance levels for KPIs before implementation.

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2. **Collect Data:** Use tools such as surveys, logs, and reports to measure progress.
 3. **Analyse Results:** Compare performance data against objectives and benchmarks.
 4. **Implement Changes:** Use insights to drive improvements in policy and practice.
 5. **Document Progress:** Maintain records of all reviews and changes to ensure accountability.