Newbattle Abbey College
Colaiste Abaid a'Bhatail Nuaidh

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL) PLAN
2026-2030

1. Introduction

Newbattle Abbey College is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all members of the College community are able to access learning, work and services in a way that supports their needs.

We recognise that British Sign Language (BSL) is a language in its own right and that D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users may require specific support to fully participate in College life.

As a small and specialist institution, we support students and staff with a wide range of needs. Support is provided on a case-by-case basis, reflecting the individual requirements of each person and the nature of their engagement with the College.

Through this Plan, we affirm our commitment to:

- meeting our obligations under the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015
- supporting BSL users to access all College services
- providing a positive and inclusive experience for BSL users within our community

This Plan covers the period 2026 to 2030 and aligns with the goals of Scotland's BSL National Plan.

2. Scope

This Plan applies to:

- enrolled and prospective students
- staff and applicants

It applies across all College activities, including:

- learning and teaching
- student wellbeing and support
- events and wider College life

3. Summary of Approach

Newbattle Abbey College will take a proportionate and responsive approach to supporting BSL users.

Rather than adopting a fixed model of provision, we will:

- respond to individual needs as they arise
- put appropriate support in place in advance wherever possible
- work with individuals to identify reasonable adjustments
- ensure that support is coordinated and effective

Our priority is to ensure that BSL users are able to:

- access information
- participate in learning and work
- engage fully in the College community

4. Across All Services
We share the long-term goal of the BSL National Plan:
"Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users."

Our Commitments (2026–2030)
We will:

- ensure that requests for BSL support are considered promptly and reasonably
- make use of appropriate interpreting and communication support where required
- promote awareness of national services such as contactSCOTLAND-BSL
- provide clear points of contact for individuals seeking support
- ensure that key information can be made accessible on request
- encourage staff to develop awareness of BSL and Deaf communication needs where relevant to their role

5. Post-School Education
We will support students who use BSL throughout their engagement with the College.

Our Commitments
We will:

- provide accessible information for prospective students on request
- ensure that open days, interviews and admissions processes are accessible where required
- work with students to identify and put in place appropriate support for learning
- support transition into and out of College, including progression to further study or employment
- ensure access to student support services, including wellbeing and learning support
- consider accessibility within residential provision, where relevant

6. Employment and Work
We recognise that staff may also require support to carry out their roles effectively.

Our Commitments
We will:

- consider requests for BSL support from staff on an individual basis
- make reasonable adjustments to support staff in their roles
- raise awareness of schemes such as Access to Work where appropriate
- ensure that recruitment processes are accessible on request

7. Health, Wellbeing and Support
We will ensure that wellbeing and support services are accessible to BSL users.

Our Commitments
We will:

- work to ensure that student wellbeing and support services are accessible
- facilitate access to external health and support services where required
- provide information in accessible formats on request

8. Participation in College Life
We are committed to ensuring that BSL users can participate in the wider life of the College.

Our Commitments
We will:
- take reasonable steps to ensure that events and activities are accessible where required
- support participation in student representation and College decision-making
- encourage an inclusive College culture where communication needs are understood and respected
- engage proportionately with external partners, including the Alliance Scotland Sensory Hub and the BSL Network, to inform, support and strengthen our approach to meeting the needs of Deaf and sensory-impaired learners and staff

9. Monitoring and Review
Progress against this Plan will be monitored through existing College processes, including outcome reporting where appropriate.

We will:
- review support provided to BSL users on a case-by-case basis
- seek feedback from students and staff where appropriate
- use this feedback to inform future improvements

10. Review Arrangements
Please refer to the College 'Policies and Procedures Lists and Status' for review timetable.
This Plan should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents, whether specifically listed above or subsequently published or amended.
The College reserves the right to update, introduce, or revise policies and procedures from time to time.

Compliance with the most current versions of applicable policies and procedures, as published, is expected.

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Title:	BSL Plan 2026 -2030
Lead Officer:	Depute Principal
Date last reviewed	February 2026
Next Review date:	February 2029
Approved By:	Board
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