



Accessibility Policy and Plan

Rationale

At St. Mark's Catholic Primary School, we have a duty under the Road Traffic Act 1991, the Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order 2005 and the Equality Act 2010 to provide adequate access for people with disabilities. We believe we have worked hard at making our school accessible. We are always looking at ways of improvement and we acknowledge that under the above Acts we are required to make reasonable adjustments to the building to improve access.

The Special Educational Needs Disability Act defines disability as:

- physical disability
- sensory impairment such as visual and hearing
- mental health problems
- chronic illness such as asthma, epilepsy and diabetes
- medical conditions
- Asperger's Syndrome/Autism Spectrum Disorder
- special learning difficulties
- any other conditions which affects pupil's ability to study

We aim to provide access to our buildings, facilities and curriculum for all those who wish to attend our school. We are committed to improving access within the limitation of the physical structure of the buildings and other resources.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Aims:

- To make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils, school personnel or visitors with disabilities are not disadvantaged in any way
- To anticipate the needs of pupils, school personnel or visitors before they join the school
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy

Strategy:

As a school we will:

- identify the nature of the school population including pupils already in school and moving through it and the nature of the future intake using advance information from pre-school nurseries
- audit our strengths and areas for development in working with pupils with disabilities to include; the level of staff awareness of Equalities legislation; areas of the curriculum to which pupils with disabilities might have limited or no access
- review the opportunities for the participation of pupils with disabilities in after school clubs and educational visits
- review the building and identify parts of the school to which pupils with disabilities have no or limited access
- consider the impact on disabled pupils of the way the school is organised
- review the ways in which information is currently provided for pupils with disabilities
- report our findings to key stakeholders without breaching confidentiality

The plan will be informed by the views and aspirations of pupils with disabilities, their families and the priorities of the local authority

The plan

Overview

Our access plan is specific to our school based on the information gathered and consultation results. It addresses the three areas of improving access to:

- The physical environment
- Access to education, benefits, facilities and services
- Access to information usually provided in written form, and it will set out strategies for funding, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the plan

Audit

The school will use the following audit annually to assess its strengths and areas for development and then to plan the changes that it needs to make where necessary.

Physical environment

a. Toilet, Changing and Personal Care Facilities

1. Is there an accessible toilet facility that is large enough to accommodate a toilet and washbasin, bed, hoist and space for child, wheelchair and up to two adults?
2. Do we have private and well-equipped areas for personal care and showering? Is there space for child, wheelchair and up to two adults?
3. Is there a toilet cubicle that is slightly larger than average with handrails?
4. Is there a medical room where necessary treatment and therapy can be carried out in private?
 - *Yes, there is a purpose built room satisfying all of these requirements. It is located on the ground floor near to an external door.*
6. Is there a policy and strategy for the safe keeping and administration of medicines?
 - *Yes, a member of the medical team ensures these procedures are in place and up to date.*
7. Is there a known emergency response strategy in case of a medical emergency and are staff adequately trained in first aid in line with the statutory requirements?
 - *Yes. First aid training records are held in the school office.*
8. Are urgent contact lists up to date and accessible in an emergency?
 - *Yes, they are held centrally in the school office.*

b. Physical Accessibility:

1. Have we assessed the implications of physically disabled pupils accessing the upper areas of our building?
 - *Yes. This is currently not possible due to cost but the addition of a lift in the future should not be ruled out. Pupils unable to access the upper floor would have full access to the curriculum in a ground floor classroom.*
2. Do we have clearly identified in the plans for individual pupils and in the general evacuation procedures for visitors with disabilities?
 - *All ground floor classrooms and the hall have doors leading to the outside with built in ramps where necessary, ensuring speedy evacuation.*
3. If we have steps but no physically disabled pupils currently, have we made plans for potential pupils in line with our 'anticipatory duty'?
 - *Yes, there is a purpose built large classroom on the ground floor.*
4. Many physically disabled pupils are using powered wheelchairs which can be quite large. Is there any accessible equipment which may be too small for modern larger wheelchairs? E.g. older toilets?
 - *The accessible toilet space and toilet door are adequate to accommodate a modern wheelchair.*
5. Does the school need to plan to improve access for power chair users in accessing the school site? E.g. Field, nature trails, ponds etc?
 - *Wheelchair users can access the school grounds within the perimeter fence. However there is no access to the large field which is only occasionally used. This would require funds to construct a path to allow access.*
6. Are there allocated parking spaces for the parents of disabled pupils and do we ensure that the space is not used inappropriately, or blocked by other vehicles?
 - *Yes there is an allocated space.*

7. Is the access into school from the parking space level with no obstacles?

- *Yes, the access is via a path from the car park to the school entrance.*

8. Are there any heavy doors, sharp narrow turns and cluttered corridors that might be barriers to access? Where classroom space is tight, have adjustments been made to classroom layout in order to facilitate access? Will some disabled pupils need specialist furniture in order to access the curriculum? (Schools have a responsibility to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils and this can include specialist equipment).

- *Barriers to movement can be removed on corridors. There is a purpose built classroom, larger than the other classrooms to allow ease of movement. Specialist equipment will be purchased as required.*

9. Is the school aware of any existing support to purchase any necessary equipment?

- *No. At present, additional equipment is not required for any member of the school.*

Access to the curriculum and learning:

1. Are all areas of the curriculum available to pupils regardless of their disability?

- *Yes*

2. Where an activity cannot be made accessible or would be inappropriate is an alternative activity planned for?

- *Yes*

3. When we plan to improve access to the curriculum have we identified any reasonable adjustments needed to offer an equality of opportunity?

- *Yes*

4. Do we offer and plan specific staff training will improve access to the curriculum to support pupils with disabilities?

- *Yes*

5. Do we have plans and allocated funds for purchasing specialist equipment that will increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils? E.g. plans to purchase more books with large print, writing slopes and pencil grips, or adjustable desks and chairs?

- *Yes, this is built into the SEND and curriculum budgets.*

6. During our monitoring of classroom observation do we review the participation of pupils with disabilities during lessons and use observations to inform future developments in inclusion?

- *Yes*

7. Access to school visits can be problematic for some disabled pupils. Do we keep the school's visits policy under review and use accessible venues and transport providers?

- *Yes*

8. Are the needs of pupils with hearing and visual impairment considered – hearing loops in classrooms, large print texts, ICT equipment and computers?

- *Yes.*

Access to written information

1. Are we proactive increasing staff awareness of font size and page layouts to support pupils with visual impairments?

- *Yes*

Principles

Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the our aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the SEND policy.

1. We recognise our duty under the DDA (as amended by the SEND):

- not to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in our admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- not to treat pupils with disabilities less favourably
- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting pupils with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage
- to publish this Accessibility Plan.

2. We recognise and value parents' / carers' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out certain activities. We respect the parents'/carers' and child's right to confidentiality.

3. We provide all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils; which endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum 2014 framework, which underpins the development of a more inclusive curriculum;

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment, for individual and groups of pupils.

Activity

Here at St. Mark's Catholic Primary School, we have identified the following points for action as part of this plan:

a) Delivery of the curriculum

To continue to ensure that curriculum planning reflects an adaptable and flexible approach to the teaching and learning of all subjects.

b) Physical environment

We will continue to take account of the needs of pupils and other users with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

c) Provision of information in other formats

The school is aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested. The school will liaise with sensory support staff and speech therapy department to find suitable alternative strategies.

Date of Plan: September 2021

Date of Review: September 2022

The plan is also available in the following formats, on request to the head teacher: email; enlarged print version; other formats by arrangement.

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at our school. The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.