

FOUNDED 1789



ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (Aided) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Accessibility Policy

Date: May 2022

Reviewed and Ratified By: Governing body on 18th May 2022

Review Date: Every three years May 2025

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Signed: _____ Headteacher

Equality

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all pupils, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation; age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation (please see 'Single Equality Scheme').

1. Legal background

The Disability Discrimination Act (as amended by the Special Educational Needs & Disability Act 2001) requires all schools and LAs to plan to increase the accessibility of schools for disabled students. LAs must prepare an accessibility strategy covering all maintained schools in their area, and each school must produce its own accessibility plan. From September 2002 schools and LAs are required to formulate accessibility strategies and plans. They must have written documentation covering an initial period of three years in place by April 2003. Both schools and LAs are required to plan for:

Improving access to the physical environment of schools

This includes improvements to the environment of the School, which can include visual, acoustic and physical environments. All new school buildings have to comply with the Building Regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 and should be physically accessible to disabled students. Much of the work in the area of improving the physical environment will therefore involve improving access to existing buildings.

Increasing access for disabled students to the curriculum

Access to the curriculum covers not only teaching and Learning, but also the wider curriculum such as after-school activities, leisure, sporting and cultural activities or school visits. LAs may be able to help schools by offering staff training, encouraging schools to work together and share good practice, and by offering schools a range of support services such as advice on teaching techniques, classroom management and curriculum material.

Improving the delivery of written information to disabled students

This covers planning to make written information normally provided by the School to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Information should take account of pupils' disabilities and parents' preferred formats and should be made available within a reasonable timescale. LAs may help schools by organising central support services to provide information in alternative formats. LAs may also encourage schools to share information and expertise. The LA must consult with schools and dioceses when preparing its accessibility strategy. LAs and schools have a duty to review their strategies and plans, revise them if necessary, and to implement them. LAs and schools should prioritise resources for implementing their strategies and plans.

2. Definitions

The Disability Discrimination Act describes a disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

Impairments include sensory impairments – such as those affecting sight or hearing. People who have had a disability are protected from discrimination even if they no longer have a disability. Mental illnesses that are clinically well-recognised are included. So, for example,

medically diagnosed ADHD is considered a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act. While many disabled students will have, or may be eligible for, an Education Health and Care Plan not all disabled students have AEN. Equally, not all students with AEN will necessarily have a disability under this legislation.

1. This Accessibility Plan has been drawn up in consultation with the staff and governors of the School.
2. This statement sets out the ways in which St Mary's Primary School provides 'access' to education for pupils with a disability.
3. St Mary's Primary School is on a tiered site which makes transition around the school for pupils and staff with mobility issues quite challenging. The school has made reasonable adjustments to make most of the school accessible. The upper playground and main entrance level can be accessed via a slope from the main gate. There is a lift between the upper and lower floors for pupils, visitors and staff. There is a small lift to access the study area on the lower ground floor. Pupils on the lower corridor can access an open space immediately outside Class 7, but currently there is no access for wheel chair users to the lower playground. The Early Years area is currently in a court yard in the centre of the school which is accessed via a set of steps. Children in the Early years with a physical disability can access the main infant playground. There are two disabled toilets one on each level.

When planning for future building work access for pupils with disabilities is always a consideration. We are committed to working towards providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

4. At St Mary's Primary School access arrangements are considered and implemented on an individual basis as, in our experience each person's needs are different and are best met in ways that are pertinent to them even though the challenges they face may appear to be similar.
5. The governing body and staff of St Mary's Primary School are totally committed to the school's ethos of inclusion. To this end the school works hard to develop and maintain a close partnership with families and external agencies to meet the needs of all pupils and their families to ensure the school is fully accessible to them.
6. It is acknowledged that there will be the need for ongoing awareness raising and training for all staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the potential need to inform attitudes on this matter.
7. This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Health & Safety
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy

8. When determining access arrangements consideration will be given to:

- Preparation for entry to school
- The curriculum: teaching, Learning and activities
- Classroom organisation
- Timetabling and groups of pupils
- Homework
- Access to school facilities
- School sports
- School policies
- Break times
- Interaction with peers
- Assessment arrangements
- School discipline and sanctions
- Exclusion procedures
- Educational visits
- Extra-curricular activities
- Enrichment opportunities
- Arrangements for working with other agencies
- Preparation for transfer to new classes and secondary school
- Allocation of support staff
- Sharing of information

9. The School Accessibility Plan will be monitored and reviewed as part of school improvement.