SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, CONGLETON

Accessibility Policy and Plan

"Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School is a Christ centred learning community, where all are safe, valued and loved."

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School, Congleton

Saint Mary's Primary School Accessibility Policy and Plan

Introduction

At Saint Mary's Primary School, we are committed to providing an inclusive environment where every child can thrive. We recognise our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) to ensure that pupils, staff, parents, and visitors with disabilities are not treated less favourably and can access education and school life on an equal basis.

A disabled person is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Equality Act 2010). This includes sensory impairments and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities to alleviate substantial disadvantage. This may include auxiliary aids, adapted resources, or adjustments to premises.

This policy outlines our commitment to improving access for all and forms part of our ongoing school improvement planning.

Aims

Through this policy, Saint Mary's aims to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable greater access for pupils, staff, parents, and visitors with disabilities.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, parents, and staff.

Legislative Framework

This policy is based on:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- The Local Authority's Accessibility Strategy

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Governing Body: Ensures compliance with statutory duties and monitors the implementation of the accessibility plan.

- The Headteacher and SENCo: Responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy, ensuring staff are aware of their responsibilities, and coordinating accessibility improvements.
- All Staff: Have a duty to support inclusion and promote equality of access for all pupils.

Current Good Practice

We identify barriers to access by:

- Monitoring pupil progress and outcomes for those with SEND and/or disabilities.
- Consulting with parents, carers, pupils, and outside agencies.
- Reviewing the physical environment regularly to identify any adjustments needed.

Examples of current provision may include:

- High-quality, inclusive and adaptive teaching, including Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP) and appropriate reasonable adjustments.
- Accessible classrooms and learning areas.
- Use of assistive technology (e.g., laptops, visualisers, hearing aids, communication aids).
- Staff training on supporting pupils with additional needs.

Accessibility Planning

Our Accessibility Plan forms part of this policy and sets out objectives and actions to improve accessibility in three key areas. The plan is formally reviewed at least every three years, with progress monitored regularly and updates made where necessary.

a) Access to the curriculum

- High-quality, inclusive and adaptive teaching, including Ordinarily Available Inclusive Practice (OAIP).
- Reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and resources to meet individual needs.
- Staff CPD in areas such as autism, dyslexia, communication and interaction, and supporting a range of additional needs.
- Targeted interventions and additional support where required.

b) Access to the physical environment

- Step-free access to main areas of the school.
- Accessible toilet facilities.
- Clear signage and lighting.
- Evacuation plans for pupils and staff with mobility needs.

c) Access to information

- Providing school documents in alternative formats where required (e.g., large print, audio).
- Using visual supports such as symbols and timetables.
- Ensuring parents with disabilities have accessible channels of communication.

Monitoring and Review

- This Accessibility Policy and Plan will be formally reviewed every three years, or sooner where changes in legislation, the school environment or the needs of the school community require it.
- Progress against the actions within the Accessibility Plan will be monitored regularly and the plan updated where necessary.
- Progress will be reported to the Governing Body.

Action Plan

Access to the Curriculum				
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria
Ensure all pupils can access a broad and balanced curriculum	Review curriculum planning to ensure high-quality, inclusive and adaptive teaching, OAIP and appropriate reasonable adjustments are in place.	SENCo & Class Teachers	Ongoing	SEND pupils access the curriculum Appropriate adaptations are made.
Improve staff confidence in meeting diverse needs	Deliver CPD on autism, dyslexia, speech & language, and social/emotional needs	SENCo	Annual programme	Staff confidence is improved Staff appropriately support children with these difficulties

Enhance use of assistive technology	Audit current resources; provide training on software/apps to support learning	SENCo & ICT Lead	Ongoing	Children have a range of apps to support their learning.

Access to the Physical Environment				
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria
Improve physical access to classrooms and communal areas	Audit site for accessibility barriers (e.g. steps, door widths, signage) and prioritise reasonable adjustments	Headteacher & Site Manager	Ongoing	All children can access all parts of school.
Maintain accessible toilet facilities	Review provision annually and ensure appropriate resources (rails, changing bed if required)	Headteacher & SENCo	Annual	Toilets remain fit for purpose and accessible
Improve safety in evacuation procedures	Review individual risk assessments to identify pupils and staff requiring additional support during emergency evacuations and ensure appropriate evacuation arrangements are documented	Headteacher & SENCo	Reviewed annually and as needed	Individual evacuation needs are identified, appropriate arrangements are documented, and relevant staff understand how to support safe evacuation.

Access to Information				
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Criteria
Ensure all parents/carers can access school communications	Offer newsletters and letters in alternative formats on request (large print, digital, audio)	Office Manager	Ongoing	Parents and carers receive effective and purposeful communications.
Support pupils with communication needs	Increase use of visual timetables, symbols, and simplified language across school	Class Teachers	Ongoing	Children are able to use communication tools and aids to effectively communicate.
Improve accessibility of school website	Review website to ensure compliance with accessibility standards (e.g. alt text, clear font, colour contrast)	Head teacher/SLT	Annually	Website accessibility is reviewed annually, with any identified barriers recorded and appropriate improvements made to support access for all users.

Linked Policies

- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy