



Accessibility Plan

1. Introduction

At St. Mary's we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff, parents and all those involved with school life.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose any disability and to participate fully in school life. The achievement of all pupils is monitored and the data used to raise standards, ensure inclusive teaching and remove or minimise any potential barriers to learning.

The school is committed to making 'reasonable adjustments' wherever possible to ensure that the school environment is as accessible to as many people as possible. St. Mary's welcomes any comments in respect of this, to be presented to the Chair of Governors, via the school office. These are preferred in writing, however anyone requiring any assistance should please contact the school office, who will gladly help.

At St. Mary's we believe that diversity is a strength, which is respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit our school.

2. Definition of Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

3. Legal background

Since September 2002, the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 and 2005 outlawed discrimination by schools and L.A.'s against either current or prospective disabled pupils in their access to education. It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is reviewed and revised as necessary and at a minimum of every 3 years.

The Governing Body has three key duties towards disabled pupils under Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for reasons related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage including potential adjustments which may be needed in the future.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

4. The purpose of the Accessibility Plan

The Accessibility Plan forms part of the Disability Equality Scheme and sets out the proposals of how the Governing Body aims to improve equality of opportunity for all disabled persons and increased access to education in three key areas:

- Improve access to physical environment of the school adding specialist facilities as necessary, to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services. This can include ramps and handrails as well as physical aids such as specialist desks and ICT equipment.
- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability. This includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment.

- Improve and make reasonable adjustments to the delivery of written information to pupils, parents, staff and visitors with disabilities. This will be done within a reasonable period of time and in a format that takes account of a persons preferred means of communication (pupils, staff, governors, parents etc.).

The plan should be read in conjunction with other school policies such as the SEND Information Report and the SEND Policy.

5. Contextual Information

The majority of the school building is accessible, as St. Mary's is a single storey building with ramps in most areas, where a step up or down is required. There is also a lift in school to allow access to the larger school hall and to the side of this a disabled toilet with space for a wheelchair, hand rails for support and an emergency pull cord.

The school has children with a range of disabilities which include Speech & Language, Social Communication Difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Conditions, ADHD, Sensory Impairments and Developmental Delay. The needs of these pupils are met through targeted resources such as the provision of additional staff, referrals to specialized teams and investing in specific resources. A number of the children on roll have medical conditions including: asthma, hay fever, epilepsy, diabetes, eczema, hypermobility etc. Additionally some children have allergies or special dietary requirements.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are put into place for relevant pupils.

6. Current provision

- There is ongoing priority given to disabled access to the building whenever there is any new build.
- Children's learning is designed to accommodate any disabilities. St Mary's is an inclusive school and specialist support services are employed to support children's Special Educational Needs.
- All learning materials purchased reflect an awareness of disabilities.
- When collecting and interpreting data, disability is recognised as one of the comparative criteria considered, alongside race and gender. Data on children with Special Educational Needs is collected and analysed separately.
- When appointing staff and governors all applicants are treated equally regardless of ability, race or gender, in line with our school policies.

7. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school Curriculum.

The school's SEND policy ensures that staff identify, access and arrange suitable provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. Working with the Local Authority and Educational Psychology Service the SENDCo manages the Statutory Assessment Process ensuring additional resources are available where appropriate.

The school works closely with:

- Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists
- Additional Needs/Cognition and Learning Team
- Speech and Language Therapy
- CAMHS

8. This plan is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, Inclusion Team and School Governors.

9. The school website will make reference to the plan.

Approved by the Governors: Declan Simpson (Chair) and SEN Governor- Vera Boardman

Last updated: 9th April 2022

To be reviewed in 2025 in line with our SEND policy every 3 years