



St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

"Believe Achieve, Succeed"

Under Saint Joseph's guardianship and protection, we will be supported to achieve and succeed in the things the Lord wants us to do.



Accessibility Plan

Reviewed: Advent Term 2024

1. Aims

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

Our school aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of [schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010](#).

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 undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

In line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy has developed an Accessibility Plan outlining further modifications that cover curriculum, physical access and communication.

Visions and Values

The school aims to uphold a positive, non-discriminatory approach to disability, as part of its commitment to equal opportunities to primary education and will focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school.

Rationale

'A disabled pupil' is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

As the responsible body, the Governors of Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy are required to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do:

- Not treat disabled pupils less favourably, for a reason related to their disability, than pupils who are not disabled.
- Plan strategically and make progress in increasing physical accessibility to school premises and to the curriculum to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage.

Discrimination

'A responsible Body' discriminates against a disabled person if;

- For reasons which relate to his disability, it treats him less favourably than it treats or would treat others to whom the reason does not or would not apply, and
- It cannot show that the treatment in question is justified.

In line with the Disability and Discrimination Act (2001) School Practice, provision is guided by the Disability and Discrimination Code of Practice for Schools.

Admissions

Admissions to St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy are determined by the Governing Body and are in line with LA admissions procedures. We will not discriminate against any child with a disability and will take all reasonable steps to provide effective educational provision and appropriate modification to the building where necessary.

Pupil Data

At present, academic year 2024 we have no pupils in the school who is included in the DDA definition of disability. We consult with local nurseries to gain advance information of pupils with a statement who may also be disabled.

Further information regarding the presence of disabled pupils in the school and the pattern of their participation in the life of the school can be found in their individual folders.

Exclusions

LA exclusion procedures are followed to ensure that no disabled child is discriminated against by exclusion whether fixed term or permanent.

Curriculum and Life of the School

At Saint Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to pupils who are not disabled in accessing the curriculum, daily routines, extra-curricular activities and school facilities.

The school recognises its duty to take reasonable steps or adjustments for all disabled pupils, and the School will therefore anticipate needs. The school recognises its duty to consider the broad range of needs and requirements of all pupils, current and future, and accordingly to plan and make changes to policies, procedures and practices, to ensure that disabled pupils will not be placed at a disadvantage.

In making reasonable adjustments and in drawing up accessibility plans to improve access over time, the school will take into account the LA's accessibility strategies, the school's own resources, the health and safety of all pupils, the practicalities of making adjustments and the need to maintain standards for all pupils.

The school will take proactive steps to promote disability equality for pupils, employees and service users by developing and implementing an effective disability equality scheme.

We endeavour to make the curriculum more accessible by following the good practice detailed in:

- Admissions Policy
- Equal Opportunities (Pupils) Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Race Equality Policy
- Curriculum Complaints Procedure

Accessibility Plan

St. Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy uses the 'Identify barriers to Access' checklist (appendix 1) to audit provision and accessibility. In addition, we use an external agency to complete an accessibility audit. Both will inform the School Accessibility Plan. See appendix 2.

Complaints Procedure

If there are any complaints relating to provision for disabled children, these will be dealt with in the first instance by the Headteacher. The Chair of Governors and/or the Chair of the Executive Board may be involved at this stage, if necessary. In the case of an unresolved complaint, parents may contact the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. (SENDIST)

Monitoring

The governors will monitor this policy on a regular basis to ensure no pupils are placed at a substantial disadvantage or treated less favourably. They will monitor the success of the policy and the accessibility plan by the low number of parental concerns raised.

Review

As a working document this document will be subject to continuous review.

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO ACCESS: A CHECKLIST

This list should help to identify barriers to access that exist in schools. The list is not exhaustive. It is designed to encourage a flexible approach to the further questioning of the accessibility of our school.

SECTION 1: How does our school deliver the curriculum?

QUESTION	YES	NO
Do we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?		
Are our classrooms optimally organized for disabled pupils?		
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?		
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?		
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?		
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?		
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?		
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?		
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical activity?		
Do we provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?		
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?		
Are there high expectations of all pupils?		
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?		

SECTION 2: Is our school designed to meet the needs of all pupils?

QUESTION	YES	NO
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Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds, and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?		
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?		
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?		
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including alarms with both visual and auditory components?		
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?		
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?		
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?		
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics and noisy equipment?		
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?		

SECTION 3: How does our school deliver materials in other formats?

QUESTION	YES	NO
Do we provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?		
Do we ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g., by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?		
Do we have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?		
Do we ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?		

DDA Initial Assessment Framework

1. Name of School: Saint Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

2. What additional facilities are available in school, for disabled individuals, under the following headings:

General Physical Access ☒

	None	Throughout Part	
• Lift	X	☐	☐
• Stair lift	X	☐	☐
• Ramps	☐	☐	X
• Handrails	☐	☐	X
• Wide Doorways	☐	☐	X
• Automatic Doors	X	☐	☐
• Accessible toilets	☐	☐	X
• A changing bench for toileting	☐	☐	X
• Hoists			

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|---------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ☐ Moveable | X | ☐ | ☐ |
| ☐ Fixed | X | ☐ | ☐ |

Others – please specify

SECTION 3 – Main School Entrance and Reception					
		Yes or N/A	Partial	No	Your Comments
3.1	Is there level access at the main school entrance? (NB: A small threshold step no greater than 12mm can be considered level) (‘Yes’ = level; ‘Partial’ = 1 step; ‘No’ = several steps at the entrance and no alternative ramp)				
3.2	If there is a ramp, is it suitable for wheelchair users? (NB: Max gradient 1:12, level landing at top of ramp, handrails.) (‘Yes’ = adequate; ‘Partial’ = minor changes required; ‘No’ = substantial adaptations required)	N/A			

3.3	If there are steps, are they suitable for people with walking difficulties? (NB: Handrails to both sides or central, contrasting step edges, even rise to each step) (‘Yes’ = adequate; ‘Partial’ = minor changes required; ‘No’ = substantial adaptations required)	N/A			
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SECTION 4 – External Areas					
		Yes or N/A	Partial	No	Your Comments
4.1	Do routes between buildings provide independent access for wheelchair users? (If ‘Partial’ or ‘No’, please comment on areas for improvement)				
4.2	What proportion of building entrances have level access for wheelchair users? (‘Yes’ = >75%; ‘Partial’ = 25 – 75%; ‘No’ = < 25%. Please comment on areas for improvement)				
4.3	Is there level access to all unique outdoor areas? (e.g. sports areas, tennis courts, playgrounds, seating areas etc.) (‘Yes’ = all; ‘Partial’ = some; ‘No’ = none)				All playgrounds can be accessed using different entrances to the school. The outdoor covered area has steps down to it.

SECTION 6 – Emergency Evacuation Plan					
		Yes or N/A	Partial	No	Your Comments
6.1	What proportion of your building(s) are easy to evacuate by people in wheelchairs? ('Yes' = >75%; 'Partial' = 25 – 75%; 'No' = < 25%. Please comment on areas for improvement)				
6.2	Does your Emergency Evacuation Plan include a strategy for evacuating disabled pupils, staff, visitors and community users? (Please note areas for improvement)				Reviewed annually
6.3	If you have upper floors, are there means to ensure the evacuation of people with mobility impairments? ('Yes' = adequate; 'Partial' = minor changes; 'No' = substantial adaptations – please give comments)				Not in wheelchairs

SECTION 7 – Physical Access to Curriculum Areas and Unique Facilities (where applicable)		
Curriculum Area	Total number of teaching areas	Number which are accessible

8.1	Art		
	Design & Technology		
	Humanities		
	Science		
	Sport School Hall	1	
	Performing Arts		
	Mathematics		
	English		
	Languages		
	ICT		
	Library	1	
	Other – Please specify	7 classrooms + resources room Upstairs room	X

SAINT JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The Plan is for:

- Disabled pupils who are in the school now: improving access for them is a matter of planned improvements in addition to reasonable adjustments.
- Disabled pupils who are in the school system, but at an earlier Key Stage: good advance information about disabled pupils coming to the school will be important to making reasonable adjustments and to making planned improvements over time;
- Disabled pupils who are not yet in the school system, but about whom the local authority and other agencies may have information.

Over time, the focus should shift significantly from planned improvements for individual pupils to embedding accessibility considerations into everything the school does: in school improvement, in curriculum development, in maintaining and improving the physical environment, in professional development and in all planning processes.