

Accessibility Policy and Plan

St Mary's Horsforth Catholic Voluntary Academy



"Happy together in God's family,
we love, grow and learn."

Approved by:	Aoibheann Kelly-Edwards	Date: March 2023
Last reviewed on:		
Next review due by:	March 2026	

Vision Statement

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that “schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation”. According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education’s guidance on statutory policies for schools. The plan will be reviewed every 3 years or where operational needs dictate and approved by the Academy Council. At St Mary’s Horsforth, the plan will be monitored by the Headteacher and evaluated by the Academy Council. The current plan will be appended to this document.

At St Mary’s Horsforth, we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

At St Mary’s Horsforth, our mission is to offer a distinctive Catholic education for every child, with the Gospel values at the heart of all we do. Our children are part of our loving Christian school community where every individual feels valued, confident and secure.

Aims

- To increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs
- To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils, staff and other members of the school community with a disability, medical condition or other access needs can access education and associated services.
- To improve the delivery of information on different disabilities to pupils, staff, parents/carers and other members of the school community

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.

St Mary’s Horsforth is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

We are committed to adhering to the principles of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

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

St Mary’s Horsforth Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipates the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

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.

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.

St Mary's Horsforth Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information:

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, adapting the curriculum as necessary. This includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010).
- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;
- Where needed, adapt the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include adaptations to hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty. The Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website. The Accessibility Plan will be monitored through the Academy Council.

St Mary's Horsforth is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to adhering to the principles of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

St Mary's Horsforth's School Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipates the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

St Mary's Horsforth's Accessibility Plan relates to the key aspects of physical environment, curriculum and written information:

This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicines Guidance
- Trips and Residential Visits Policy

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all Academy Council' committees will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010

Current good practice

We gather information about any disability or health condition in early communications with parents and carers or pre-school settings of children who are new to school. For parents and carers of children already at the school, we ask parents to keep the school informed of any changes to the information they have provided.

Physical Environment

There are no areas of the school to which disabled pupils have no access at the moment. There are parts of the school building where disabled pupils may have limited access to. Disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extracurricular activities present particular challenges, for example lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction impairments, afterschool clubs for pupils with physical impairments and school trips for pupils with medical needs, however all reasonable adjustments are made to support as full an involvement as possible.

Curriculum

Through planning for individual need, we aim to provide as inclusive an approach as practically possible. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, however all reasonable adjustments are made to support as full an involvement as possible. We seek advice and support from the relevant professionals in order to ensure that we have made adequate and reasonable adjustments.

Information

Different forms of communication are made available as needs are identified to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others. Access to information is provided in a range of different formats available for disabled pupils, parents and staff as needed.

Access Audit

The school is housed in a one-story building on three levels. All entrances to the school are either flat or ramped and all have wide doors fitted. The main entrance features a secure lobby, this being fully accessible to wheelchair users. The school has designated visitor parking. There are disabled toilet facilities available in our building. This is fitted with a handrail and a pull emergency cord. The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked.

Management, coordination and implementation and review

- We consult with other professionals and services when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.
- The Academy Council and Senior Leadership Team work closely with the Local Authority.
- We work closely with parents to consider their children's needs.
- The policy is reviewed every 3 years and/or as children's needs change.

- We make links with other schools to share best practice through regular SENCo network meetings and other communications as needed.

Complaints

The school works, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs. If there are any complaints relating to the provision for pupils with access needs these will be dealt with in the first instance by the Headteacher, The SEND governor or chair of academy council may be involved if the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily.

Action plan

Aim 1: To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.

Our key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability, medical condition or other access needs. Provision may include: Liaison with specialists, professional development for staff, a differentiated curriculum, specialist resources to support learning and access to the curriculum, a range of support staff including trained teaching assistants and access arrangements in place for statutory testing.

Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
To liaise with pre-school providers to prepare for the new intake of children into each Reception cohort	Identify pupils who may need an adapted curriculum or additional support and provision. Access training where necessary to ensure needs met. Well planned transition planned including additional meetings with parents/pre school/transition visits.	May to July annually	Headteacher/SENCo EYFS Leader	Provision to enable the child to access the EYFS set in place ready for when the child/ren start school
To liaise with other settings to prepare for the intake of new children who transfer within year	Identify pupils who may need an adapted curriculum or additional support and provision. Access training where necessary to ensure needs met. Well planned transition planned.	Ongoing as need arises	Headteacher/SENCo SENCo	Provision set in place ready for when the child/ren start school

To increase access to the curriculum for children with disabilities and/or additional needs	<p>Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs.</p> <p>The curriculum is reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.</p> <p>Training for staff to ensure quality first teaching for all pupils.</p> <p>Use of assistive technology.</p>	Ongoing.	SLT and all teachers	<p>Targets are measurable and meaningful to the intended progress</p> <p>Targets are set termly following thorough assessments</p> <p>The curriculum is reviewed by reflective teachers who aim to meet the needs of all children</p>
To review policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	Regularly monitor policies to ensure they comply with the Equality Act 2010	Ongoing	SLT & Academy Council	All policies clearly
To establish and maintain positive working relationships with parents	<p>To have regular meetings with parents for IEPs.</p> <p>Ensure parents have clear understanding of new IEP targets and how to support their child.</p> <p>Support parents through signposting to outside agencies and early help plans.</p> <p>Sharing of key information.</p>	Ongoing	SLT and all teaching staff	Clear collaborative working approaches through regular meetings, risk assessment reviews, target sharing and action planning
To establish and maintain close liaison with outside agencies for pupils with additional needs	<p>To ensure collaboration between all key personnel.</p> <p>Necessary referrals.</p> <p>Attendance at cluster meetings.</p> <p>Training.</p>	Ongoing	SLT/SENCo, all teaching staff and outside professionals	Clear collaborative working approaches through regular meetings, provision reviews, annual reviews and action planning

<p>To include pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs as fully as possible in the wider curriculum including trips and residential visits as well as extra- curricular provision</p>	<p>Create personalised risk assessments and access plans for individual children. Liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and implementing training where needed. Ensure that actions, including emergency evacuation procedures, are clear and that staff are capable of carrying them out. Ensure children with SEND are given first access to clubs.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>SLT, SENCo and all teaching staff, extra-curricular service providers and educational visits settings</p>	<p>Evidence that appropriate considerations and reasonable adjustments have been made</p>
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Aim 2: To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs can access education and associated services.

Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
Improve the physical school environment	The school will take account the needs of pupils with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting and colour schemes, clear signage and more accessible facilities and fittings.	Ongoing	SLT, site manager and Academy Council	Evidence that appropriate considerations have been made wherever physical school improvements are carried out.

Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs	Create personalised risk assessments and access plans for individual pupils. Liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and implementing training where needed. Ensure that actions, including emergency evacuation procedures, are clear and that staff are capable of carrying them out.	Ongoing	SLT, SENCo, all teaching staff and site manager	As full as possible inclusion for all pupils. Safe evacuation in an emergency.
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Aim 3: Improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and other members of the school community

Targets	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibilities	Success Criteria
To enable improved access to information for pupils, parents and visitors.	Create and offer information in alternative formats if required. Interpreters are used for families who use BSL as main way of communicating. Access arrangements are considered and put into place for statutory testing.	Ongoing	SLT, teachers, admin team and SENCo	Evidence that appropriate considerations and reasonable adjustments have been made

<p>Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for parents with a disability, medical condition or other access needs so as they can fully support their child's education</p>	<p>Adopt a proactive approach to identifying the access requirements of parents and make reasonable adjustments where possible.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Whole school team</p>	<p>Evidence that appropriate considerations and reasonable adjustments have been made, so that parents can fully support their children in their education and be part of the school community.</p>
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Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every **3** years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

It will be approved by the Academy Council.

Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Health and safety policy
- Positive handling plan
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report and policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Appendix 1: Accessibility audit

Feature	Description	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by
Number of storeys	1	N/A		
Corridor access	Clear	N/A		
Lifts	N/A	Lift would need to be fitted if a child/ member of staff has a disability, as there are 2 flights of stairs.		
Parking bays	15 parking bays plus 2 disabled car parking bays		Headteacher	
Entrances	1 main entrance to school and ramp to school reception. There is also a ramp to the school hall allowing 2 entrances for wheelchair access.	N/A		
Ramps	From the KS1 playground to the entrance and directly outside the school hall.	Ramp needs to be purchased for classroom areas if a child/ member of staff has a disability, as there is a step leading to outside area.	Headteacher	

Toilets	Disabled toilet in Key Stage 1 and in the school hall.			
Reception area	Reception area is level			
Internal signage	Emergency signage in place in case of evacuation.			
Emergency escape routes	Escape routes from classroom doors/main entrance/hall.			