



**SANCTA
FAMILIA**

CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Accessibility Policy

External Use

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Introduction

At Sancta Familia Catholic Academy Trust we exist to provide an exceptional education for every student, every day; driven by love, service, humility and our Catholic faith. We lead a family of Catholic schools from across South London where everyone is known, loved, and adds value to our community.

Therefore, it is essential that we continue to work hard to ensure that we continue to improve the accessibility of our schools. We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment to enable this to happen.

Legislation

UK schools are legally required to include provisions in their accessibility plans under the Equality Act 2010, which mandates that schools must not discriminate against disabled pupils and must make reasonable adjustments to ensure they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. The Act requires schools to prepare and publish an accessibility plan that addresses three key areas:

1. **Improving access to the curriculum.**
2. **Enhancing the physical environment.**
3. **Ensuring information is accessible to disabled pupils.**

Additionally, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice provide statutory guidance on supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including the use of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Schools must also comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires them to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled pupils.

The Trust will ensure that accessibility planning fully reflects these duties and statutory requirements.

Definition of a Disability

A person is disabled under the Act if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on their ability to undertake normal daily activities.

Substantial is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would, or is undertaken in a significantly different way, to complete a daily task such as getting dressed.

Long-term means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a respiratory infection.

People with progressive conditions can be classed as disabled. A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. However, someone automatically meets the disability definition under the Act from the day that they are diagnosed with HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

Some conditions are expressly excluded from the definition of disabled by the Act. These are: addiction to, or dependency on, alcohol, nicotine, or any other substance (other than in consequence of the substance being medically prescribed); the condition known as seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hayfever), except where it aggravates the effect of another condition; tendency to set fires; tendency to steal; tendency to engage in physical or sexual abuse of other persons; exhibitionism; and voyeurism.

The exclusions also apply where these tendencies arise as a consequence of, or a manifestation of, an impairment that constitutes a disability for the purposes of the Act.

The Act states that, except for the provisions in part 12 (transport) and section 190 (improvements to let dwelling houses), the provisions of the Act also apply in relation to a person who previously has had a disability as defined above. This means that someone who is no longer disabled, but who met the requirements of the definition in the past, will still be covered by the Act. Also protected would be someone who continues to experience debilitating effects as a result of treatment for a past disability.

In practice, this means schools must take into account the needs of pupils, staff, parents, or carers who are currently disabled, who have progressive conditions, or who have previously had a disability that continues to affect their daily life.

Who is this guidance for?

This policy relates to any young person who attends one of our schools, and any member of staff employed by the trust.

It also applies to parents, carers, and visitors who may require adjustments to access our schools or participate in Trust activities.

Reasonable Adjustments

Where someone meets the definition of a disabled person in the Act, we will make reasonable adjustments to any elements of a job, or site, that places that person at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled person.

Each of our schools must show how it is:

- 1. Identifying pupils and staff with disabilities to enable it to give reasonable assistance to them and without discriminating against them.**
- 2. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.**
- 3. Improving the physical environment of schools to enable those with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.**
- 4. Improving the availability of accessible information to those with disabilities.**

Reasonable adjustments in relation to students and parents/carers might include: removing movable barriers like furniture, teaching and holding meetings in a different, wheelchair accessible room;

adaptions to enable a guide or hearing dog to support a person in school; purchasing specialist equipment, such as an ergonomic chair; discounting disability-related sickness leave for the purposes of absence management; providing additional supervisory guidance / support; allowing different start and end times to the working day for staff.

From September 2012 schools have been required to provide auxiliary aids (and services) for disabled pupils to overcome any disadvantage experienced in schools.

Reasonable adjustments in relation to the school site might include: providing step free access to school buildings where possible; ensuring that new classrooms or refurbishment of old buildings, ensuring that doors are wide enough for wheelchair access; including a disabled parking space in the car park.

If it is clear that the only adjustments that can be made to avoid a disadvantage are unreasonable then they do not need to be made. In such situations the school must document, in detail, how and why it has come to this conclusion.

Examples of adjustments may also include providing information in alternative formats (large print, braille, simplified language, digital formats), ensuring signage is accessible, or making timetabling adaptations to support individual needs.

What our plans should include

Each of our schools must have an accessibility plan. Every school's accessibility plan must include;

- 1. Identifying pupils and staff with disabilities to enable it to give reasonable assistance to them and without discriminating against them.**
- 2. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum. In particular, at KS4, what alternative accreditation is offered to ensure that all students have access to a high quality pathways regarding a career, education or training of their choice.**
- 3. Improving the physical environment of schools to enable those with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided. Including action to improve the signage in the building and grounds where needed. In addition, support for disabled parents and families to access the school for a meeting or event.**
- 4. Improving the availability of accessible information to those with disabilities. This means providing information in different formats such as braille, larger font or reduced simplified language.**

Accessibility plans should cover a period of three years and then be reviewed again at the end of that period with an updated plan for the next three years.

Each school must publish their accessibility plan on their website. We will be working with schools over the next year to codify our accessibility policies across all schools.

The Trust will work with schools to monitor progress, share good practice, and ensure that accessibility planning reflects our Catholic values of inclusion and dignity for all.



SANCTA FAMILIA

CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

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