Bishop Hogarth
Catholic Education Trust

Accessibility Plan

St. Joseph's Catholic Academy

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Aims of the Accessibility Plan

This Plan outlines how the School aims to increase access to education for pupils with disabilities in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act 2010 (i.e. the curriculum, physical environment and information).

A person is regarded as having a disability under the Act where they have 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.

This Plan aims to:

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

This Plan is reviewed every three years to take into account the changing needs of the school and its pupils. The plan is also reviewed where the school has undergone a refurbishment/significant alterations or new build.

The Accessibility Audit

To assist in the development of the Plan and the identification of key issues the School will undertake an Accessibility Audit – at least once every three years. A template for the audit is attached at **Appendix 1** and covers the following three areas:

- **Access to the curriculum** – the School will assess the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum on an equal basis with their peers.
- **Access to the physical environment** – the School will assess the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the physical environment on an equal basis with their peers.
- **Access to information** – the School will assess the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access information on an equal basis with their peers.

When conducting the audit, the school will consider all kinds of disabilities and impairments, including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Ambulatory disabilities** – this includes pupils who use a wheelchair or mobility aid
- **Dexterity disabilities** – this includes those whose everyday manual handling of objects and fixtures may be impaired
- **Visual disabilities** – this includes those with visual impairments and sensitivities
- **Auditory disabilities** – this includes those with hearing impairments and sensitivities
- **Comprehension** – this includes hidden disabilities, such as autism and dyslexia

The audit should be used as a standalone tool to prompt investigation and review and need not be published with the Accessibility Plan.

The findings from the audit will, however, be used to identify the broad issues to be addressed and the actions to be taken to improve access.

All actions will be carried out in a reasonable timeframe. The actions that will be undertaken are detailed in the following sections of this document.

[Please note that the actions in the tables below are examples only. You must amend the content of the tables to reflect your school's actions.]

Planning duty 1: Curriculum

Issue	Action to be taken	Lead	When	Outcome
Staff members do not know whether the curriculum is accessible	Audit of the curriculum	Headteacher, teachers, subject leaders, SENCO	Autumn 2022	Management and teaching staff are aware of any possible accessibility gaps in the curriculum
Staff members feel they do not have the skills to support pupils with SEND	CPD provided to staff members Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum	Headteacher, SENCO	Summer 2022	Staff members have the skills to support pupils with SEND, using recommendations from the EEF and Stockton Local Authority.
Some pupils with SEND cannot access their lessons.	Provide laptops and other adjustments for pupils with SEND	Headteacher, SENCO	Summer 2022	Pupils with SEND can access lessons and assessments.
Summative assessments are not accessible for all children SEND.	CPD for access arrangements for tests, including upcoming SATs. Laptops and scribes provided in accordance with accessibility guidance set out by the DfE.	Headteacher, SENCO, class teachers	Spring 2023	All children will be able to access summative assessments that are used termly.

Planning duty 2: Physical environment

Issue	Action to be taken	Lead	When	Outcome
Children with physical needs cannot access the upper floor of KS2.	Audit of physical environment Classes to be altered on a yearly basis	Headteacher, site manager, SENCO,	Summer 2022	School is aware of accessibility barriers to its physical environment and make reasonable adjustments.
Learning environment of pupils with visual impairments is not accessible	Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes	Headteacher, site manager, SENCO,	Summer 20**XX**	Learning environment is accessible to pupils with visual impairments
Lunch hall is distressing for those with auditory sensory needs.	All children with auditory sensory needs identified and provided with ear defenders.	SENCO, class teacher	Summer 2022	Children can access the dinner hall with their peers without becoming distressed.

Planning duty 3: Information

Issue	Action to be taken	Lead	When	Outcome
Staff do not know whether school information is accessible or not	Audit of information and delivery procedures	SENCO, business manager	Autumn 2022	School is aware of accessibility gaps to its information delivery procedures. All information is available on the website and hard copies are available at the school office upon request.
School website is not accessible to children with SEND	Audit of website	ICT manager	Summer 20XX	Website is fully accessible
Information about the school environment is not accessible to children with EAL.	Audit of classrooms with children with EAL. Support and CPD provided by SENCO	SENCO	Autumn 2022	Information around classrooms are accessible for children with EAL. Classroom displays and signs are amended to suit the language of the child.

Appendix 1

Accessibility Audit

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is a legal requirement for schools to provide equal opportunities for all pupils, including equal access to the physical environment, information, and the curriculum without hinderance. The school must also accommodate the needs of staff and visitors Lead have disabilities, both inside its buildings and on its grounds.

How to use this audit

This audit is an example of a tool used by an existing school within the Trust (St John's Catholic School & Sixth Form College) and should be adjusted to the conditions of each school.

The audit will be carried out at least once every **3** years. It comprises three sections: **access to the curriculum**, **access to the physical environment**, and **access to information**. Guidance notes are attached at the end of the audit to help prompt enquiry. Actions should be collated into broad issues for carry over to the Accessibility Plan.

An audit for all types of disability

While conducting this audit, schools should consider all kinds of disabilities or impairments, which may include:

- **Ambulatory disabilities** – this includes pupils who use a wheelchair or mobility aid.
- **Dexterity disabilities** – this includes those whose everyday manual handling of objects and fixtures may be impaired.
- **Visual disabilities** – this includes those with visual impairments and sensitivities, so lighting, glare, contrast and colour should be considered.
- **Auditory disability** – this includes those with hearing impairments and sensitivities, so induction loops, visual signals and acoustics should be considered.
- **Comprehension** – this includes hidden disabilities such as autism and dyslexia. Considerations should also be made for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).

Name of school	Date of audit

Audit completed by	Role

ACCESS AUDIT

Feature ***For example:***	**Description / Comments**	**Actions to be taken**	**Person(s) responsible**	**Date to complete actions by**
Access to the curriculum – See guidance note 1				
Access to the physical environment – See guidance note 2				
Number of storeys	The school is built upon a range of levels and has varying corridor widths.	Bespoke arrangements are made to ensure that students with a disability are able to access the lifts in the main building and ramps at the front of school. Extra time is given to students who need additional support to move around the building.	Leadership	On-going
Corridors, Aisles & Doors	All corridors are suitable in size to accommodate wheelchair access. The Site team are proactive in ensuring that corridors remain clear of obstructions.	Site Team and day cleaner to maintain site checks to ensure that all areas are clear of obstruction and spillages at all times.	Site Team Day Cleaner Staff on duty	On-going
Lifts	The school has one passenger lift sited in the main body of the school at Student Link. This allows access from the ground floor to	Continue with regular maintenance checks through SLA arrangements.	Finance & Operations Manager Site Team	See Maintenance and service records

	the first and second floors. We also have a disabled platform lift allowing access into the DT area.		External Support	
Car Parks and School Grounds bays	On-site car parking for staff and visitors include dedicated disabled parking bays in front of Student Reception and in the Visitor carpark.	Monitor disabled bays and ensure that they are used for their intended purpose.	Leadership Site Team	On-going
Entrances & Reception	Entrances to the school are either flat or ramped and all have wide doors. Areas where access may be difficult (Portacabins) has limited but reasonable access.	Timetables of individuals to be reviewed to ensure the portacabins are not used as the teaching areas for those groups.	Leadership - Timetable	In preparation for new year and reviewed as necessary
External Ramps & Steps	The main entrance to the School has a disabled ramp leading into the main body of the school.	A portable ramp to be purchased to be an additional support at one of the exits of the Sports hall. Main entrance and exit to the sports hall already has a ramp access.	Finance & Operations Manager	Summer 2021
Toilets	The School has disabled toilets sited at various points throughout the School and Sports Facilities.	Maintain cleanliness of the facilities	Cleaners Site Team	Ongoing
Internal signage	The School has internal directional signage identifying key areas as well as indicating the flow of movement.	Review internal signage in light of changes implemented pre and post COVID restrictions. Signage to be internally prepared and ready for new systems and strategies regarding the physical environment.	Leadership	Ongoing monitoring of all access in and around school
Means of escape	The School has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked. Emergency signage and escape routes have been updated as part of our fire	Checks and monitoring to continue.	Site Team Finance & Operations Manager	On-going

	safety and door replacement project.			
Emergency lighting (internal and external)	The School has new internal and external emergency lighting (2020-21) to provide clear and well-lit access.	Checks and monitoring to continue.	Site Team Finance & Operations Manager	On-going
Access to information – see guidance note 3				

Guidance Note 1 – Access to the curriculum

1. How does the school enable all pupils to have access to the full curriculum without hinderance including PE, drama and music?
2. How do staff adapt lesson plans so that all pupils can participate and reach their full potential?
3. How does the school ensure that all pupils have access to extracurricular activities and are able to participate in school trips?

Guidance Note 3 – Access to the physical environment

1. How has the school made sure that access routes, entrances (including reception), doors and corridors are wide enough for wheelchair users and those with ambulatory difficulties to have room for manoeuvre? Are ramps and power assisted doors used where appropriate?
2. Are accessible toilet and changing facilities available for people with disabilities?
3. How does the school allow wheelchair users and those with ambulatory disabilities to have access to seating in dining halls, classrooms, staff rooms and offices and to have adequate room to manoeuvre?
4. How has the school made sure that floors & lighting are suitable, and that tactile signs are used for those who are visually impaired or who have physical disabilities?
5. How does the school make sure pupils with hearing impairments are notified when the school bell rings and are induction loops and couplers provided?

6. Are means of escape fully accessible including from upper floors and is the fire alarm visual as well as audible including inside toilets.

Guidance Note 3 – Access to information

1. Are relevant areas of the school clearly signed for those with visual impairments and disabilities, such as autism or dyslexia?
2. Do you have arrangements to provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?
3. Do you have the facilities, such as ICT, to produce written information in different formats?
4. Do you ensure that information is available to staff, pupils and parents in a way that is user friendly for all people with disabilities?
5. How has the school ensured its website is accessible to everyone, such as the incorporation of translation features and audio reading?