St Mary's Catholic Primary School

"Learning together in Faith and Love"

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Policy Reviewed	Autumn 2026
Next Review	Autumn 2029

1. Mission, values and commitment

St Mary's Catholic Primary School exists to serve the Catholic families of the Parish of Our Lady of the Holy Souls, Kensal New Town and other local parishes. Our mission, "Learning together in Faith and Love", underpins our commitment to an inclusive school community in which every child is welcomed, valued and enabled to participate fully in school life.

Our values of Kindness, Respect, Tolerance, Honesty, Responsibility and Co-operation shape our approach to equality, inclusion and accessibility. We seek to remove barriers rather than expect children to overcome them, and we work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors, the local authority, health professionals and other agencies.

2. Purpose and legal framework

This policy and plan set out how St Mary's Catholic Primary School will improve accessibility for disabled pupils and others with access needs.

It replaces the previous policy's reliance on the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and SEN and Disability Act 2001 as the principal framework. The current core duties arise from the Equality Act 2010, including Schedule 10.

The policy should be read alongside the school's SEND Policy and SEND Information Report. It also takes account of the Children and Families Act 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026).

Under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the school must prepare, implement, keep under review and, where necessary, revise a written accessibility plan. The plan addresses three statutory strands:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment so that disabled pupils can take advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services; and
- improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils where that information is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled, taking account of pupils' disabilities and the preferences expressed by them or their parents/carers.

3. Definition of disability

For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. "Substantial" means more than minor or trivial, and "long-term" generally means that the effect has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months or for the rest of the person's life.

The definition may include pupils with physical or sensory impairments, long-term medical conditions, neurodevelopmental conditions and some mental health conditions. A pupil may be disabled under the Equality Act even where they do not have identified SEND, and a pupil with SEND is not necessarily disabled. Decisions will therefore be made on the circumstances and needs of the individual child.

4. Equality, reasonable adjustments and inclusion

The school will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil because of disability and will take reasonable steps to avoid substantial disadvantage. The duty to make reasonable

adjustments is anticipatory: the school will consider barriers in advance wherever reasonably possible rather than waiting for an individual child to experience difficulty.
Reasonable adjustments may include changes to policies, routines or teaching approaches; adaptations to the environment; accessible resources; seating or timetable arrangements;

additional adult support where appropriate; and auxiliary aids or services, including assistive technology. Decisions will take account of effectiveness, practicality, health and safety, available resources and the individual pupil's needs. Disabled pupils will not be charged for reasonable adjustments.
Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the school will work with the local authority and relevant professionals to secure the provision specified in that plan. Accessibility planning complements, but does not replace, the school's duties towards individual pupils with SEND.

5. Safeguarding and accessibility

Accessibility is also a safeguarding consideration. In line with KCSIE 2026, the school recognises that children with SEND, disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and that barriers may make it harder for them to recognise, communicate or report concerns. Staff will maintain a child-centred approach, avoid assumptions that changes in behaviour, mood, communication or injury are simply related to a child's condition, and ensure that safeguarding information and reporting routes are accessible to pupils with communication or other additional needs.
Individual arrangements will be considered for emergency evacuation, intimate or personal care, medical needs, online access and participation in educational visits where relevant. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) will be prepared where an individual assessment identifies that one is required.

6. Curriculum access and participation

The school aims for disabled pupils to have access to the same ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum and wider opportunities as their peers. Curriculum planning will identify and remove barriers to participation, while maintaining high expectations.

Approaches may include:

- adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments to tasks, resources, pace, presentation and recording methods;
- appropriate assistive technology, specialist equipment and auxiliary aids;
- accessible arrangements for assessment and statutory tests where permitted by the relevant assessment rules;
- reasonable adjustments to participation in PE, educational visits, clubs, performances, worship, school events and enrichment activities;
- staff training informed by the needs of pupils, including communication, sensory, physical and medical needs; and
- seeking advice from specialist teachers, therapists, health professionals and other services where appropriate.

7. Physical environment

The school will take reasonable steps to improve physical access over time. St Mary's is a Grade II listed building, and some structural alterations may therefore require listed-building consent or may not be practicable. Listed status does not remove the school's Equality Act duties. Where a physical alteration is not reasonable or cannot be made, the school will consider effective alternative arrangements to avoid substantial disadvantage.

Accessibility will be considered when premises work, refurbishment, furniture, signage, lighting, acoustics, toilets, entrances, circulation routes, playground provision and emergency arrangements are planned. The school will undertake access reviews and respond to the known needs of current and prospective pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

8. Accessible information and communication

Information that is routinely provided to pupils will be made available to disabled pupils in an accessible form, within a reasonable time, where this is needed. The school will take account of the pupil's disability and any preferences expressed by the pupil or their parents/carers.

Depending on need, this may include enlarged print, simplified or Easy Read materials, visual supports, alternative fonts or spacing, electronic formats compatible with assistive technology, audio, symbol-supported communication, translated or interpreted communication where appropriate, or other formats recommended by specialists. The school will also seek to make key parent-facing information and digital communication accessible and will respond to reasonable requests for alternative formats.

9. Consultation, responsibilities and monitoring

The Governing Body is the responsible body for ensuring that the school meets its statutory accessibility duties. The Head of School, supported by the SENDCo and other leaders, is responsible for coordinating implementation in day-to-day practice. All staff share responsibility for identifying and reducing barriers within their roles.

The school will seek the views of disabled pupils and pupils with SEND, and their parents/carers, when planning and reviewing reasonable adjustments and accessibility priorities. Relevant staff, governors and external professionals will be consulted where appropriate.

Progress against the Accessibility Plan will be reviewed at least annually by school leaders and reported to governors. Actions may be added, amended or brought forward where needs, pupil cohorts, premises, technology, guidance or resources change. The plan will be formally renewed at least every three years and implemented throughout its life.

10. Admissions and access to school life

The school will not discriminate unlawfully against a disabled child in relation to admission or the provision of education and associated services. Where a prospective or current pupil has an access need, the school will discuss reasonable adjustments with the family and, where appropriate, relevant professionals so that arrangements can be planned in good time.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in relation to attendance procedures, behaviour arrangements, school meals, uniform, homework, trips, clubs, collective worship, transition and other aspects of school life. Any individual adjustment will be considered in the context of the child's needs and the school's legal duties.

11. Publication, complaints and linked policies

This policy and Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website and made available in an alternative accessible format on request. Information about the school's accessibility arrangements will also be reflected in the SEND Information Report, as required.

Concerns about accessibility or reasonable adjustments should normally be raised promptly with the class teacher, SENDCo or Head of School so that they can be considered and addressed. Formal complaints will be dealt with under the school's Complaints Policy. This does not affect any statutory rights available to parents/carers or pupils.

This policy should be read alongside:

- SEND Policy and SEND Information Report
- Equality Policy and Equality Objectives
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying arrangements
- Online Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Complaints Policy

Accessibility Plan 2026–2029

The following plan provides a practical framework for continuous improvement. It should be read as a live plan: individual reasonable adjustments must not be delayed until a scheduled action date where a pupil needs support sooner.

Priority / objective	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Evidence / review
Curriculum participation	Audit barriers to participation for disabled pupils and pupils with SEND; review adaptive teaching, resources, PE, trips, clubs and assessment arrangements; record and share effective reasonable adjustments.	SENDCo / SLT	Termly; annual audit	Pupil/parent voice; learning walks; SEND reviews; participation data
Staff knowledge and confidence	Identify training needs from current pupil profiles and provide targeted CPD on disability, communication, sensory/physical needs, assistive technology and reasonable adjustments.	SENDCo / DSL / SLT	At induction and at least annually	Training records; staff feedback; impact in practice
Accessible information	Review core pupil and parent information for accessibility; establish a clear process for requesting alternative formats; ensure classroom materials can be adapted promptly.	SENDCo / Office / Computing lead	By Spring 2027; ongoing	Accessible-format requests met; website/document review; pupil/parent feedback
Physical access	Undertake and maintain an access audit covering entrances, routes, classrooms, toilets, signage, lighting, acoustics, furniture and external areas; prioritise feasible improvements.	Head of School / Premises / Governors	Annual review	Access audit; premises plan; completed works
Listed-building constraints	For proposed structural changes, seek appropriate professional advice and listed-building consent where required; document alternative arrangements where alteration is not reasonable or practicable.	Head of School / Governors	As required	Advice/consents; risk assessments; documented alternatives
Emergency evacuation	Identify pupils or others requiring individual evacuation support; create/review PEEPs where assessment shows they are needed and ensure relevant staff understand arrangements.	DSL / Premises / SENDCo	On admission/change of need; at least annually	Current PEEPs; drills; staff awareness
Assistive technology and auxiliary aids	Review availability, suitability, maintenance and staff/pupil competence in using assistive technology and other auxiliary aids.	SENDCo / Computing lead	Termly / as need arises	Equipment register; support plans; pupil feedback
Transitions and admissions	Identify access needs early for new starters and transitions between year groups/settings; liaise with families and professionals before transition wherever possible.	SENDCo / Class teachers	Each transition cycle	Transition records; parent/pupil feedback
Voice and co-production	Seek views of disabled pupils and pupils with SEND and their parents/carers about barriers, adjustments and priorities for the plan.	SENDCo / SLT	At least annually and at individual reviews	Consultation records; changes made in response
Governance and publication	Governors receive an annual accessibility update; review plan progress, resources and priorities; keep website policy/SEND information current.	Head of School / SENDCo / Link Governor	Annual; formal renewal Autumn 2029	Governor minutes; updated plan and SEND Information Report

Review record

Review date	Reviewed by	Key changes / progress	Next actions

Key statutory and guidance references

- Equality Act 2010, including Part 6 and Schedule 10 (Accessibility for disabled pupils).
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

- Department for Education and Department of Health, SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- Department for Education, guidance on what maintained schools must publish online.