



St Margaret Mary's Catholic Junior School

Accessibility Action Plan 2023 – 2026

Policy Title:	Accessibility Plan 2023-26
Date adopted:	6 th December 2023
Date of next review:	November 2026
SLT Lead:	Rebecca Wilkinson
Committee:	Full Governing Body
Statutory requirement:	Yes

1. Introduction/Context

1.1 The Accessibility Plan addresses the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (which replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and the SEND Code of Practice of September 2015. These acts place a responsibility on the Governing Body to ensure that the school is socially and academically inclusive. In particular, the Equality Act requires the school to develop a plan to show how it will develop services in the following three areas:

- a) To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum.
- b) To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure disabled students are able to take advantage of education and other benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.
- c) To improve the delivery of information to disabled students, so information is as available as it is for students who are not disabled.

2. Purpose/Aims

2.1 The school's diverse and inclusive community will be a centre of excellence in learning, where all students, including those with disabilities, are supported and challenged to fulfil high ambitions.

2.2 All students will have access to appropriate qualifications and will develop the skills and resilience to meet the demands of working, family and community life. Students will demonstrate the empathy and confidence to work with others to achieve a better future.

2.3 To ensure all disabled students are fully involved in school life and are making at least expected progress.

2.4 To identifying barriers to participation and find practical solutions to overcoming these.

2.5 To work collaboratively with disabled students and their parents/carers to create appropriate provision, including robust EHCPs where appropriate.

2.6 To increase the confidence, sensitivity and expertise of teachers and support staff when teaching or supporting a wide range of disabled students.

2.7 To meet the requirements of the Equalities Act and the SEND Code of Practice in respect of disabled students.

3. Definitions

3.1 Definition of Disability (Equality Act 2010)

"A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to perform normal day-to-day activities."

3.2 Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND Code of Practice September 2015)

A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of the kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. This will include students with medical needs.

4. The Accessibility Plan

4.1 This plan summarises our development priorities in the three areas specified by the Equality Act (see context above). The school is also committed to making reasonable adjustments for individual students to ensure all students are able to be involved in every aspect of school life, in partnership with their families, and that barriers to learning are removed.

a) Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum

4.2 Students with SEND (special educational needs or disability) are given access to the curriculum supported by the school's specialist SEND provision and in line with the needs of the individual and the wishes of their parents. Every effort is made to educate students with SEND alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENCO consults the student and parents about proposed flexible arrangements.

4.3 The school curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.

4.4 Our Special Educational Needs Policy, Local Offer and SEN Report outline the provision the school already has in place to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This includes:

a) Identification of SEND at a very early stage through meticulous liaison with appropriate feeder schools such as nursery schools, primary schools or high schools, supported by individual provision maps and the SEND register.

b) Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs/disability of any student in their charge, including sharing progress reports, medical reports and student/parent feedback.

c) Listening to students' and parents'/carers' views and taking them into account in all aspects of school life.

d) Awareness raising programmes for all students about the range of disabilities in the school, in particular creating a very supportive base for each disabled pupil.

e) Regular training opportunities for staff on SEND and appropriate teaching and learning strategies.

f) Increasingly specialised in-class support or guidance from trained TLAs (Teaching and Learning Assistants) and Additional Educational Needs Teachers (AEN Teachers).

g) Specific specialist intervention to build skills (particularly for literacy and numeracy) in small groups and/or adapted timetables.

h) Specialist advice from other professionals (e.g., Speech and Language Therapist, School Nurse, Occupational Therapist, hearing impaired service, physiotherapist) on how to adapt the curriculum and teaching strategies for individuals.

i) Special access arrangements for internal and external exams.

j) Specific target setting and monitoring to ensure all students with SEND make at least expected progress and accelerated progress in intervention groups.

k) Ready access for parents to staff, with partnerships supported by planned structured conversations and ongoing home-school liaison.

l) A structured and dedicated transition programme for vulnerable students

m) Specialist advice and guidance to support transition.

n) Multi-agency support coordinated by the school's Inclusion teams in each year group.

- o) Training for all staff from specialist autism provision staff on teaching and learning strategies for students with autism.

Further development

4.5 The School Development Plan sets out additional development priorities in this area. These include:

- a) Create an inspiring curriculum model which meets the needs of all students.
- b) Broaden choices to construct personalised pathways.
- c) Develop high quality curriculum for lower ability students.
- d) Develop more complex curriculum model.
- e) Conduct annual curriculum reviews.
- f) Reorganise non-classroom-based support staff to ensure effective context for continuing professional development.
- g) Improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services, provided or offered by the school.

b) The school environment already incorporates many features to ensure accessibility to students with disabilities

4.6 These include:

- a) A specialist SEND area, with small, quiet and calm learning spaces
- b) Any disabled toilets
- c) Features that improve acoustics
- d) Customised furniture and/or equipment
- e) Specialist resources, including digital technologies
- f) Guiding in emergency evacuation
- g) Any ramps

4.7 In addition, teachers are given advice on how to move and arrange furniture, how to manage lighting, noise and visual stimulus, how to create visual timetables etc., so that individual students' needs are met. Similar attention is given to how students' needs can be met on school journeys and visits.

Further development

4.8 The school carries out an accessibility audit every three years in advance of reviewing this policy. The last audit was undertaken by EA Audits Ltd.

4.9 The school is also committed to ensuring full accessibility in any future new build.

c) Improve the delivery to disabled students of information which is readily accessible to students who are not disabled

4.10 Teachers and TLAs consider the needs of each SEND student and provide accessible learning resources for them. The increasing use of Interactive Whiteboards and other digital technologies have diversified the ways in which information is presented to all students. Visual and audio information is now as common as written information.

4.11 In addition, the school makes the following available as appropriate:

- a) Differentiated resources with particular attention to reading age, plain English, images and layout.
- b) Laptops and other digital technologies.
- c) Coloured overlays for text.
- d) Tactile resources.
- e) Readers and/or scribes in exams, where appropriate.

Further development

4.12 The following opportunities to improve further will be explored:

- a) Opportunities provided by digital technologies.
- b) Regular clear and relevant information to parents in home language if required.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 All staff are responsible for removing barriers to learning for disabled pupils.
- 5.2 All leaders are responsible for improving accessibility within their area of responsibility.
- 5.3 The Governing Body is responsible for the approval of this plan.
- 5.4 The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring the resourcing, implementation and updating of this plan.
- 5.5 The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that all current students' needs are covered by this plan and for monitoring the effectiveness of the plan in meeting disabled students' needs.

6. Review

6.1 This Accessibility Plan has the status of a policy of the Governing Body and is reviewed every 3 years. The views of disabled students and parents will feed into the review.

12. Key to Action Plan

12.1. Priority Ratings

It is unlikely that you will be able to implement all the recommendations in the near future and we do recognise this. To this end a priority rating is given to each recommendation, which is designed to guide you in the formulation of the accessibility plan, which then can be incorporated into the school accessibility strategy and your School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Priorities for action may be dependent upon a range of factors including, for example:

- Compliance to AD M (Part M of The Building Regulations)
- Client's policy and objectives
- Current use of the building
- Costs involved and available budget and resources
- Plans for refurbishment
- Maintenance programmes
- Agreement of outside agencies (such as a free holder or local highway authority, planning permission)

It is for the schools' senior leadership and management to take ownership of actions to improve accessibility, in the context of the many competing demands schools face. The priorities suggested below may be helpful in that regard.

It is suggested that the schools' own development and improvement plan (SIP) contains targets linked to this Accessibility Action Plan, to encourage allocation of staffing and budget resource to support further improvements to accessibility.

Priority A:

Where there are potential health and safety risks or where failure to implement changes would be highly likely to attract legal implications. Immediate action is recommended to put changes into effect.

Priority B:

Where action is recommended within the short term to alleviate an access problem or make improvements that will have a considerable impact.

Priority C:

Where action is recommended within 12 - 24 months to improve access.

Priority D:

Where the recommendation involves excessive costs or should be implemented as part of a long-term plan.

12.2. Budget Implications

Potential budget costs have been suggested. Especially in the case of higher budget suggestions, it is recommended that quotation and tender exercises are undertaken in compliance with the schools and funding bodies financial regulations and appropriate budget allowed for at the point of preparing the school's annual expenditure budget.

N - None

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable with no revenue cost to the school.

OG - Ongoing Maintenance

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable within annual revenue budgets for annual maintenance as part of the annual planned preventative maintenance programme.

L - Low

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable for a budget of less than £1000.

I - Intermediate

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable for a revenue budget of between £1000 & £5000. Such action may need allowing for at annual budget planning time.

H - High

Such recommendations are likely to be achievable for a capital budget cost above £5000. Such action will probably need allowing for at annual budget planning time.

ST - Structural Change

Such recommendations are likely to require a budget exceeding £15,000. Strategic Budget and Project planning at a professional level of support are likely to enhance delivery of the desired change.

Action Plan

Key – SBM – School Business Manager / PO – Premises Officer / HT = Head Teacher

13.1. Access to Information							
Audit Ref	Audit Item	Suggested Actions	Priority	Budget Implications	Target date for completion	Ownership of Task (School to insert name)	Date Completed

13.2. Access to Site and Facilities							
Audit Ref	Audit Item	Suggested Actions	Priority	Budget Implications	Target date for completion	Ownership of Task (School to insert name)	Date Completed
10.2.4	Access to Reception	Error! Reference source not found.	B	L	2024	SBM / PO.	08/11/2023
10.2.5	Reception Facilities	Error! Reference source not found.	B	N	ASAP	SBM / PO.	08/11/2023
			B	N	2024	SBM / PO.	24/11/2023
10.2.6	External Areas	Error! Reference source not found.	B	L	ASAP	SBM / PO.	Areas spray painted on 24/11/2023

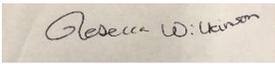
			C	L	2025	SBM / PO.	Ramps to be ordered in next financial year.
			B	L	2024	SBM / PO.	30/11/2023
			B	L	2024	SBM / PO.	30/11/2023
10.2.7	Emergency Evacuation	Error! Reference source not found.	B	L	2024	SBM.	01/07/2024
10.2.10	Accessible Toilets	All accessible toilets to have mirrors, hand washing/drying facilities and coat hooks fitted at an accessible height.	B	L	2024	SBM / PO.	24/11/2023

	<p>Check all accessible toilets have grab bars positioned as per below:</p> 	B	L	2024	SBM / PO.	24/11/2023
	<p>Emergency alarm cords to reach all the way to the ground should an emergency occur and should have an easy grab handle. Signage can assist in ensuring users/cleaners are aware of this. For example:</p> 	A	L	ASAP	SBM / PO.	30/11/2023
	<p>Install a swivel/pivot hinge to the reception toilet door to allow it to open both outwards and inwards. For example:</p> 	C	L	2025	SBM / PO.	30/07/2024
	<p>Change any unsuitable locks to a large lever style latch to assist</p>	C	L	2025	SBM / PO.	Ongoing

		<p>those with limited dexterity. For example:</p>  <p>Doors should be signed with the universal symbol for accessibility. For example:</p> 	B	L	2024	SBM / PO.	24/11/2023
10.2.13	Internal Signage	Error! Reference source not found.	B	L	Ongoing	SBM / PO / Staff.	Ongoing
			C	L	Ongoing	SBM / PO.	Disabled toilets completed, other doors ongoing.

10.2.18	Doors	Error! Reference source not found.	B	N/L	ASAP	SBM / PO.	31/03/2024
			B	N	2024	PO.	24/11/2023
			B	N	ASAP	SBM / PO.	30/11/2023
10.2.20	Staff Facilities	Error! Reference source not found.	B	L	2024	SBM.	30/03/2024

13.3. Signatures

Head Teacher	Name (Print)	Signature	Date
	R Wilkinson		28.11.2023
SENCo	C Medway	<i>C Medway</i>	28.11.2023
Governor/Board Member	M Rawsthorne	<i>M Rawsthorne</i>	28.11.2023

