



Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and  
Newcastle

# St Mary's RC Primary School: Accessibility Plan & Policy



***Excellence, inspired by Gospel values***

**Headteacher:** Mr David Miller

**Chair of Governors:** Mrs Michelle Harris

**Date:** December 2018

**Date for Review:** December 2021

## Accessibility Plan

### Vision, Values and Ethos

St Mary's RC Primary School is committed to the principles of inclusion. We have a caring, supportive ethos that seeks to value all individuals. Our school promotes equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and others who use our school.

By promoting a positive attitude towards disabled people, we aim to eliminate discrimination and harassment related to disability and thereby fulfil an essential component of our ethos.

We will involve disabled people in informing the direction our school takes to promote equality of opportunity and accessibility to the school environment. We also seek to encourage full participation of disabled people in the school community even if this requires treatment that is more favourable.

Our school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a happy, challenging environment where each pupil can develop to the maximum of his/ her potential and feel valued as an individual who can contribute to the life of our school and society in general.

### **We promote:**

- ✓ Pupil self-confidence so that each pupil develops a sense of personal worth and is confident in his/her ability to succeed.
- ✓ Positive relationships to help pupils develop good relations with others, based on mutual respect and consideration, and an understanding of, and a tolerance towards various races, religions and cultures.
- ✓ Co-operation to develop the abilities of pupils to contribute as members of groups and recognising their responsibilities.
- ✓ Self-discipline so that pupils understand the need for high standards of behaviour and to develop responsibility towards people and property.

### The legal context

The 1995 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) introduced a duty, which applies to all schools, which sets out a general duty to promote disability and a specific duty to publish a disability equality scheme. It requires schools to be more proactive in their approach to promoting disability equality and eliminating discrimination. Our definition of disability defines a disabled person as someone who has:

***'A physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'***

This definition covers a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity

Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability only if the effect is on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. *See Appendix 4 for a list of impairments that would affect normal day-to-day activities.*

The duty puts greater focus on approaches to policy development and management of issues in relation to disability.

Part 4 of the DDA requires that the governing body increase access to education for disabled pupils. Our school has produced, with this scheme, an Accessibility Plan, which identifies actions based on our self-evaluation that will promote opportunities for participating in the curriculum; accessing the building and services and delivery of information to pupils and adults. *See Appendices 1, 3, 4 and 5.*

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.

### **Involvement of pupils, staff, parents / carers, governors, agencies and service providers**

The responsibility for implementing this policy is taken by the Governors of the Achievement, Standards and Outcomes Committee. A working group representing the views of disabled people will fulfil our statutory duty to involve disabled people in the production of this disability equality scheme (DES). This group consists of D. Miller (Headteacher); M. Ross (Deputy Headteacher); S. Hughes (SENco); M. Harris (Chair of Governors); A. Herdman (Vice Chair of Governors); C. Affleck (Parent Governor).

Pupils in our school, including our school council, have provided their views to the group on accessibility issues and the school provision. *See Appendix 2.* From the Annual Review of pupil statements we collate pupil and parent views to inform our scheme. Through respectful relationships with disabled pupils we acknowledge their feelings and respond to their views.

Where we have disabled staff, parents / carers and service providers we will provide a response to suggestions on how we can improve our disability scheme and its priorities. This would inform considerations that may be required to make reasonable adjustments. We will seek to record views of external agencies, voluntary groups and services we procure to inform our disability equality scheme and make any necessary adjustments.

An annual report, identifying priorities for school action, will be provided by the working group and passed on to the governing body.

### **Information Gathering in relation to the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees**

St Mary's RC Primary School will follow local authority guidance on the collection of information on disabled employees and the recruitment of new staff. The local authority human resources database has a record of those staff that have indicated whether they have a disability. Other information in school will be analysed to ensure that there is no discriminatory practice and will take into account the following: seniority, TLR payments, permanency of staff, CPD, disciplinary and capability proceedings, harassment and bullying, sickness and those leaving the profession early. Those staff that voluntarily provides information will be assured that it is used confidentially to inform working practice and conditions.

All staff will be supported by the local authority agreed policies on sickness and returning to work. Our school would seek to contact the 'Access to work' scheme to explore possible support to staff if required during their employment.

### **The educational opportunities available to, and achievements of, disabled pupils**

The school maintains a pupil tracking system, which provides current data on pupil attainment and achievement. This system also provides specific information on pupil disability and attainment. Pupils with a disability will be registered on admission to St Mary's. Information will be collected through the transfer of records from previous schools, the local authority and parents / carers to ascertain pupil needs and levels of attainment and achievement in order that consideration is given to provision and access to curriculum. Further detail is available in our school's SEND and Admissions Policies.

In order that pupils have full access to the curriculum the school will prioritise aspects of the school Accessibility Plan so that pupils with a disability are ensured greater participation in the curriculum.

Consideration will be given to the management of pupils with medical needs and their care plans to access the curriculum.

The following questions would be considered to identify priorities:

- Are there areas of the curriculum to which a disabled pupil has limited or no access?
- Are pupils fully participating in extra-curricular activities?
- How are we addressing those areas of the school building that are not accessible to disabled pupils, staff or others?
- What forms of communication can we provide for pupils and adults?
- Does our written information allow greater access to the curriculum and information on our school?
- Are we monitoring policies and practice? E.g. administration of medicines, staff development on inclusion areas, incidents that may affect disabled pupils.

*Further questions are in Appendix 3 & 5.*

### **Impact, reviewing and reporting our scheme**

The scheme will be monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed annually with the SEND and Inclusion policy and Accessibility Plan. The review of the scheme will cover:

- Information on attainment and achievement for those pupils with a disability.
- Current pupils, staffing and others who are registered with a disability.
- A record of the progress made against the school Accessibility Plan.
- Adjustments that are to be considered in the school SEN policy which would cover staffing and provision.
- Priorities that would be included in the school's SEF and school improvement plan.

Governors receive an annual report on the school's DES. A summary of the scheme priorities are in the school prospectus and on our website. *See Appendix 3 for further questions that may be used by the governing body to assess the quality of the scheme.*

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Accessibility Plan and Disability Equality Scheme Activities

Appendix 2: Pupil Views

Appendix 3: The Disability Equality Duty and the Governing Body (GB)

Appendix 4: The DDA definition of disability

Appendix 5: Questions to support the Accessibility Plan

Appendix 6: Accessibility Audit

### **Links with other policies**

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

- Health & Safety Policy (including off-site safety)

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) information report
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Assertive Discipline and Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- School Improvement Plan
- School Mission Statement
- Teaching and Learning Policy

**Monitoring and Reviewing**

The Accessibility Plan & Policy will be reviewed on a triennial basis.

This policy was reviewed by Governors on: Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Signed:

Name: ..... (Headteacher)      Date: .....

Name: ..... (Chair of Governors)      Date: .....

## Appendix 1: Accessibility Plan and Disability Equality Scheme Activities

Activities	Resources	Date to be achieved by	Person Responsible	Success Criteria
<b>1. Leading and monitoring the disability equality scheme</b>				
<p>Liaise with staff, parents and children to ensure the needs of disabled people are being met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff questionnaire to raise awareness of any disability.</li> </ul>	<p>SENDco release time Questionnaires</p>	Dec 2018	SENDco	Questionnaires completed, awareness raised and action plans in place.
<p>Review all school policies, procedures and plans to ensure that our vision and value statements are explicit within them.</p>	<p>Staff meetings Governor meetings</p>	Ongoing	<p>Governors Headteacher All staff</p>	All policies will reflect our school's vision and values and will be relevant and current.
<p>To ensure that it is part of the Governing Body meeting structure. This will be an agenda item.</p>	Meeting Room		Headteacher	The Health & Safety governors from the resources Committee will have identified clear improvements and developments.
<p>Review and update the school accessibility plan.</p>	Governing body and SLT meetings	Nov 2018	Governors Headteacher	New policy ratified and placed onto school website.
<p>Establish the disability working group to ascertain views of disabled people.</p> <p>Identify key actions and promote greater involvement in school life.</p>	<p>Meeting Room Questionnaires</p>	April 2019	Governing body/ working group	Working group established and views of disabled people ascertained.

				Key actions identified and greater involvement in school life promoted.
Monitor and review DES on an annual basis.	Working group meetings	Spring term annually	Governors Headteacher	Review carried out annually and all governors made aware of the findings.
Create an accurate database of pupils, staff and parents / carers with identified disabilities.	Staff meetings SIMS updated Pupils views surveys	January 2019	Governors SENDco SSM	Database accurate
Ensure staff are able to meet identified needs.	CPD	Ongoing	Headteacher SENDco	All staff can emmet the needs of the children in their class.
Local Authority to provide up to date training on Equality Act and implications.	Staff meeting	Spring 2019	SENDco	All staff to have clear understanding of Equality Act and the implications for the classroom.
<b>2. Promoting curriculum access for disabled pupils and adults</b>				
Pupils with disabilities can access ICT: Conduct access audit.	Subject Leader time Update software	Ongoing	Class teachers ICT coordinator	All children and adults can access the full range of the ICT curriculum.
School visits are made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment and impairment.	Risk assessments Pre visit visits	Ongoing	Governors Headteacher Class teachers	All children access all visits.
Pupils with disabilities are encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities.	Risk assessments	Ongoing	Governors Headteacher Class teachers	All children able to access music, drama and physical activities.
Pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum with quality resources to aid and scaffold their learning.	SENDco Advice	Ongoing	SLT/SENDco Subject coordinators	Pupils with disabilities can access all learning and make at least expected progress.

	Advice from LA SENIT Purchase resources where needed		Class teachers	
Arrange for interpreters to enable all stakeholders to access all facilities.	Class teachers to arrange interpreters where necessary	Ongoing	Governors Headteacher Class teachers	All stakeholders access all areas of school life.
<b>3. Improving the quality of information for and about disabled pupils and adults</b>				
Provide information in a variety of formats, including a SEND Information Report available through the LA Local Offer and School Website.	Needs identified on entry	Ongoing	Headteacher Administrator	All stakeholders able to access information from school website.
Ensure that parents / carers who have a disability can receive information and reports by an alternative method.	Needs identified on entry	Ongoing	Headteacher Administrator All staff	All stakeholders able to access information from school.
<b>4. Improving the physical environment of the school and it's services</b>				
Ensure that pupils in wheelchairs/ mobility support frames can move around the school without experiencing barriers:  - Keep ramps clear and ensure external ramps are gritted in winter Ensure classrooms have clear access between different areas.	Grit Caretaker equipment as required	Ongoing	Headteacher SLT Caretaker	Pupils in wheelchairs/ mobility support frames can move around the school and classroom without experiencing barriers.
Provide pathways to travel around the site:  - Repair any damage to the paths.	Concrete Paving slabs Sand	Ongoing	Headteacher SLT Caretaker	All stakeholders able to travel around the site.

Ensure Emergency Evacuation covers pupils and adults with a disability.	Practice drills - monitoring evacuation time	Termly	Governors SLT	Emergency Evacuation is fit for purpose and covers pupils and adults with a disability.
Signage to be clear around the school:  - Health and Safety walk to establish effectiveness of signage around the school.	Governor Visit Governor meeting	Dec 2018	Headteacher Caretaker	Improved clarity of signage.
Full slips, trips and falls assessment to be undertaken.	Staff meetings Caretaker CPD	Jan 2019	Headteacher Caretaker	All staff and volunteers made fully aware of tripping hazards; front office brief everyone upon entry .
Governors to consider how to improve access for adults with disabilities entering the school.	Working group meetings	April 2019	Governors Headteacher	All stakeholders advised of most accessible routes for productions and events. Governors have discussed funding for a lift at the front of the school.
Ensure the designated disabled parking space is available and unstructured at all times by unauthorised vehicles.	Caretaker patrols	Ongoing	Headteacher Caretaker	Disabled space available for blue badge holders.
<b>5. Other issues</b>				
Continue training for staff and pupils with medical conditions:  - Asthma training - EpiPen training - Autism Awareness training - Attachment Disorder training	CPD Staff meetings INSET days	Spring 2019	Headteacher SENDco	All relevant staff fully trained on current medical conditions in the school.

## Appendix 2: Pupil Views

### Pupil Views on 'Meeting My Needs'

Name:

Date:

**This is how I feel about:**

	Happy	Ok	Sad
Getting to school	☺	☹	☹
Being at school	☺	☹	☹
My classroom	☺	☹	☹
Sitting with my teacher	☺	☹	☹
Getting help from my teacher	☺	☹	☹
Working on my own	☺	☹	☹
Working in a group	☺	☹	☹
Listening to the teacher	☺	☹	☹
Pupils who talk too much	☺	☹	☹

**I think:**

	Yes	Sometimes	No
My teacher explains well when I am stuck			
I get help when I ask			
My school cares about me			
I have friends at school			

**I like:**

	Happy	Ok	Sad
Using the computer/ ipad	☺	☹	☹
Writing	☺	☹	☹
Reading	☺	☹	☹
Number/ maths	☺	☹	☹

**Additional questions:**

Question	Comment
<p>You have additional support separate from your fellow classmates (e.g. in the library).</p> <p>How do you feel about this?</p> <p>Do you feel you miss much that has gone on in class without you?</p> <p>Do you feel you are learning more this way?</p>	

<p>How can we do things better?</p>	
<p>Are there things in school you would like to do but don't get the chance to do?</p> <p>What are they, and why don't you get the chance?</p> <p>What can the school do to help you in this?</p>	
<p>Have you had any difficulties with getting around the school for your lessons?</p> <p>If so what were they?</p>	
<p>Do you use equipment or aids in lessons to help you and are there any difficulties?</p>	
<p>Can you suggest how your lessons could be improved for you?</p> <p>(For example, in helping you listen, read, write, do games, play or go on visits.)</p>	

### Appendix 3: The Disability Equality Duty and the Governing Body

Questions the governing body may want to ask itself as being responsible for the whole school

#### **Duties to disabled pupils, staff and parents/ carers**

	Yes	No	Evidence
<p>Does the GB receive reports on how the school is meeting its duties in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled pupils?</li> <li>• Disabled staff?</li> <li>• Disabled parents, carers, governors, other disabled people who use the school?</li> </ul>			

#### **Disability equality duty: General duty**

	Yes	No	Evidence
<p>Does the GB have regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote equality of opportunity for disabled people?</li> <li>• Eliminate disability discrimination?</li> <li>• Eliminate disability-related harassment?</li> <li>• Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?</li> <li>• Encourage participation by disabled people in public life?</li> <li>• Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment?</li> </ul>			

#### **Disability equality duty: Specific duty**

	Yes	No	Evidence
Does the school have a disability equality scheme?			
Did the school involve disabled people (pupils, staff, parents / carers) in the development of the scheme?			

<p>Does the school's scheme show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How disabled people have been involved? How information is gathered on the effect of the school's policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recruitment, retention of disabled staff?</li> <li>- Opportunities for achievements of disabled pupils?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How the school assesses the impact of policies, current or proposed, on disability equality?</li> <li>• The steps it is going to take to meet the general duty (the school's action plan)?</li> <li>• How information will be used to support the review of the action plan and inform subsequent schemes?</li> </ul>			
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**Additional comments**

#### Appendix 4: The DDA definition of disability

The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has:

*'A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'*

Definition of the terms:

- A physical impairment includes sensory impairments
- Mental impairment includes learning difficulties and impairment resulting from, or consisting of, mental illness.
- Substantial means more than minor or trivial; and
- Long-term is defined as 12 months or more.

Things that would affect day-to-day activities:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger

## **Appendix 5: Questions to support the Accessibility Plan**

### **Identifying Barriers to Access - Curriculum**

1. Are teachers and support staff receiving training to teach and support disabled pupils?
2. Are classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?
3. Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?
4. Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?
5. Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?
6. Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?
7. Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by able and disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?
8. Do staff allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?
9. Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?
10. Is there access to appropriate computer technology for pupils with disabilities?
11. Are school visits made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?
12. Are there high expectations of all pupils?
13. Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?

### **Identifying Barriers to Access - Premises**

1. Does the size and layout of areas - including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities, classrooms, the assembly hall, dining area, library, indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms allow access for all pupils or members of staff?
2. Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities?
3. Are pathways of travel around the site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?
4. Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform all pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?
5. Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings, i.e. lifts with tactile buttons?
6. Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?
7. Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?
8. Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment?
9. Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?
10. Is the equipment in the disabled toilet properly installed and accessible?

### **Identifying Barriers to Access - Personnel, Governors and Parents/ Carers**

1. Are teachers, administration and support staff aware of the implications for them of the Disability Discrimination Act?
2. Does the school provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, an audio tape or in Braille for the families of pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with printed information?
3. Does the school ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud and explaining diagrams?
4. Does the school have facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?
5. Are staff familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?
6. Are pre-school home visits used effectively to plan ahead for pupils with disability?
7. Do staff have access to training?
8. Do policies reflect the school's aim?

## Appendix 6: Accessibility Audit

### St Mary's RC Primary School: Buildings and Grounds Accessibility Audit

Accessibility Issue	How we address this	Further action needed/Additional information
Are we a convenient distance from public transport?		
Is the route free of kerbs?		
Is the route free of hazards?		
Is there a dropping off area?		
Is there a designated area for coaches to load / unload?		
Are there designated car parking spaces for people with disabilities?		
Are the routes from the car park area to the buildings unobstructed and accessible?		
Is the route clearly marked and found?		
Is the route level?		
Is the route free of hazards such as building features, litter bins?		
Are adequate handrails provided?		
Are nosings readily identifiable and unlikely to create trip hazards?		
Are visual and tactile warning signs provided at the top and bottom of steps?		

Do entry phones and security systems allow use by people with sensory or mobility impairments?		
Is there a reception area?		
Are tactile signs available for people with impaired vision?		
Are junctions between floor surfaces formed to prevent tripping hazards?		
Do inner doors meet disabled access criteria?		
Are floor surfaces slip resistant?		
Are floor surfaces firm for wheelchair manoeuvre?		
Are signs provided and positioned to inform all people with disabilities?		
Are seating arrangements/spaces suitable for use by people with disabilities?		
Are all areas in assembly equipped with an induction loop and signage?		
Are fixtures and fittings within easy reach?		
Are outlets, switches and controls easily reached?		
Is the WC door easily negotiated?		
Can ambulant disable people manoeuvre and rise and lower themselves in a standard WC cubicle?		

Is the kitchen provided with fittings suitable for use by people with disabilities?		
Are work surfaces adequate?		
Are outlets, switches and controls easily reached in the kitchen?		
Is the audible alarm supplemented by a visual system?		
Are exit routes accessible as entrance routes?		
If people with disabilities cannot completely evacuate the building, can they reach places of safety or refuge and are there signs designating?		
Is there a personal egress plan in place for any member of staff who may require assistance?		
Is the fire exit signage and signs to places of safety with the building adequate?		
Do we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support pupils with disability?		
Are classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?		
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?		
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?		

Do staff recognise and allow for the considerable effort expended by some pupils with disabilities to access the curriculum?		
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some pupils with disabilities to use equipment in practical work?		
Have we considered the impact of the timetable on pupils with disabilities?		
Is provision made for pupils with disabilities who cannot engage in particular events?		
Do all pupils have access to the wider curriculum including extra-curricular activities?		
Are there high expectations of all pupils?		
Do we provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille or pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?		
Additional:		