

St. Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy

Accessibility Plan 2021-22

Vision and values.

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan.

The purpose of the plan is to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Our school aims to treat all pupils/students fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils/students without discrimination of any kind.

At St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy we expect all pupils to be able to participate and achieve in every aspect of the life of the school.

- We are committed to inclusion and equal opportunities for all of our pupils. All students at the academy follow a broad and balanced KS3 curriculum and continue to access a full range of curriculum subjects through their pathways at each key stage.
- We recognise the varying needs of our students with disabilities and/or Special Educational Needs.
- We will seek to identify and put into place strategies to overcome potential barriers to learning for individuals and groups of students.

The accessibility plan will be made available online on the school website and paper copies are available upon request.

Our academy is also committed to ensuring staff are trained with regard to equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding of disability issues.

The school supports available partnership working to develop and implement the plan.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, the complaints procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents, staff and governors.

Legislation and guidance.

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 they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their 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.

Pupil/student information.

Currently, St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy has 19 pupils/students with a disability. This is within a school population of c.1300. The current nature of the disabilities is as follows:

- 5 pupils with hearing impairments;
- 11 pupils with physical disabilities;
- 3 students with learning disabilities.

All of these pupils/students have full access to the mainstream curriculum and participate in all aspects of school life. All students make steps of academic progress throughout the year (relevant data can be accessed from school assessment databases).

Pupils/students are encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and to attend school trips. Pupils/students with SEND needs and disabilities are represented on the school council.

The number of SEND support students and students with an EHCP on roll at St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy continues to be below the national average. However, the academy has a higher than national average number of students with disabilities. The academy recognises an increasing number of students with communication and interaction difficulties (ASD) on roll and strives to meet the changing demands of its pupil/student population.

Close liaison takes place annually with all of our feeder primary schools so that we are aware of any upcoming disability issues and can make plans accordingly. The school has a dedicated KS2/3 transition co-ordinator who works alongside the SENDCO to ensure the needs of any new students are addressed before they join the school in Y7.

Pupils/students.

During SEND reviews and parents evening consultations all pupils/students with disabilities and SEND needs are consulted about their experiences in school. Any pupil/student concern that cannot be addressed by the SENDCO is discussed with SLT to make any adjustments to the curriculum/timetable, if appropriate. All pupils/students at the academy with disabilities and hearing impairments have stated that they are coping well in school and have not reported any difficulties accessing the curriculum to date. Where appropriate a school taxi has been organised for pupils/students with physical disabilities to meet changing medical needs.

Parents.

All parents of pupils/students with SEND and disabilities are invited to annual SEND reviews (where a student is registered as SEND support or has an EHCP). Parents of all students are also invited to attend annual parent consultation evenings. Parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns or potential issues with the form tutor, Year Leader or SENDCO. Where a parent is unable to attend a face to face meeting in school alternative meetings are arranged via the telephone or TEAMS to remove any barriers there may be for parents to engage with school staff ensuring concerns are addressed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The school liaises with all relevant outside agencies and support services where appropriate to enhance the access for pupils to the curriculum. Any pupil/student who needs SEND provision, specific accessibility provision or has medical needs is supported by an individual support/medical plan which is accessible to all staff who teach them or support the student across the school.

Improving the physical environment.

All students with physical disabilities are supported in accessing the school site in a variety of ways (which is individually assessed to meet the needs of the student) allowing them to access the curriculum.

Support in place may include:

- having a lift key so that the pupil/student does not need to use the stairs;
- leaving lessons slightly early to avoid busy corridors;
- timetabling classes in 1 room to minimise movement around the site;
- access to The Cottage and associated pupil support services throughout the day;
- a “time-out” card to access sensory breaks if/when needed.

Pupils/students with a hearing impairment or visual impairment are supported with the Hearing and Visual Support services who work closely with the SENDCO to ensure the correct provision is in place for that individual student.

The school recognises that transition for pupils with disabilities/SEND begins at Year 5 and works closely with feeder primary schools and outside agencies to make the necessary physical alterations before the pupil joins the school.

To increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability the Academy will:

- offer a differentiated curriculum for all pupils;
- use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum;
- ensure curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities;
- ensure curriculum progress is tracked for all pupils, including those with disabilities;
- set targets that are appropriate for pupils/students with additional needs;
- regularly review the curriculum to make sure it meets the needs of all pupils/students;
- consider the layout of handouts/worksheets;
- consider the use of different coloured paper, overlays and exercise books to meet the needs of students with dyslexia and visual stress;
- consider the use of enlarged texts, modified exam papers, EAA;
- consider the use of mirroring software and laptops to support students with visual impairments;
- review the layout and size of timetable information;
- consider the suitability of textbooks;
- review the use of homework diaries;
- consider alternative methods of recording and speech recognition software;
- develop the use of TEAMS and live streaming of lessons, where appropriate;
- continue to incorporate the advice and recommendations from outside agencies and educational psychology staff who work with students to ensure individual needs are addressed;
- consider internal signage;

- use of visual aids in teaching.

The Academy will improve access to the physical environment by ensuring the school is adapted to the needs of pupils as required.

Examples include:

- ramps;
- use of lifts;
- corridor width;
- disabled parking;
- disabled toilets and changing facilities;
- use of hygiene room;
- wheelchair accessibility.

Monitoring arrangements.

This document will be reviewed and approved in full every **3** years, but will be updated annually (in terms of year specific information).

It will be approved by the Local Management Board.

Links with other policies.

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- anti-bullying policy;
- curriculum policy;
- Disability Equality Scheme;
- SEND policy;
- SEND information report;
- Single Equality Scheme;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy;
- Complaints Policy.