



Access Policy

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a fully inclusive school and our aims are to:

- Provide a curriculum which develops the individual's confidence, independence and full potential to maximise development intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally, morally and creatively.
- Provide positive experiences and a supportive environment to help children develop enquiring minds and become self-motivated lifelong learners;
- Work in partnership to develop understanding, respect and care for one another and the community in which we live.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, pupils and any others involved in the school community with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices or service delivery.

Our school will promote positive attitudes to disability and will not tolerate harassment of people with any form of physical or mental impairment.

What do we understand by ‘disability’?

‘Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’ (DDA 1995 Part 1 Para. 1.1)

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with special educational needs be included as disabled for the purposes of the Act. Behavioural difficulties arising from physical or mental impairments or from mental illness are also included.

This Disability Access Policy sets out the ways in which St Mary’s Catholic Primary School will meet its general and specific duties.

- **We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future.**

At St Mary’s we endorse the definition of inclusion that states:

- **Inclusion is the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.**

Our building is all on one level and ramps have been put in place on the school grounds for easy access for all pupils and adults with disabilities. We have a toilet specifically for use by those with disabilities.

The school’s Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo) has great knowledge and experience of working with a range of special educational needs and disabilities. Our team of TAs are well-trained and are always deployed with the needs of children in mind. The school employs external support where appropriate and necessary and is also able to access support from the Local Authority and the SEND team.

The General Duty

By challenging any negative attitudes to disability we will actively seek to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life;
- take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons;

How we will meet the General Duty and Specific Duty

This Access Policy provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty of producing an Access Plan for our school:

- Responsibility for developing this plan lies with the Headteacher, Governing Body, staff, parents of disabled children, disabled pupils and staff; and people from the wider community using the school;
- The school will seek to improve how we gather information from people with a disability by consulting with parents and pupils to encourage disability disclosure;
- To comply with the DDA requirements will consider in particular the educational opportunities and achievements of pupils and the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees;
- Gathering information will be an ongoing process. We will collect data about individual disabilities as appropriate and analyse our policies and procedures in the light of our findings.
- Information gathered should be used to prepare any new action points and to review annually the effectiveness of the actions taken;
- Information will be analysed to show how much progress has been made in relation to disability equality. Educational achievements and wider opportunities for pupils with disabilities will be monitored. Further opportunities to promote equality will be included in subsequent Action Plans.

Arrangements for publication

- All staff and governors will have access to the Access Policy;
- The plan and its implications will be explained to staff via Inset and staff meetings;
- Communication of this plan to pupils will be via assembly, PSHE programme, the School Council and the curriculum;
- Parents will be informed of the plan through the school website. The full version of the plan will be available to all parents via the website or a paper copy on request;
- Arrangements will be made to modify, enlarge and/or communicate this policy in other formats upon request.

Reviewed: April 2019

Review Date: April 2021

Head Teacher: P M Pickering

Chair of Governors: Canon J Y Batthula