

St George's Catholic Primary School
Accessibility Plan Statement
2022-2025



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St George's Catholic Primary School Accessibility Plan Statement 2022-2025

Written by: N Bracey, Senco

Date: February 2022

Date for Review: February 2025

St George's Catholic Primary School - Our Inclusion Vision...

...is for every pupil in our school to achieve the most successful individual outcomes, educationally, socially, in their personal life, and within their local community, and for their unique needs to be recognised and met as early as possible. Our Accessibility Plan intends to achieve this vision by empowering these children and young people to achieve all that they can.

Our aim is to provide the highest possible standards for the children in our care. The whole

child is important to us and we aim to develop our children intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually. We help every child to reach his or her potential, whether it be academically, in sports or the performing arts, such as Music, Dance, Drama, Art and as good citizens in society.

Respect and love for everything in God's world is a main part of our ethos and we encourage children to think and evaluate, to reflect and communicate. We want children to have fun learning! We are a Catholic School. We uphold the beliefs of the Church and our ethos is embodied within Christ's teachings. We are also an inclusive school, so everyone is welcome in our school community and we embrace diversity.

"We learn, we love, we look after our world.

We strive to be the best that we can be, following in the footsteps of Jesus"

We believe that our parents, carers and school should work together to provide the best and most accessible opportunities for our pupils, and we will do all we can to ensure that any barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude are removed.

We will ensure that we:

- develop our school culture, policies and practice in order to include all our pupils
- access the right training and ongoing professional development to enable our continued focus on the process of further developing inclusion
- found our inclusive approach on respect for difference and a commitment to building relationships that benefit every child and young person
- offer all our pupils excellence, choice, flexible and appropriate support, and support and facilitate the inclusion of their views.

Policy Dated: February 2022

Date of Next Review: February 2025

Approved by:

St George's Catholic Primary School - Accessibility Plan Statement

2022 - 2025

National Background

Improving access to education and educational achievement for disabled pupilsⁱ is essential to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation in society, access to employment opportunities and inclusion within mainstream education.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 amended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by introducing new duties on Local Authorities (LA) and Schools in relation to disabled pupils and prospective pupils. From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. The main duties are not to treat disabled pupils less favourably and to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage. Additional provision under the new Equality Act 2010 was introduced in September 2012, and relates to the requirement for schools to provide Auxiliary Aids for disabled pupils subject to the Reasonable Adjustment duty.

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) introduced the duty to promote disability equality from December 2006. This duty applies to EY settings, schools and LAs. Schools and LAs have a planning duty to prepare and publish accessibility strategies and access plans in order to increase over time the accessibility of school buildings, and access to education and information for disabled pupils. Schools' Accessibility Plans should also consider access to after-school activities and Extended School activities if they are based on their school site.

The Children and Families Act (2014) gives further guidance about children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and the Welfare of children (for instance pupils with medical conditions). Running alongside this Act is the 2014 SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years: statutory guidance for organisations which work with or support children or young people with SEND.

Key National Documents

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm>

SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010010.htm>

Removing Barriers to Achievement

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20080906003404/http://teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/senstrategy/>

Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20091204130917/teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/disability/disabilityandthedda/ddapart0/>

Reasonable adjustments for Disabled Pupils

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/education-providers-schools-guidance/key-concepts/reasonable-adjustments/>

Equality Act 2010: Guidance on Matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of Disability

http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CC8QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.equalityhumanrights.com%2Fuploaded_files%2Fguidance_on_matters_to_be_taken_into_account_in_determining_questions_relati_to_the_definition_of_disability.pdf&ei=cIs8Ub21I-GP7AahgYGQCQ&usg=AFQjCNFFomnFA6mFhZmERSCa6qGzCVW5Rw&bvm=bv.43287494,d.d2k

Equality Act 2010 (Schedule 10)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>

The Equality Act (2010) A guide for those working with learners with sensory impairment: National Sensory Impairment Partnership (Nat SIP), Revised - March 2012

Children and Families Act (2014): Guidance on Children and Young People in England with SEN or disabilities and on Welfare of Children

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

Our School Context

We have a strong family feel at St. George's, which means that children, parents and the staff team work together in a supportive and open atmosphere to the enjoyment and benefit of all. Our school is a place where children are nurtured and their talents are developed and celebrated. Our children are always expected to do their best and aim for excellence in everything they do.

At St. George's we strive to promote the values of our Christian faith throughout our daily life and take pride in our Christian ethos. Our strong partnership with St George's Catholic Church and the community enhances the children's knowledge and understanding of our faith. It is these values that we hope our children will take with them into their future lives.

As at September 2021 we have seven classes, all named after saints. Each class is for a single year group.

After-school clubs are offered to children of all abilities and needs, although they may be restricted to particular age groups. Some clubs are accessed by invitation only - children invited are those with the greatest need for that facility or those with a particular interest.

More information about our school can be found on our website at:
<http://st-georgesrc.wilts.sch.uk/>

Through our aims referred to above, we will endeavour to develop learners who are:

- self-aware, and have the necessary skills and knowledge to take on challenges of the future
- confident learners who are adaptable and resilient, can think independently and communicate effectively
- self-directed, and can question, reflect and persevere, active contributors, able to work effectively with others.

In order to achieve our aims and support our inclusion principles, our school will focus holistically on:

- **Access to Curriculum**
- **Access to Environment**
- **Engagement with children, young people, and their parents/carers**
- **Access to Information**

Access to Curriculum

In line with the Teachers' Standards (September 2012), and a quality first teaching approach, St George's will endeavour to:

- adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
- know when and how to *differentiate* appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support themⁱⁱ.

Our school will:

- plan for and teach children with learning needs through quality first teaching and a range of proven interventions
- use a range of inclusive teaching strategies
- refer to the advice and support contained in the Wiltshire Graduated Response to SEN Support (WGRSS) and other Wiltshire documents
- refer to advice given by professionals from outside the school
- be fully conversant with a wide range of catch-up programmes
- take an informed and independent view of the possible literacy and mathematics interventions that are available, based on evidence
- ensure the effective supported transition of vulnerable children and young people
- evaluate the outcomes of our current additional provision and the value for money it provides
- make informed decisions about how best to target available funding in the future
- recognise and unlock the potential of pupils and develop a strong culture for success
- enhance the life chances of our most vulnerable children
- provide effective professional development for staff and governors

- keep parents and carers informed.

Access to Environment

St. George's Catholic Primary School is aware that reasonable adjustments may be needed to the classroom and school to create safe spaces, calming areas and workstations for pupils with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Emotional or Mental Health Difficulties. From September 2012 there has also been a new requirement to provide Auxiliary Aids for Disabled pupils subject to the Reasonable Adjustment dutyⁱⁱⁱ.

St. George's Catholic Primary School will ensure that we access the best advice and guidance for supporting pupils on the Autism Spectrum, including referring to the SWASS (Support in Wiltshire for Autism: School Strategies/Early Years and Foundation version).

We will ensure that we engage with support services from health and education who can advise about adaptations to the inside and outside environment for individuals to help include pupils with sensory integration needs. This will include advice and guidance relating to:

- issues of physical space and how to reduce distractions
- opportunities to present information visually
- providing organisational strategies to complete activities
- having visual structure to help with organisation, increase clarity and provide instruction

General

Our school will:

- follow the guidance in the Wiltshire Graduated Response to SEN Support (WGRSS). This offers good practice guidance which our school will work towards meeting
- provide relevant and appropriate advice, training and assessment
- ensure that specialist advice and training is sought from the Specialist SEN Service, Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Service and other services regarding curriculum access and wider issues, whenever necessary
- venues for educational trips and visits are accessible for pupils with mobility difficulties and other difficulties
- school staff are available to liaise with visiting professionals

Communication and Interaction

Our school will:

- ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to existing classrooms and school accommodation to reduce distractions, such as creating individual work stations
- consider how the environment may cause sensory overload (e.g. lighting, noise levels, odours) and take steps to minimise this for pupils experiencing difficulty
- follow the guidance outlined in SWASS (Support in Wiltshire for Autism: School Strategies)

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Our school will:

- recognise, act on and uphold Equality Act 2010 legislation, which states that schools are required to ensure disabled children are not treated unfavourably because of a reason arising as a consequence of their disability, and to make adjustments to ensure they can access all the benefits of their education and not be placed at a disadvantage. These protections apply equally to policies on behaviour, including blanket discipline policies which do not take account of disabled children's different needs^{iv}
- include the need to look at underlying causes of behaviour and in particular unmet learning needs when developing a school Behaviour Policy. If a child or young person has special educational needs or a disability this includes the need to conduct a review of the appropriateness of the provision being made for them, through their Support Plan.
- consider ways in which we can gain the views of pupils who have difficulties with social and emotional aspects of learning to inform plans for strategies and practice that can enhance their social and emotional well-being and mental health.

Sensory /Physical

Physical/Medical

Our school will ensure that:

- handrails are provided that do not end before the top or bottom step
- staff attend manual handling training, where manual handling is a component of the support being provided
- pupils with mobility difficulties are taught in accessible teaching rooms

Visual

Our school will ensure that:

- general and room signs are easy to read
- door handles are of good contrast, and where possible PE equipment such as benches contrast against the floors/walls of gym
- handrails are provided that do not end before the top or bottom step
- we have systems in place to assist safe travel around the school site e.g. keep corridors clear of lockers, bags and clutter
- we regularly audit the school site for potential trip hazards such as loose drain fittings or curled up carpet edges.

Hearing

Our school will

- ensure all new building complies with the *Acoustic Design of Schools* guidance (BB93^v)
- provide carpet to avoid the need for rubber feet on chairs in classrooms where hearing impaired students are studying
- consider the acoustic environment and take steps to improve the sound and reverberation levels, by use of carpets, curtains, hush boards, ceiling tiles, close fitting doors etc.
- make use of sound-field systems provided by Wiltshire County in classrooms where there is a child with a recognised significant hearing impairment in the class
- ensure teachers access the advice provided by the Advisory Teacher for Hearing Impairment that is provided to HI pupils.

Buildings

Our school will endeavour to ensure that:

- all new or remodelled buildings for SEN accommodation include withdrawal spaces, work stations or alternative classroom layouts, and internal or external time out spaces, including all necessary detailed design features;
- building improvements to help individual pupils will be progressed where individually appropriate and an efficient use of resources; minor adaptations to existing classrooms or buildings may be undertaken if it will provide for the needs of an individual pupil and where there is clearly an efficient use of resources
- reasonable adjustments are made, including the new requirement to provide Auxiliary Aids for Disabled pupils subject to the Reasonable Adjustment duty^{vi} These adjustments will also take aspects of Health and Safety into

account where relevant and appropriate, for example, in relation to issues of buildings' security

Admissions

Our school will not take any action that might discourage the admission of any pupil with a disability. The governing body, acting in accordance with the School Admissions Code and in consultation with the Clifton Diocese and Wiltshire Local Authority, is responsible for the admission of pupils.

Local Authority staff will continue to be involved in assisting with issues regarding individual placements for children with Education, Health and Care Plans, including those with significant disabilities.

Engagement with parents/carers and partners

St George's Catholic Primary School recognises that our parents and carers have a key partnership role to play in the development of appropriate services that meet the needs and aspirations of our school and the local community^{vii}.

Access to Information

St George's Catholic Primary School recognises that we have a statutory duty to provide Accessible Information to our parents/carers and pupils, and we will strive to meet the most effective levels of communication with all members of our school community.

As part of this, we will:

- explain the measures that we are taking to promote accessibility to the curriculum and environment in our prospectus
- provide accessible information for disabled pupils, and their parents/carers, including disabled parents/carers
- where necessary, provide interpretation for parents, or information in alternative formats
- be clear about where parents/carers can obtain paper copies of information should parents and carers not have access to the internet.
- develop our use of social media as an accessible source of information.

Evaluation and Review

Accessibility plans

The responsible body of a school in England and Wales must prepare:

- (a) an accessibility plan to be reviewed annually
- (b) further such plans at such times as may be prescribed.

An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period:

- (a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum
- (b) improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school
- (c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

The responsible body must keep its accessibility plan under review during the period to which it relates and, if necessary, revise it.^{viii}

We will review our Accessibility Plan based on a thorough audit of all aspects of Accessibility, to be undertaken by the end of 2022.

Footnotes:

ⁱ A child of compulsory school age or a 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 a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

The term 'special educational needs' (SEN) has a legal definition:

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

(Draft legislation on Reform of provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs: September 2012)

ⁱⁱ <http://wiltslt.com/index.php/latest-news>

ⁱⁱⁱ Significantly, this change:

- places the auxiliary aid as the focal point, whereas auxiliary aids weren't expressly mentioned in the original definition
- removes having to look at a particular *provision, criterion or practice* and focuses on whether there is *substantial disadvantage*
- means schools are now looking at the *person* rather than the *procedures and practices*

^{iv} A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A physical or mental impairment includes learning difficulties, mental health conditions, medical conditions and hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, and speech, language and communication impairments (*Equality Act 2010*)

^v <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/BB93>

^{vi} See *vi*

^{vii} New regulations support parents' engagement in, and knowledge of, local services because they require Wiltshire (and other local authorities) to publish a short breaks service statement detailing for parents the range of services on offer in each area and the eligibility criteria that apply to them.

^{viii} <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>