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ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2026 - 2029

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Date:	September 2026	Version No:	9
Review date ² :			

¹ The Governing Body are free to delegate approval of this document to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head Teacher

² This document should be reviewed every 3 years

REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	March 2012
2	Front Cover ONLY updated to take account of revised Statutory Policy Guidance issued by the DfE	January 2013
3	Reformatted only	February 2014
4	Reformatted only	February 2015
5	Reformatted only	May 2017
6	Very minor updates AND 'Date Complete' added to all Action Plans (Appendices)	September 2018
7	Reviewed – links checked	October 2019
9	Reviewed with minor restructuring and updated to include information relating to the Public Sector Equality Duty	September 2023
	Reviewed – minor formatting changes, no change to content ⁴ Updated action plan.	September 2026

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1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in several ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However, the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition.
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities are under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability, if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

2. Definition of disability

Under the Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment,
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).
- 'Normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

It should be noted that this definition is *not just regarding physical difficulties* but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition, there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled, but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- 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

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

3. Reasonable adjustments

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is, then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

The Act does not set out what would be a reasonable adjustment or a list of factors to consider in determining what is reasonable, however, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) provides further guidance in its publication [EHRC Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils](#). It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities are required to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a statement of SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

Under the Equality Act we do not have a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our accessibility planning.

4. Public sector equality duty (PSED)

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (section 149 of the Equality Act) came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty applies to public bodies (including schools) and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.

The PSED is supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties require public bodies to

- publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty at least annually; and
- set and publish measurable equality objectives, at least every four years.

All information must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access it and the published information must show that the public body had due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

These are generally described as the three aims of the Equality Duty. Our accessibility plan has been developed to help us to effectively meet our obligations under the PSED and ensure that users of our service who have a disability are not disadvantaged when accessing our curriculum, physical environment or the information which we provide.

5. Aims of the accessibility plan

We strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

In St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum.
- Increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of schools/settings to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, **begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people** through specific targets. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates, in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Plan will be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

6. Key objectives

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework ([Click here to access](#)) which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - Setting suitable learning challenges.
 - Responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs.
 - Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

7. Contextual information

- St. Catherine's Catholic Primary School is a Voluntary Aided and located in the New Streets area of Penrith. The school community of 110 pupils hosts a range of cultures, predominantly White British.
- The school building is contained on one level and access through double doors can be made at three points.

The school has accessible toilet facilities. The main hall can be accessed at three points from double door entrances. The dining hall tables have wheelchair access at both ends. The school has tables of differing heights which can be moved around classrooms as needed. Interactive boards are free-standing and the heights can be adjusted. ICT, Science and Music equipment is portable and can be accessed in all classrooms.
- The playground is flat and tarmac. The Trim Trail is surrounded by wooden bark but needs to be accessed by a small elevation.
- The school garden has a mix of ground level and raised beds.
- The school playing field is large and predominately flat. The grass is maintained to a short level during the academic year.
- The school accesses facilities at UCC and QEGs for curriculum activities.

8. Development of the plan

8.1 Vision and values

Our School:

- Has high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life.
- Is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled students in all aspects of school life.
- Values the individual and the contribution they make to all aspects of school life.
- Will strive to ensure that its disabled pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and teaching resources so as to develop fully in their education.

- Acknowledges a commitment to embrace the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement.
- Will continue to focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school.
- Is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school community.

8.2 Information from pupil data and school audit

- Governors have identified that we have, as at the start of the academic year 2013/2024 there are 0 students regarded as disabled under the terms of the DDA. These can be grouped as: hearing impaired, physical mobility problems (non-wheelchair users), visual impairment, Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD, Autistic, epileptic.

The Governors understand that there is a possibility that pupils with disabilities may come to St. Catherine's in the future and full consideration of their needs will be given.

In order to ensure that our data is up to date and accurate we will:

- liaise with the Local Authority so as to identify and therefore plan a response to students with a disability well before they arrive;
- improve the information dissemination from our Learning Support facility;
- implement a system that allows parents to inform us if they themselves have a disability;
- identify early on in their school career any obstacles to the effective learning of disabled students;
- use all available data to inform the planning of individual student learning patterns;
- use information supplied via previous LA Asset Management/Accessibility Audits to assist us to develop an action plan to reduce obstacles for the school community.

8.3 Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

We will:

- ensure the development of the plan involves coordination with the Local Authority in line with the LA Accessibility Strategy and ensure that we provide the best choices for students wanting to enrol here;
- consult the full governing body/SEND governor/relevant sub-committee;
- consult staff including specifically SENCo, heads of year/department, safety committee;
- set up a structure to allow the views of students, both able and disabled to be considered;
- survey parents/carers to ascertain their views on our provision for disabled students and any developments they feel would be of use to the students and also offer parents alternative ways of answering the survey;
- involve outside agencies who already exist to assist disabled students in their education and future careers;
- ensure the views of ALL those consulted are taken into consideration and the plan modified where reasonable to meet the needs of stakeholders;

9. Scope of the plan

9.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- To investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled students to access can be improved;
- To further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled students;
- To investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled students to learn including liaison with the LA Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Statementing and Provision Team.

We plan to increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied

pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or off-site visits. It also covers the provision of specialist **aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

9.2 Improving the school's physical environment to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

- In consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the site.
- Improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas.
- Investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is required regardless of whether the school has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

9.3 Improving delivery of information that is provided in writing for disabled pupils

We will strive to:

- produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired students;
- investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site.

The school plans to improve the delivery of **written information** to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information will be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

9.4 Financial planning and control

The Head teacher with Senior Management Team, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the School Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process. The objective is that over time School Accessibility Plan actions will be integrated into the School Development Plan.

We will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

10. Implementation

10.1 Management, coordination and implementation

Our Leadership Team will undertake a disability audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents (refer to Section 7.3).

As a result of the audit, we shall:

- produce action plans, with definite time scales for the implementation of the actions implicit in the plan;
- plan to provides workshops so staff can understand and buy into the Accessibility Plan and not see it as a bolt on;
- present the plan to the governing body for their approval;
- modify the plan based on the views of stakeholders;

- review the plan and the associated action plans to see if milestones are being met. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary every three years.

10.2 Monitoring

We recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

10.3 The role of the LA in increasing accessibility

- provided training and awareness opportunities on issues regarding inclusion to staff, governors and parents and how this has been used in school to promote inclusion e.g. uptake of Dyslexia Friendly status, Inclusion Quality Mark, attendance on courses, use and adaptation of LA provided information, etc.;
- promoted collaboration through the provision of information aimed at sharing good practice;
- encouraged liaison between special and mainstream schools to share expertise and pupil placement;
- ensured that schools are aware of support services that provide advice to schools/settings and staff;
- provided specialist help to identify ways forward in increasing the inclusion of all pupils;
- linked building adaptations to refurbishment and capital building works;
- informed schools how information can be provided in a number of different formats.

10.4 Accessing the school's plan

- Raising awareness of font size, colour palettes and page layouts will support pupils with visual impairments.
- Auditing the school library to ensure the availability of large font and easy read texts will improve access.
- Auditing signage around the school to ensure that it is accessible to all is a valuable exercise.
- Auditing the use of, and methods of displaying, materials around the school.

This will be done through:

- presentation in a section on the school website open to all visitors to the site;
- mention in the head teacher's newsletter of the availability of the plan;
- open evening/parents' forum with this as a theme.

We will ensure that the plan is available in different formats where requested.

The school will achieve successful implementation of the accessibility plan with continued support in the areas of:

- providing training and awareness opportunities to staff, Governors and parents/carers on issues regarding equality and inclusion;
- providing targeted training for particular groups of pupils/staff;
- promoting collaboration through the provision of information and the sharing of good practice;
- encouraging liaison between other local schools/settings including special schools;
- seeking support/advice from outside the school, from services, other agencies and organisations;
- ensuring that the school is aware of all support services that provide advice to schools/settings and staff.

11. Related policies

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

- Curriculum details
- Equality Policy, Action Plan and Objectives
- Staff Training and Development Plan

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- Governor Training Plan
- Health & Safety Policy and procedures
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy, Local Offer Response and Information Report
- Off-Site Visits Procedures
- School Behaviour Policy & procedures
- School Development Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Complaints Procedure

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St Catherine's Catholic Primary SCHOOL				
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2026 - 2029				
The Governors are committed to responding to the needs of our pupils and families and will strive to ensure equality of access to the curriculum, physical environment and written information. An audit will take place in the Spring Term, following Reception intake information being released, to ensure any needs have been addressed before the September start. In-year admissions will be assessed on an individual basis and any major refurbishment recommendations will be made to the Resources Committee, an extra-ordinary meeting will be called if necessary. The Items and Targets below outline a plan for the year, further additions may be added if the need arises, which will be communicated to the Governors Resources Committee				
IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM				
Target	Activity	Timeframe	Outcome	Date Complete
Ensure teaching and learning is accessible for increasing numbers of pupils with EHCPs	- Audit current provision for pupils with SEND and EHCPs. - Review use of adaptive teaching strategies across all classes. - Train staff in: - Speech, language and communication needs - Sensory regulation strategies - Inclusive classroom practice - Develop visual timetables and communication supports in every classroom. - Strengthen SEND pupil progress tracking.	Year 1		
	- Increase intervention programmes for literacy, numeracy and communication. - Introduce targeted use of assistive technology where appropriate (speech-to-text, reading software, visual communication apps). - Develop nurture and emotional wellbeing provision. - Expand staff expertise through SEND-focused CPD and peer observations.	Year 2		
	- Review impact of interventions and adapt provision. - Develop pupil voice opportunities for children with SEND. - Establish stronger transition support between year groups and into secondary school.	Year 3		

Appendix B(iii)

	Build a bank of inclusive teaching resources accessible to all staff.			
IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT				
Improve accessibility of the physical environment	- Complete a site accessibility audit. - Identify barriers for pupils with mobility needs. - Ensure classrooms are organised with clear pathways and accessible seating. - Review accessibility of playgrounds and lunch areas.	Year 1		
	- Improve signage across the school using clear symbols and visuals. - Install additional handrails where appropriate. - Review accessibility of toilet facilities. - Purchase adjustable furniture for pupils with physical needs.	Year 2		
	- Improve accessibility of outdoor learning areas. - Ensure all future refurbishment projects consider accessibility needs. - Review evacuation procedures and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs). - Evaluate accessibility improvements with pupils and families.	Year 3		
IMPROVING ACCESS TO WRITTEN INFORMATION				
Improve communication with families who speak English as an additional language Increase parental engagement from diverse communities Ensure information is accessible to all stakeholders	- Review communication with families whose first language is not English. - Identify the main community languages represented in the school. - Ensure key school documents can be translated when required. - Develop more visual communication methods for parents.	Year 1		
	- Strengthen links with families from all communities through parent forums and cultural events. - Provide interpretation support for important meetings where necessary. - Review website accessibility and readability. - Develop easy-read versions of key policies and information.	Year 2		
	- Evaluate parental engagement from diverse groups. - Establish parent ambassadors/community representatives. - Continue developing culturally inclusive communication and curriculum resources.	Year 3		

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Appendix B(iii)

	Review effectiveness of translation and interpretation support.				