

'St Mary's Catholic Infant and Junior Academies are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'



ST MARY'S
CATHOLIC INFANT AND JUNIOR ACADEMIES

Accessibility Policy

2025 2026

Designation	Name	Date Approved	Date of Renewal
Executive Headteacher	Mrs Samantha Birchall	Sept 2025	Sept 2026
Chair of Governors	Mrs Vanessa Wells	Sept 2025	Sept 2026

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Statement of intent

St Mary's Catholic Infant and Junior Academy is committed to taking all reasonable steps to avoid placing any individuals with disabilities at a disadvantage, and works closely with disabled pupils, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove any potential barriers to their learning experience.

This policy outlines the principles that the academy is committed to following throughout all accessibility planning activities to ensure that all disabled pupils are able to enjoy and access all aspects of educational life in the same way as other colleagues. The specific measures the academy has taken to ensure the academy is accessible are outlined within the Accessibility Plan.

The ways in which the academy fosters inclusion and equality for pupils who share other protected characteristics are outlined in the Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and the ways in which the academy ensures its practices and environments are accessible and inclusive for staff are outlined in the Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

This policy must be adhered to by all staff members, pupils, parents and visitors.

1.1 Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 1996
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following academy policies:

- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Early Years Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Development Plan
- Data Protection Policy

1.2 Definitions

In line with the Equality Act 2010, “**indirect discrimination**” is defined as where a provision, criterion or practice is discriminatory in relation to a person’s protected characteristics, where:

- The provision, criterion or practice applies, or would apply, to people without those protected characteristics.
- It puts, or would put, people with those protected characteristics at a disadvantage compared to those without.
- The academy cannot show that the provision, criterion or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The “**protected characteristics**” are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

A person is defined as having a “**disability**” if they have a physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

1.3 Roles and responsibilities

The local academy council will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that all accessibility planning, including the academy’s Accessibility Plan, adheres to and reflects the principles outlined in this policy.
- Approving this policy and the Accessibility Plan before they are implemented.
- Monitoring this policy and the Accessibility Plan.

The executive headteacher will be responsible for:

- Creating an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving the academy’s accessibility, in conjunction with the local academy council and in line with the academy’s legal obligations and the principles outlined in this policy.
- Ensuring that staff members are aware of pupils’ disabilities and medical conditions where necessary.
- Establishing whether a new pupil has any disabilities or medical conditions which the academy should be aware of.
- Consulting with relevant and reputable experts if challenging situations regarding pupils’ disabilities arise.
- Working closely with the local academy council, LA and external agencies to effectively create and implement the academy’s Accessibility Plan.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the executive headteacher and local academy council to ensure that pupils with SEND are appropriately supported.
- Ensuring they have oversight of the needs of pupils with SEND attending the academy, and advising the executive headteacher in relation to those needs as appropriate.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy and the Accessibility Plan at all times.
- Supporting disabled pupils to access their environment and their education wherever necessary, e.g. by making reasonable adjustments to their practice.
- Ensuring that their actions do not discriminate against any pupil as a result of their disability.

All staff members and governors will partake in whole-school training on equality issues related to the Equality Act 2010. Designated staff members will be trained to effectively support pupils with medical conditions, e.g. understanding how to administer insulin, in line with the Administering Medication Policy.

1.4 Accessibility Plan

The academy’s Accessibility Plan demonstrates how access will be improved for pupils, staff, parents and visitors to the academy within a given timeframe.

The Accessibility Plan will be structured to complement and support the academy's Equality Information and Objectives Policy, as well as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

The plan has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the academy's physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take advantage of the facilities and education on offer
- To improve the availability and delivery of written information to disabled pupils, in particular that which has already been produced for pupils who are not disabled.

The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three-year period ahead of the next review date, which will be Sept 2026. If it is not feasible to undertake all the plans during the lifespan of the Accessibility Plan, some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The academy will provide adequate resources for implementing plans, ensuring pupils are sufficiently supported.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to measure where reasonable adjustments need to be made in order to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities. It will be used to advise other academy planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

The academy will collaborate with the LA in order to effectively develop and implement the plan. The LA will prepare accessibility strategies based on the same principles as the academy's Accessibility Plan. The LA will also provide auxiliary aids and services where necessary to help the academy provide suitable support to pupils with disabilities.

An access audit will be undertaken by the local academy council and SENCO annually.

During Ofsted inspections, the inspectorate may include the academy's Accessibility Plan as part of their review. Both this policy and the Accessibility Plan will be published on the academy website.

1.5 Equal opportunities

The academy strives to ensure that all existing and potential pupils are given the same opportunities, and is committed to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness. The Accessibility Plan will detail any barriers which are hindering the opportunities for pupils with SEND. The aim of the plan is to take appropriate measures in order to overcome these barriers, allowing all pupils equal opportunities.

Staff members will be aware of any pupils who are at a substantial disadvantage due to their SEND and will take the appropriate steps to ensure the pupil is effectively supported. Wherever possible, teaching staff will adapt their lesson plans and the curriculum to allow all pupils to reach their full potential and receive the support they need. The academy will ensure that all extracurricular activities are accessible to all pupils and make reasonable adjustments to allow pupils with SEND to participate in all academy activities.

1.6 Admissions

The academy will act in accordance with its Admissions Policy. The same entry criteria will be applied to all pupils and potential pupils.

The academy will strive to not put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at the academy. All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all opportunities available to any member of the academy community.

Information will be obtained on future pupils in order to facilitate advanced planning. Prospective parents of statemented pupils, and pupils with SEND, are invited to a transition meeting prior to the pupil starting school in order to discuss the pupil's specific needs.

1.7 Curriculum

The academy is committed to providing a healthy environment that enables full curriculum access and values and includes all pupils regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual and emotional needs. No pupil will be excluded from any aspect of the academy curriculum due to their disability. The academy aims to provide a differentiated curriculum to enable all pupils to feel secure and make progress.

The lead for each subject and the SENCO will work together to ensure that the pupil's EHC plan is implemented, and that the teaching of that subject is adjusted for the pupil wherever necessary in line with their EHC plan. Where any amendments to the provisions of the plan need to be amended or adapted to allow the pupil to reach their full potential in a given subject, advice will be sought from outside agencies where necessary.

Where areas of the curriculum present challenges for a pupil, these will be dealt with on an individual basis. The class teacher, in discussion with the pupil and their parents, will ensure that all adjustments possible, in line with common sense and practical application, will be made for any disability.

Curricular activities involving physical activity or exercise, e.g. PE lessons, will be adapted, wherever necessary and possible, to ensure disabled pupils can participate in a valuable way in lessons.

There are established procedures for the identification and support of pupils with SEND in place at the academy. Detailed pupil information on pupils with SEND are given to relevant staff in order to aid teaching, e.g. 'pupil passports'.

The academy ensures that specialist resources – including physical resources, e.g. large-print books, and human resources, e.g. learning support assistants – are available and appropriately deployed for pupils who require or would benefit from them to fully participate in the curriculum.

1.8 Physical environment

The academy is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff members, parents and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within the academy premises. There are no parts of the academy to which pupils or staff with disabilities have limited or no access to.

The academy will ensure that accessibility audits are conducted for those within the academy community to ensure that specific needs are taken into account; however, in general, the academy will make its best endeavours to anticipate potential access needs that may be encountered in the future and to ensure that the physical environment is as accessible as possible for all current and prospective pupils.

The specific ways in which the academy will ensure its physical environment is accessible in full to all members of the academy community, irrespective of any protected characteristics, are detailed within the academy's Accessibility Plan.

1.9 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when new legislation or guidance concerning equality and disability is published. The local academy council and executive headteacher will review the policy in collaboration with the SENCO.

Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as and when academy policies are reviewed.

Area 1 Accessing the Curriculum				
Intent	Implementation	Timescale	Lead Professional/s	Impact
Ensure all pupils have full access to the academy's curriculum	Regular reviews of SEND and medical needs register	Ternly	Head of School SENCo Class teachers	All academy records/information up to date and known by all working with children
	Use of visual timetables Additional aids available, e.g. pencil grips, writing slopes	Start of each academic year		Full curriculum entitlement delivered.
	Use of Provision Map software	Start of each academic year		Enriched learning experiences for all children.
	Transition programme used to ensure full details of all SEND children are communicated from Infant academy to Junior academy. This includes migration of CPOMS	Summer Term 2026		During periods of self isolation, children had access to the required curriculum.
	Continued reviews of Matrix of Vulnerability	Half-termly		
	Residential Trips to be shared by all. pupils are not prohibited from attending any residential due to disability. Pre-booking checks with all residential providers.	Ongoing		Fully Inclusive experience

<p>Ensure EHCP enable children with disabilities to have full access to the curriculum</p>	<p>Ensure any EHCP transition to Infant academy starts in Spring Term and involves all parties i.e. Infant academy SEND Lead, EYFS teachers</p> <p>Ensure any EHCP transition from Juniot academy starts in Spring Term and involves all parties i.e. Infant academy SEND Lead, Y2 teachers, Year 3 teachers and SENCO.</p> <p>Advice sought from specialist services during any review process EHCPs content is known by all adults working with the child</p> <p>A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) completed for disabled pupils/pupils with any access issues (e.g. crutches)</p>	<p>spring Term each year.</p> <p>Ongoing throughout the year and during any set review meeting. Ongoing</p> <p>Start of each academic year or when needed throughout the year</p>	<p>Head of School SENCo EYFS teachers</p> <p>Y2/Y3 teachers</p>	<p>Smooth and informed transition for EHCP pupils to Infant academy Pupils with disabilities are able to access all areas of academy life</p> <p>Smooth and informed transition for EHCP pupils to Junior academy Pupils with disabilities are able to access all areas of academy life</p> <p>All staff are aware of risks and evacuation procedures for disabled pupils</p>
<p>Training of relevant staff re supporting children with specific disabilities</p>	<p>Staff to attend specific training to enable them to effectively support the children in their care.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of School Phase Leads</p>	<p>academy correctly resourced.</p>

	<p>Should a child with a physical disability join academy mid-year the training needs of staff will be identified at the Professionals' Meeting.</p> <p>If academy recruits for a specific disability need – relevant training will be identified and checked at interview and highlighted in the job description and advert</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Any appointment</p>		<p>Staff are more than adequately trained and qualified to carry out their duties.</p>
<p>Area 2 Physical Environment</p>				
Intent	Implementation	Timescale	Lead Professional/s	Impact
<p>Ensure access for disabled members of the academy community</p>	<p>Corridors kept clear of obstacles(deliveries etc)</p> <p>Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) completed for disabled pupils if needed</p> <p>Review outdoor equipment provision to identify improvements that can enrich outdoor learning experience.</p> <p>Review Forest School Area Access</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing when needed</p> <p>Termly</p> <p>Summer Term</p>	<p>Executive HT Head of School</p>	<p>Clear and safe access around academy site</p> <p>All staff are aware of risks and evacuation procedures for disabled pupils</p> <p>Any additions to outside environment are fully inclusive and can be accessed by all.</p> <p>Clear access paths to Forest School area</p>

To review statutory policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	work through each statutory policy related to buildings and premises management. If needed seek guidance from Trust Buildings and Health and Safety / Trust HR.	ongoing	EHT	Relevant policies comply with Equality Act 2010
Accessible car parking	Disabled members of staff and visitors have a place to park in the staff car park near the entrance to the building	ongoing	EHT	There is a place for disabled members of staff and visitors to park throughout the academy day.