St Thomas the Apostle School & Sixth Form College

Accessibility Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND

Updated: June 2024

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Accessibility Plan

Section 1: Aims

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 its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

Our school fully supports the vision namely:

- 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

Our school endorses the definition that says:

- 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.

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

Section 2: 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 pupil with disabilities faces in comparison with a pupil without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

Section 3: Action Plan

St Thomas the Apostle College will actively seek to improve access to services in the ways set out below. These will be reviewed annually and updated to take account of improvements made, future resource availability and changing needs in the target areas.

Aim	Current Good Practice	Objectives
Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability	We ensure that the curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of students with SEN and disabilities. We ensure that target setting is effective and appropriate for these students. We work to ensure that disabled children can take place equally in all of school life.	• Review SEND student access to curriculum within class sessions and ensure the curriculum is differentiated to meet the learning needs of students with SEN and disabilities and that target setting is effective and appropriate for these students. • To continue to ensure that all students are able to access the school trips and that appropriate risk assessments are completed for those students • Liaise with external professions e.g. SALT/OT to incorporate strategies and support within classrooms and around school with children who require specific equipment and adaptions. • Make available the written material usually provided to all students, in an appropriately presented form where necessary, to SEN & disabled students, including pictorial and oral formats and also to ensure that the learning environment is planned to maximise learning opportunities
Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	We manage the physical environment of the school buildings and grounds to meet the needs of a range of disabled students currently on roll and prospective students. The environment is adapted to meet the needs of pupils as required. This includes:	• Manage and improve the physical environment of the school buildings and grounds to meet the needs of a range of disabled students currently on roll and prospective students • To be aware of the access needs of disabled children, staff, and parents/ carers

	• Lifts for pupils to meet all levels of the school • Ramps to access the swimming pool • Disabled parking spaces • Disabled toilets and changing facilities • Wide corridors that could be used by a wheelchair user We practice whole school evacuations to ensure that all children with physical disabilities can be safely evacuated.	• Ensure that arrangements for the movement of students with SEN or restricted mobility are not hampered by the physical environment of the academy with adjustments being made where appropriate • To ensure that each new cohort is accommodated for and that reasonable adjustments are made where necessary - create access plans for individual disabled children as part of the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) process • Ensure an access plan is prepared and reviewed if someone at school becomes physically impaired and in need of support • Ensure that all new starters (staff) have specific training on disability issues

Section 4: Monitoring Arrangements

This document will be reviewed every three years but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by Head of Inclusion.

It will be approved by the Governing Body.