

# St. George's Church of England Academy



## Accessibility Plan

2019 -2022

Date of next review: May 2022



## Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Academy's Diversity and Equality Policy. Since September 2002, the Board of Directors has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Directors of the Academy to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Disability Discrimination Act:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is an action plan showing how the school will address the priorities identified in this plan.

## Vision and values

Our ethos is underpinned by our Christian Values and God's love and compassion for all.

Our vision is to provide an excellent, well-rounded education which celebrates academic, emotional and spiritual achievement and prepares everyone to fulfil their full potential in an inclusive environment in God's World. The Christian values of Thankfulness, Hope, Forgiveness, Peace, Friendship and Trust are at the heart of our community, giving us the inspiration for our life together as a family school, and underpin everything we do.

## Aims

Rooted in the image of God, for all to love and flourish, our school: -

- values all God's children and keeps them safe from harm;
- is distinguished by the quality of care given to all our extended family of school, home and parish;
- promotes life-long learning in the hope of God's future for the world and supports everyone on their journey through life;
- promotes attitudes of self-reflection, mutual respect, tolerance, acceptance and responsibility;
- celebrates diversity and difference, treating everyone with dignity and recognising the ultimate worth of each person;
- aims to give every child the opportunity to develop their full academic, emotional and spiritual potential;
- promotes an understanding and appreciation of the relevance of faiths and world views and their impact on society and culture;
- builds Christian values into our ethos and enables children to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and the Christian belief in the Trinity.

Central to this vision are the core elements originally set out in Every Child Matters, for every child to:

- be healthy;
- stay safe;
- enjoy and achieve;
- make a positive contribution;
- achieve economic well-being.

At St. George's, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and equality of opportunity for all our pupils and prospective pupils. The achievement of disabled pupils will be monitored to ensure this occurs and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that our school environment is as accessible as possible to all pupils.

At St. George's C of E Academy, we believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

**The school has set the following priorities for the development of the vision and values that inform the plan:**

The Senior Leadership Team and the Inclusion Officers will ensure that due attention is given to issues relating to inclusion, in line with the Disability Discrimination Act and other relevant legislation.

**What do we understand by “disability”?**

At St. George's we promote disability equality and prepare all our children for life in a diverse society. We use the term 'disabled' to refer to someone who has:

*'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term, adverse impact on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'*  
(DDA 2005)

We do not interchange the term 'disabled' with the phrase 'special educational needs' although we do appreciate that some pupils with special educational needs will also have disabilities. We use the Disability Discrimination Act definition of impairment to include 'hidden' impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as well as:

- 'Physical impairment' which includes sensory impairment;
- 'Mental impairment' which includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness.

We believe that impairment does not of itself mean that a pupil is disabled; it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered.

The test of whether impairments affect normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects one or more of the following:

- mobility;
- manual dexterity;
- physical co-ordination;
- 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.

The core value of St. George's in relation to disability is to 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 steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other pupils.

### **Information from pupil data and school audit:**

St. George's is a single storey building that was built in 2006, with an additional extension added in 2018. The main part of the building surrounds an internal courtyard. There are 12 classrooms within the main school (with an adjoining Early Years Unit comprising of 3 additional classrooms and work spaces). The Early Years provision is separated from the main building by an internal door. There are also additional shared spaces including a Hall, Studio, Meeting Rooms, Computing Suite, Group Rooms, Medical Room, Library, Kitchens, Staff Room and Office spaces. Currently, there are nine one and a half form entry classes from Year 1 to Year 6. There is a main Disabled Toilet/Shower room/ changing table/adjustable height sink in the main entrance foyer plus an additional 3 disabled toilets. There are also additional showering facilities within the Nursery provision. There are three playgrounds – early years, infant and junior, which are accessible from cloakrooms. There is a large field, covered seating, planted areas, and play areas. There is also a quiet reflective area accessible to children at playtimes.

The school has a capacity for 420 pupils and a 26 (FTE) place nursery. We currently (May 2019) have 349 pupils on roll. Our current pupil population includes pupils with the following disabilities: autistic spectrum disorder, physical disability, serious medical conditions, hearing impairment, attention deficit & hyperactivity disorder, asthma, Down Syndrome and speech & language communication needs.

Where appropriate, the school applies for concessions, such as additional time or the use of amanuensis, for pupils with known disabilities in order to enable such pupils to have the opportunity to achieve their full potential in national curriculum tests at the end of the Key Stage.

The participation of children with known disabilities is catered for when staff plan off-site visits in liaison with the Educational Visits Coordinator: detailed risk assessments show how children with particular needs and disabilities will be included and their additional needs met. All pupils are encouraged to attend extra-curricular clubs, including pupils with known disabilities. The school has successfully included children with a range of disabilities when selecting teams to represent the school.

The majority of pupils who enter the school come from our nursery. Excellent liaison and planned joint activities between nursery and reception class staff ensure that school staff are often aware of potential disability issues prior to pupils starting in mainstream school. Children entering Reception Class are invited for taster sessions at the school. Parents are encouraged to share information concerning their child, including any existing or potential disabilities and/or special educational needs.

**The school has set the following priorities for the development of information and data to support the school's accessibility plan:**

- To seek the views of pupils with disabilities through class and school council
- Meetings, and termly and annual reviews and (where child has disability which is also a special educational need).
- Continue to consult with parents via questionnaires

The main priorities in the school's plan:

- Continue to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

Our school has developed our own stand-alone curriculum, which is based on the National Curriculum. Our Curriculum rests on a firm foundation of basic skills which will enable our children to ultimately explore and pursue their own interests. Although content is important and is taught according to National Curriculum requirements, skills and attitudes will be developed throughout. Children will discover that learning is not passive, but an active process that leads somewhere and in turn allows the child to see physical, tangible evidence of the skills they have learnt. This also helps children develop an evaluative attitude towards their work and a sense of not only pride in their work but a focus for areas to improve.

The school ensures Physical Education programmes are adapted for pupils with disabilities so they can take full part in all sporting activities.

All pupils are taught in mixed ability classes, with intervention programmes used across the school. Where this serves the best interests of the child, pupils are sometimes withdrawn for one-to-one support or small group work to teach specific skills needed to achieve particular targets.

Currently, teaching assistants and classroom assistants are deployed across the school to ensure that pupils with known disabilities have support where necessary, both in the classroom and during unstructured times, such as playtime and lunchtime.

Furthermore, the school invests significantly in the support and advice from external specialists, including the Educational Psychology Service. Expertise is also welcomed from other agencies such as the Childhood and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and the Speech and Language Therapy Service.

Clear systems of formative and summative assessment are in place for all pupils in all year groups. The school's Assessment Policy gives full details. The Senior Leadership Team holds regular pupil progress meetings with teaching staff to discuss pupil progress, achievement and attainment.

Access to the wider school curriculum is provided, taking into account the needs of all pupils. Staff liaise with the Inclusion Officers when planning and risk-assessing off-site visits and residential trips (for Year 5/6 pupils). The needs of all pupils are considered when staff arrange special events and theme days.

All pupils, including pupils with known disabilities, are encouraged to participate in the full range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school, and are welcomed at the school's Out of School Clubs.

**The school has set the following overall priorities for increasing curriculum access:**

- continue to hold regular pupil progress meetings with the Senior Leadership Team
- Inclusion Officers continue to create provision maps to support for pupils across the curriculum, in order to ensure that support is targeted where it is needed most
- develop and extend the use of ICT to increase pupil access to the curriculum
- raise staff awareness of specific types of disability and strategies for inclusive practice within the classroom and beyond
- continue to assess and actively seek funding for learning support for pupils with known disabilities where they meet the local authority's criteria for funding
- continue to apply for exam concessions/make alternative arrangements for pupils with known disabilities so that they can access end of Key Stage 2 national curriculum tests, where appropriate
- Subject leaders to develop subject areas and resources in light of known and potential disabilities.

**Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:**

For information on the physical layout of the school, please see the information on school audit and pupil information above.

All year group classrooms are either fully or partly carpeted to reduce noise levels and provide a non-slip surface for pupils. Nursery and Reception children have access to toilet facilities within their classrooms and there are boys' and girls' toilets in the infant and junior entrances. There are several disabled toilets across the school. All classrooms are fitted with blinds so as to be able to regulate the amount of natural sunlight that enters the classrooms. The school's site manager regularly checks light fittings and any flickering or 'buzzing' lights are replaced.

All classrooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards and sound systems and there are wireless laptops for use across the school. There is a designated medical room within school. All doors within school are fitted with glass vision panels.

The school is also fitted with an induction hearing loop system

Parking bays are specifically allocated to drivers with Blue Badges.

**The school has set the following priority for physical improvements to increase access:**

- To ensure accessibility for all is considered in any future expansions/developments to the school building

**The school has set the following priorities for providing information for disabled pupils:**

- Continue to develop use and range of hardware, software and other technological aids
- Continue to seek and implement specialist advice from external specialists and agencies



## **Management, coordination and implementation**

The Academy's Board of Directors have the responsibility for the school's Accessibility Plan and sets a clear direction for it through discussion at full board meetings and sub-committee meetings.

The Board of Directors will ensure that the Accessibility Plan is formally reviewed and revised every three years in consultation with various stakeholders and external specialists and agencies that support children in school with known disabilities.

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

- School Development Plan
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Medications Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- National Curriculum Subject Policies
- Admissions Policy
- School Brochure
- Collective Worship Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

### **The school has set the following priorities for the management, coordination and implementation of the Accessibility Plan:**

- Formally appoint a lead professional to take oversight of the school's accessibility plan
- Directors to consider allocating a member of the Board to have specific responsibility for championing issues relating to equal opportunities, including disability.

The school makes its Accessibility Plan available in the following ways:

- The plan is available on the school's website
- The plan is available to view upon request at the school office
- Upon request, the school will endeavour to supply the plan in different formats as required (e.g. large print, on coloured paper, as a PDF email attachment)