

# St Matthew's RC High School



## Accessibility Plan

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**Reviewed:** September 2021

**Next Review:** September 2022

## Introduction

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

The **SEN and Disability Act (2001)** extended the **Disability Discrimination Act (1995)** to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled students under Part 4 of the DDA:

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

This duty requires schools to produce an Accessibility Plan that identifies the action the school intends to take over a three year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas. It is published and evaluated annually.

The three areas include:

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

In addition, the Disability Equality Duty (2006) requires all schools to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA.
- Eliminate harassment of those with a disability.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons.
- Encourage participation by disabled individuals.
- Take steps to take account of disabilities even if this involves treating disabled persons more favourably.

The Disability Equality Duty requires schools to:

- Involve those with a disability in producing a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan.
- Publish the DES/Action Plan.
- Demonstrate they have taken action identified to achieve outcomes.
- Report on progress, review and revise the DES annually

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students", issued by DfES in July 2002.

At all times St. Matthew's will also be equally aware of the needs of disabled staff, parents and visitors.

## Key Objectives of the St Matthew's Accessibility Plan

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for students and prospective students with a disability.
- To provide a caring and friendly environment for all students, staff and visitors.
- To provide resources to cater for the needs of the individual students.
- To promote an understanding of disabilities throughout the school and an awareness of the needs of students with a disability.

## Principles

1. Compliance with the DDA is consistent with St. Matthew's mission statement, the equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEND policy.
2. St. Matthew's recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):
  - not to discriminate against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
  - not to treat disabled students less favourably.
  - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.
  - to publish our Accessibility Plan.
3. In performing their duties, the LGB and staff at St Matthew's will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002).
4. St. Matthew's recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.
5. St. Matthew's provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
  - setting suitable learning challenges and responding to students' diverse learning needs
  - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

All staff will be able to meet more fully the needs of disabled students with regards to accessing the curriculum.

### **Activity**

- Education & related activities

St. Matthew's will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

Within the curriculum, St. Matthew's aims to provide a full access to all elements. Specifically, in all areas of Information & Communication Technology, St. Matthew's will have consideration in planning facilities for:-

- Wheelchair access
- Screen reader software
- Screen magnifier software
- Features such as sticky keys and filter keys to aid disabled users in using a keyboard
- Screen Magnifier Software.
- Use of I-Pad devices

To develop communication skills in students, enabling them to express thoughts and opinions successfully through speech, writing and sign language as appropriate.

To give advice and support in curriculum subjects as appropriate, to enable disabled students to participate successfully in lessons within the mainstream school.

To ensure that the needs of all disabled students and staff are represented within the school. To create positive images of disability within the school so that students grow into adults who have some understanding of the needs of disabled people.

- Physical environment

St. Matthew's will take account of the needs of students 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.

- Provision of information

St. Matthew's will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

### **Action Plan**

The Plan will be monitored through the LGB. The plan is of necessity organic and will need adaptation and additions on a regular basis.

Additionally, St. Matthew's will always endeavour to:-

- Improve availability of written material in alternative forms
- Improve working environment for students with visual impairment by incorporating appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing and install blinds on south-facing windows.

### **Linked Policies**

This Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies, such as:-

- Equal Opportunities policies
- Curriculum Policies
- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- School Prospectus and Mission Statement
- Teaching and Learning Policies

### 1. St Matthew's RC High School – School Accessibility Action Plan – September 2019 to July 2022

	Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement	Review 2021
<b>Short Term</b>	Ensure the English block is accessible for wheelchair users	To ensure the automatic doors on the entrance to the English block are working. Key to the toilets is the same as the whole school building	Wheelchair users can access the building independently	October 2019-September 2020	January 2020 -The key to English toilets is the same for the main building  June 2020 – English block doors to be left open during the day  October 2020 Automatic doors to be fixed.	Disabled Pupils can now access the English block.  Pupils have access to the Disabled toilet.
	Outside space for the SAVIO students to access	Outdoor environment in the school for the SEMH pupils to access independently	Area of school for pupils to access	May 2020 – October 2020	September 2020 - Area of school is cornered off and available for SAVIO students.	Outdoor area completed October 2020
	Provide a whole school Dyslexia Friendly Environment	All presentations to staff and pupils are dyslexia friendly. Dyslexia resources including coloured overlays are accessible to all pupils	Dyslexia pupils can access the curriculum across the school	September 2019-October 2020	January 2020 – Whole school non-negotiable for all presentations to be dyslexia friendly. September 2020 -Help boxes including dyslexia resources are available in all classrooms. Next steps to ensure all staff are	Dyslexia friendly boards is a whole school non-negotiable – September 2020.  Coloured overlays are provided to every teacher September 2021

					using blue pen when using the white board.	
<b>Medium Term</b>	Training for all staff on disability awareness.	Continue to receive support from the LA physical support service, physical disability outreach services for appropriate equipment, strategies of how best to support pupils. Training sessions to be provided for all staff, based on different disabilities that need additional support.	All staff will have updated knowledge and understanding of how best to support pupils with a variety of disabilities.	October 2020- June 2021	September 2020 – SEND reps and key staff to be trained by specialist support service in how to effectively support VI/HI pupils. May 2021 – whole school staff training to be delivered on how to effectively support VI/HI pupils.	Small staff training has taken place with key subject teachers December 2020.  Whole school training organised for January 2022
<b>Long Term</b>	School to maintain all areas of the school that are accessible to disabled pupils including visual colours of the different floors of the school (in order to aid visually impaired pupils and pupils with SEND).	School to work alongside outside agencies to ensure on ongoing maintenance around the school. All areas/equipment will be checked/serviced and any issues reported in a timely manner.	Meetings with specialist agencies to work with Business Manager, Health and Safety Officer and SEND staff on any areas of the school that need to be changed for alternative access. Changes will be implemented in a timely manner.	October 2020- June 2022	October 2020 - Specialist staff from the LA to review the school environment and provide a list of recommendations  November 2020 – improvements to be discussed with the Business Manager.	Areas are to be zoned for year groups – September 2021.  Review to be carried out by VI team in October 2021

	Continue to work towards Emotionally friendly school status, for pupils with SEMH.	School to create a Sensory Room and Intervention spaces for pupils who need SEMH support.	Continued meetings with Health and Safety officer, SEND staff and the Business Manager which will enable a suitable setting for SEMH interventions to be created.	June 2020-May 2022	<p>June 2020 – SEMH staff all trained in CBT based programmes.</p> <p>July 2020 – sensory/quiet room created.</p> <p>September 2020 – SEMH interventions spaces developed across the school, including the HIVE.</p> <p>November 2020-May 2022 – assess the school across the EFS strands, prepare the evidence and ensure we meet the criteria for EFS.</p>	<p>Support from the PRU – October 2020-May 2021.</p> <p>Staff training taken place on SEMH intervention -May 2021</p> <p>Self-referrals for pupils – September 2020</p> <p>Key spaces for each year group to be located – October 2021</p>
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