

Review Initiated by	Head
Last Review	Autumn 2024
Next Review	Autumn 2025

## SAINT CHRISTINA'S SCHOOL: ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

***This Policy applies to the whole school including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available on the School website and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.***

Rationale for the Accessibility Plan has come from an Audit (2021-23) which sought to gather pupil, parent, carer and staff views of their experience of having full participation the curriculum.

The resulting Accessibility Plan has a clear intention to continue to improve and increase:

- Participation for all in the curriculum
- Access to the physical environment so that disabled people (a very diverse community) can easily use the educational services/ facilities
- and gain benefits by making information accessible to the community. (a very diverse population)

Since that date, 'significant changes' indicate the need for a new audit.

Changes include:

- An increase in school size and a change in population
- Final completion of building works with the expansion of St Christina's

Vision and Values of the school Accessibility Plan:

To link with the School Development Plan. All stakeholders and the school community can participate in all aspects of school life. Equal opportunities for everyone must ensure respect of protected characteristics and support of British Values. We strive for inclusive practice so that barriers to access will be overcome.

Creating an Accessibility Plan is a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent discrimination to people with disability. Disability refers to a person who has 'a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities' (para. 429). It is a duty, under the Equality Act, not to discriminate against disabled people in admissions and to take measures to make reasonable adjustments to ensure inclusion.

### Background

1. We aim to offer the highest quality of teaching and learning and support all pupils in the pursuit of academic and personal excellence. We have high expectations of all of our pupils, and we strive to ensure that each and every pupil can take part in the whole School curriculum. We value the diversity of our school community and appreciate the contribution that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can bring to School life.
2. We have an admissions policy and criteria (available to view on our website) which seeks to remove barriers to entry to our School for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities. We strive to be a fully inclusive and welcoming School as our mission statement states.
3. We regularly review and take steps to improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered

by the school.

4. We provide written information to pupils with disabilities in ways that are user-friendly and fully support the pupils in their learning experience.
5. Our staff regularly review their teaching strategies to ensure that any potential barriers to learning and participation by disabled pupils are removed. We support our teaching and non-teaching staff with programmes of training, as required, designed to raise their awareness of disabilities and to enable them to minimise any potential difficulties for pupils. We promote the importance of using language that does not offend both our staff and our pupils and ensure that, wherever possible, positive examples of disability are portrayed in teaching materials.

## **Equal Opportunities**

At Saint Christina's School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the School, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy / maternity or marriage / civil partnership, referred to as protected characteristics. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected with the School feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in School life. Reasonable adjustment is used to break down barriers to inclusion.

## **Context**

6. An audit has been carried out as required within the law. Saint Christina's is housed in a purpose-built School on four floors. There are a number of issues arising. The main entrance to the ground floor is easily accessible from the street. The ground floor is split by steps, but there is a ramp available for access up/down the steps from the side and front entrance to the Hall and Nursery Classroom on the ground floor. The adjoining Convent has a lift to enable disabled visitors to access the first, second and third floors although this would not be operational in the event of fire. Access to the playground, dining hall, and ICT room on a daily basis would not be viable in the long-term. It is concluded that there is presently limited access to some rooms but very limited emergency egress because of dependence on the Convent lift; therefore, each application for admission by a physically disabled person, whether pupil or staff, would have to be considered on an individual basis.
7. The building work of the new extension has included accessibility infrastructure. Of particular note is a permanent ramp between the new EYFS area and the playground. In the future, a permanent ramp at the front entrance of the School is in the long term plan and will enhance access between the two levels of the school's ground floor. This will be in addition to what is currently in place. The electronic sign-in system prompts the visitor to state if they require any assistance in the event of an evacuation.

## **Procedure to assist wheelchair users or those with limited mobility**

8. If a visitor is a wheelchair user, a member of staff will be designated to assist them. The designated staff member will make arrangements to use the Convent lift to access the first, second and third floor. The third floor has an additional lift to allow access from the Convent third floor to the third floor of the school which is at a different level. The same procedure can (and has) been used where a child has sustained an injury and has temporary need of its deployment (e.g. injured leg / crutches).

Regulatory Standard	Description
98 (a) Curriculum	Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with learning difficulties) can participate in the School's curriculum.
98 (b) Communication	Improving the provision to disabled pupils of information which is already in writing for pupils who are not disabled.
98 (c) Physical Accessibility	Improving the physical environment of the School in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the School.

9. We will regularly monitor the success of the plan and it will also be reviewed annually by the Governors.
10. The results of the School's audit and continuous monitoring of the above has informed the action plan below which relates to the following Regulatory Standards for Independent Schools on special educational needs and disability:

## ONGOING & NEW ACTION PLAN (2024-2027)

Target	Standard to Be Met	Action Required	Lead	Resources Required	Target Completion Date
Continue to update use of assistive technology and carry out audits of resources used and required	98 (a)	Enable the implementation of Access arrangements, use of touch typing, technology or reading pens, where recommended.	ICT Coordinator & SENDCO	Chrome books, iPads	Ongoing
Ensure classrooms are optimally organised to promote participation and independence	98 (a)	Review and implement layout of classrooms and seating positions to support learning of individual pupils. Conduct SEND walks and CPD training. Use OT and SaLT Strategies. Remove any barriers to inclusion. Make reasonable adjustments and action recommendations from external professionals, where appropriate.	SENDCO	None	Ongoing
Improve physical access to the School and the Playground – Phase 2	98 (c)	With the new extension to the School being constructed (2021-2), install two new permanent ramps to enhance accessibility: a) better access between the EYFS setting and the playground, and b)	Bursar / Governors	Extension costs	Phase 2 of the extension plan TBC

		better access from the upper level of the ground floor to the lower level. Portable Ramp still required internally.			
Increase SEND provision	98 (a)	Regular training – SEND / OT / Makaton. CPD training for staff, including Lego Therapy and Autism, ADHD awareness. Continue implementation of LCP partnership (Sept 2023).	SENDCo / SLT	Trainer fees	Ongoing
Audit SEN provision effectiveness	98 (a)	Consultation with stakeholders, including questionnaires. Continue SEND walks (PG/LP-SENDCOs), observations, training, and deployment of staff.	SENDCo / SLT	Surveys, budget request	February 2025
Plan additional toilet facilities (1st floor)	98 (c)	Increase toilet capacity to meet anticipated school growth.	Bursar	£30-40k	2024-25
Expand sensory provision	98 (c)	Develop a sensory trail to complement the sensory room. Maintain and expand sensory resources.	SLT & SENDCO	Equipment	Ongoing
Improve access to learning through technology	98 (a) 98 (b)	Upgrade IT infrastructure & screenshare capabilities. Increase in IT infrastructure within the classroom through purchase of additional class sets of Chrome books. Audit IT needs 2025-26.	ICT Coordinator	IT budget	2025-26
Introduce Inclusion Ambassadors	98 (a)	Train neurodiverse pupils to advocate for accessibility. Inclusion Ambassadors will represent all perspectives to support accessibility and inclusion. Discussions with parents of neurodiverse pupils will continue to gain insights.	SENDCO	None	Complete and ongoing
Expand mental health and wellbeing initiatives	98 (a)	Wellbeing committee created (Jan 2025) to oversee support strategies. Additional interventions planned once staff receive Mental Health training in February 2025. PAT Dog (Therapy Dog) to continue on a weekly basis. Extra play duty on Fridays for KS1 and KS2 to monitor wellbeing and inclusion at playtime, actioned by SENDCo. Inclusion Ambassadors to provide feedback on needs. Ongoing collaboration with parents of neurodiverse pupils.	SLT	Training costs	Feb 2025 - ongoing

Ensure SEND resources are well stocked	98 (a)	Regular SEND audits and purchase of equipment when required (e.g., ear defenders, sensory equipment, OT resources like scooter boards). SENDCOs to complete audit and budget request in Jan 2025.	SENDCo / SLT	Cost of equipment	Ongoing
Expand training for staff on SEND and Mental Health	98 (a)	Staff INSET and CPD training continues. Dragonfly trained all staff on SEND perspectives in 2023. Staff training on Lego Therapy. TES online training on Autism, ADHD, and Behaviour assigned for completion after February half-term 2025. New training for Wellbeing and First Aid for children with Mental Health Needs.	SENDCo / SLT	Trainer fees	Ongoing
Consider installation of lift access to all floors	98 (c)	Design and build in car park to improve accessibility. Training for personal evacuation procedures for those requiring assistance.	Bursar	£100,000	Long-term