

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School



'Our community, growing and learning together with Christ'

'Love one another as I have loved you.' John 15:12

Accessibility Plan 2026-28

Approved by: LGB

Date:

Last reviewed on: May 2026

Next review due by: May 2028

1. Introduction

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing a fully inclusive, welcoming and accessible environment where every child is valued as a unique person made in the image and likeness of God.

We believe that all pupils, including pupils with disabilities, medical needs and special educational needs, should be able to access the full life of the school. This includes the curriculum, wider school experiences, prayer and liturgy, enrichment opportunities, educational visits, after-school activities and the physical environment of the school. This Accessibility Plan sets out how St Mary's will continue to improve accessibility over time. It supports our commitment to equality, dignity, inclusion and high expectations for all pupils.

2. Aims of the Accessibility Plan

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an Accessibility Plan. The purpose of this plan is to:

1. **Increase access to the curriculum** for pupils with disabilities.
2. **Improve access to the physical environment** of the school.
3. **Improve the availability of accessible information** for pupils, parents, carers, staff and visitors.

At St Mary's, this means ensuring that pupils with disabilities and additional needs are not disadvantaged and can participate as fully as possible in school life.

We will do this by:

- making reasonable adjustments for pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors;
- identifying and removing barriers to access wherever reasonably practicable;
- ensuring that curriculum planning, teaching and assessment are inclusive;
- ensuring that school information is available in accessible formats when needed;
- ensuring that the school environment is safe, welcoming and accessible;
- promoting positive attitudes towards disability and difference;
- involving pupils, families, staff, governors and external professionals in reviewing accessibility.

3. Legal Framework

This Accessibility Plan has been written in accordance with:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions guidance;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Health and Safety legislation;
- Public Sector Equality Duty.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The school has a duty to make **reasonable adjustments** to prevent disabled pupils from being placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils who are not disabled. This may include adjustments to policies, practice, provision, communication, equipment or the physical environment.

4. Our Accessibility Principles

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School:

- accessibility is everyone's responsibility;
- pupils with disabilities are entitled to high-quality teaching and full participation in school life;
- reasonable adjustments are made proactively wherever possible;
- pupils and families are listened to and involved in planning support;
- staff are supported to understand and meet pupils' needs;
- accessibility is considered in curriculum planning, school improvement, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, trips, clubs and site development;
- we recognise that barriers may be physical, sensory, communication-based, social, emotional, cognitive or organisational.

We understand that disability can include, but is not limited to:

- physical disabilities;
- sensory impairments, including visual or hearing impairment;
- long-term medical conditions;
- neurodivergence, including autism and ADHD;
- speech, language and communication needs;
- social, emotional and mental health needs;
- learning difficulties;
- complex SEND;
- temporary injury or illness requiring short-term adjustments.

5. Current Accessibility Strengths

St Mary's already has a range of inclusive and accessible practices in place. These include:

- a strong Catholic ethos of dignity, inclusion and belonging;
- a SENCO who supports staff, pupils and families;
- adaptive teaching across classrooms;
- use of visual supports, scaffolds, task boards, now/next boards and communication aids where needed;
- reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND and medical needs;
- use of individual support plans, risk assessments, care plans and external professional advice;
- liaison with parents, carers and external agencies;
- accessible ground-floor school layout;
- wide corridors;

- accessible parking close to the school entrance;
- accessible toilet provision;
- level access to key areas of the main school building;
- consideration of access needs for school trips and events;
- safeguarding systems that support vulnerable pupils;
- curriculum work that promotes respect, difference and inclusion.

6. Accessibility Action Plan 2026–2029

Aim 1: Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with disabilities

Priority	Actions	Person responsible	Timescale	Success criteria
Ensure high-quality adaptive teaching for all pupils, including those with disabilities and SEND.	Provide staff CPD on adaptive teaching, scaffolding, sensory needs, communication needs and inclusive classroom practice. Share practical strategies through staff meetings, SEND briefings and coaching.	SENCO, Principal, SLT	Ongoing	Pupils with disabilities access learning successfully. Staff can explain and demonstrate reasonable adjustments. Lesson visits and book looks show inclusive practice.
Strengthen the use of pupil profiles, ILPs and support plans.	Ensure pupils with disabilities have clear, useful information available to staff. Plans should identify strengths, barriers, reasonable adjustments, communication needs and key strategies.	SENCO, class teachers	Termly review	Staff understand individual needs. Support is consistent across the school day. Parents and pupils contribute to reviews.
Ensure pupils with disabilities can access the full curriculum, including foundation subjects, PE, prayer and liturgy, trips and enrichment.	Review curriculum planning, educational visits and enrichment activities to ensure access needs are considered in advance. Complete individual risk assessments where needed.	SLT, subject leaders, SENCO, trip leaders	Ongoing	Pupils with disabilities participate fully wherever reasonably practicable. Access arrangements are planned in advance, not retrospectively.
Improve representation of disability and difference across the curriculum.	Audit curriculum resources, books, displays, assemblies and prayer/liturgy opportunities to ensure positive representation of people with disabilities and additional needs.	Subject leaders, RE lead, SENCO	By July 2027, then ongoing	Pupils see positive examples of disability, diversity and inclusion across school life. Curriculum resources reflect the dignity and value of all people.
Improve access to reading, written work and assessment for pupils with visual, literacy, motor or processing difficulties.	Provide resources in larger print, simplified layout, coloured overlays, digital formats, audio support, writing frames, assistive technology or adult scribing where appropriate.	Class teachers, SENCO	Ongoing	Pupils can access written information and demonstrate learning without unnecessary barriers.
Ensure pupils with communication needs can participate in learning and school life.	Use visual supports, communication boards, symbols, Makaton/signs, social stories, now/next boards, reduced language and alternative communication systems where needed.	SENCO, class teachers, LSPs	Ongoing	Pupils with communication needs are better able to understand routines, express needs and participate.
Support pupils with sensory needs.	Provide sensory breaks, movement opportunities, adapted seating, quiet spaces, ear defenders, fiddle tools or sensory resources where appropriate.	SENCO, class teachers, LSPs	Ongoing	Pupils are supported to regulate and access learning. Behaviour is understood in relation to need where appropriate.
Ensure staff understand medical and health-related barriers to learning.	Maintain up-to-date medical care plans. Train relevant staff in individual medical needs, emergency procedures and reasonable adjustments.	SENCO, medical lead, Principal	Ongoing	Pupils with medical needs are safe and included. Staff know how to respond to individual needs.

Aim 2: Improve and maintain access to the physical environment

Priority	Actions	Person responsible	Timescale	Success criteria
Maintain safe, clear and accessible routes around school.	Ensure corridors, entrances, cloakrooms and shared spaces are kept free from obstacles. Remind staff and pupils about keeping routes clear, especially for wheelchair users or pupils with mobility needs.	Principal, site staff, all staff	Ongoing	Corridors and shared spaces remain accessible. Mobility needs are considered in daily routines.
Review accessible toilet and changing provision.	Audit current accessible toilet and changing facilities. Consider whether additional facilities closer to the main entrance are required and whether changing facilities meet current and anticipated pupil needs.	Principal, SENCO, Estates/Site Lead	By December 2026	Toileting and changing arrangements are dignified, safe and accessible. Future site priorities are identified.
Ensure emergency evacuation arrangements meet individual needs.	Create or review Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans, known as PEEPs, for pupils, staff or regular visitors who may need support to evacuate.	Principal, SENCO, Site Lead	Termly and as required	Individuals with mobility, sensory, medical or communication needs have clear evacuation plans. Staff understand their responsibilities.
Improve signage and visual accessibility around school.	Review signs to ensure they are clear, visible and accessible. Consider pictorial/symbol-supported signage where helpful for younger pupils or pupils with communication needs.	Site Lead, SENCO, SLT	By July 2027	Pupils and visitors can navigate school more independently. Signage supports inclusion and communication.
Ensure accessibility is considered in site development and maintenance.	Include accessibility as a standing consideration in premises planning, refurbishments, classroom moves, furniture purchases and outdoor learning developments.	Principal, Site Lead, MAC estates, governors	Ongoing	Accessibility is considered before changes are made. Physical barriers are reduced over time.
Improve outdoor accessibility where reasonably practicable.	Review access to playgrounds, prayer areas, outdoor learning spaces, field areas and quiet spaces for pupils with mobility, sensory or SEMH needs.	Principal, Site Lead, SENCO	By July 2028	Outdoor spaces are reviewed and reasonable improvements are identified or implemented.
Ensure reception and visitor access is supportive.	Offer assistance to visitors who may need help entering or moving around school. Ensure office staff know how to respond to accessibility needs.	Office staff, Principal, Site Lead	Ongoing	Disabled visitors feel welcomed and supported. Access needs are responded to respectfully.

Aim 3: Improve the availability and delivery of accessible information

Priority	Actions	Person responsible	Timescale	Success criteria
Ensure school information can be provided in accessible formats.	Provide key information in alternative formats where reasonably requested, such as large print, simplified language, translated information, audio support or digital copies.	Principal, office staff, SENCO	Ongoing	Pupils, parents, carers and visitors can access important information.
Improve communication with parents/carers who have accessibility needs.	Ask parents/carers to share any communication access needs. Record and respond to reasonable adjustments, such as phone calls instead of written letters, enlarged print or support to understand documents.	Office staff, SENCO, Principal	Ongoing	Families with communication needs are not disadvantaged. Communication is accessible and respectful.
Ensure pupils with SEND can understand school routines and expectations.	Use visual timetables, social stories, now/next boards, task planners, emotion visuals, behaviour visuals and accessible pupil-friendly information where needed.	Class teachers, SENCO, LSPs	Ongoing	Pupils understand routines and expectations more clearly. Anxiety and confusion are reduced.
Make behaviour, safeguarding and anti-bullying messages accessible.	Ensure key messages such as Ready, Respectful, Safe, anti-bullying reporting routes and safeguarding messages are presented in child-friendly and visual ways.	SLT, DSL, SENCO	By July 2027	Pupils understand how to seek help and what behaviour is expected.
Improve accessibility of digital communication.	Ensure website information is clear and easy to navigate. Use plain English in key parent communications. Consider accessibility when posting PDFs, newsletters and ClassDojo messages.	Principal, office staff, website lead	Ongoing	Digital information is easier for families to access and understand.
Support pupils who need assistive technology.	Identify pupils who may benefit from technology such as tablets, word processing, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, audio support or adapted keyboards.	SENCO, class teachers, ICT lead	Ongoing	Pupils use appropriate technology to reduce barriers to learning and recording work.
Ensure staff know how to produce accessible information.	Provide reminders to staff about font size, layout, visuals, reduced cognitive load, avoiding cluttered worksheets, and adapting written information for pupils with SEND.	SENCO, SLT	Annual reminder	Classroom resources are clearer and more accessible for pupils.

7. Accessibility Audit 2026

Area	Current position	Action needed	Lead	Timescale
School layout	Main school building is largely ground floor with accessible circulation routes.	Continue to monitor accessibility of routes, particularly corridors and shared spaces.	Principal/Site Lead	Ongoing
Corridors	Corridors are generally wide.	Ensure bags, furniture, equipment and displays do not obstruct movement.	All staff	Ongoing
Entrances	Main entrances are generally accessible, with assistance available if needed.	Ensure visitors know support is available. Review signage and access arrangements.	Office/Site Lead	Ongoing
Parking	Accessible parking is available close to school entrance.	Keep accessible parking available and clearly marked.	Site Lead	Ongoing
Toilets	Accessible toilet provision exists, but previous plan identified location and changing provision as areas for review.	Audit current toilet/changing facilities and identify whether improvements are needed.	Principal/Site Lead/SENCO	December 2026
Changing facilities	Changing provision should be reviewed for dignity, safety and manual handling.	Review EYFS and wider school changing needs. Consider equipment/training requirements.	SENCO/Site Lead	December 2026
Reception area	Access controlled for safeguarding and security.	Continue to offer assistance for disabled visitors.	Office staff	Ongoing
Signage	Internal signage exists.	Review whether additional visual/symbol signage would support pupils and visitors.	SENCO/Site Lead	July 2027
Emergency evacuation	Escape routes are signed.	Review PEEPs for any pupil, staff member or regular visitor who requires one.	Principal/Site Lead/SENCO	Termly
Outdoor areas	Outdoor areas are used for learning, play, prayer and enrichment.	Review access to outdoor areas for pupils with mobility, sensory or SEMH needs.	Principal/Site Lead/SENCO	July 2028
Classroom environments	Classrooms are adapted according to pupil need.	Continue to review seating, lighting, sensory load, access to resources and safe movement.	Class teachers/SENCO	Ongoing

8. Staff Training and Awareness

The school will ensure that staff have appropriate training and guidance to support accessibility and inclusion.

Training may include:

- Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments;
- SEND Code of Practice;
- adaptive teaching;
- autism and social communication needs;
- speech, language and communication needs;
- sensory processing needs;
- physical disability and mobility needs;
- visual or hearing impairment;
- supporting pupils with medical conditions;
- manual handling, where required;
- intimate care, where required;
- positive behaviour support and regulation;
- accessible information and communication.

New staff will be made aware of this Accessibility Plan as part of induction where relevant.

9. Involving Pupils, Parents and Stakeholders

St Mary's recognises that accessibility planning is strongest when it listens to those directly affected.

The school will gather views through:

- pupil voice;
- parent/carers conversations;
- SEND reviews;
- EHCP annual reviews;
- ILP review meetings;
- staff feedback;
- governor monitoring;
- external professional advice;
- complaints or concerns raised by families;
- site audits and risk assessments.

Where a pupil has a disability or significant need, the school will work with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify barriers and agree reasonable adjustments.

10. Monitoring and Review

This Accessibility Plan will be reviewed at least every three years, or earlier if:

- there are significant changes to the school site;
- a pupil, parent, carer, staff member or visitor has a new accessibility need;
- statutory guidance changes;
- monitoring identifies a barrier that needs addressing;
- governors or leaders request an earlier review.

The Principal, SENCO, Site/Estates Lead and Local Governing Body will monitor implementation of the plan.

Progress against the action plan will be reviewed annually.

11. Complaints and Concerns

Parents, carers, pupils, staff or visitors who have concerns about accessibility should contact the school so that the concern can be considered and reasonable adjustments explored. Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, they may be raised through the school's Complaints Policy.

12. Links with Other Policies

This Accessibility Plan should be read alongside:

- SEND Information Report;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality Information and Objectives;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Educational Visits Policy;
- Intimate Care Policy;
- Positive Handling Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- RSHE Policy.

13. Summary Statement

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, accessibility is not simply about physical access. It is about ensuring that every child and every family can belong, participate, learn and flourish. Through this plan, we will continue to identify and remove barriers so that all pupils can access the full life of our school community — academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.