



Our Lady and St. Benedict Catholic Academy

Accessibility Plan 2024/25



Links to School Aims

Our school's mission statement is 'Loving Learning and Looking Forward with Christ'.

To this end our school will work to ensure that all students, staff, parents and other stakeholders are able to access the physical environment, the curriculum and information provided by the school.



Legal Framework

The **Equality Act 2010** replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 places a legal obligation on schools making it unlawful to discriminate against students, staff and other stakeholders with a disability. This Act brings together several different equality laws; including *the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)* and *the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)*.

The Equality Act 2010 places an anticipatory duty on schools to consider what reasonable adjustments need to be made to improve access to the schools' services for any stakeholder with a disability, as well as students this includes staff, parents, carers and any other visitors to the school. It is a schools' duty to be proactive about making these changes and not to wait until the adjustment is actually needed.

The Academy committee of Our Lady & St Benedict Catholic Academy is committed to delivering fair and equal treatment for all individuals, whether they are able-bodied or disabled. The school will work, on a continuous basis, towards improving access to the physical environment, to the curriculum and to the provision of information, with the aim of achieving access for all.

The Aim of the Plan

The aims of this Accessibility Plan are to ensure that Our Lady & St Benedict Catholic Academy continues to work towards increasing the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and any other stakeholders or visitors to the school.

The Accessibility Plan will look at what we are currently doing and relevant actions to:

- Improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and the physical aids to access provision.
- Further Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability and/or special educational needs and those who come from a disadvantaged background, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability/SEN are equally as prepared for life as the able-bodied pupils in the school. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school, such as after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or educational visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils accessing the curriculum.
- Improve the delivery of written and electronic information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples of this may be handouts, timetables, textbooks or information regarding school events. Information should be made in a range of preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.



The Action Plan below, relates to these key aspects of accessibility and shows how the school will address the priorities identified. This plan is reviewed and adjusted at least annually. A new plan will be drawn up every three years.

Our Lady and St Benedict Catholic Academy follows guidance from the Equality Act 2010. “The Act defines disability as when a person has a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.’ Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.” Furthermore schools “must not discriminate and they must make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people.”

To ensure that the Equality Act 2010 is implemented across the Academy all policies refer to the above statements.



Section 1: Improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided

Current Good Practice

Our Lady & St Benedict Catholic Academy has made significant progress in improving the physical accessibility of the school environment. The school has installed new fire doors with appropriate lighting and signage, and the main entrance is accessible via a ramp leading into the school office and main corridor. While some classrooms still have steps from the outside door to the inside, the school has worked closely with specialist agencies to make necessary adaptations, such as purchasing specialist chairs, adjusting seating and table heights, and providing equipment to support pupils with disabilities. Staff have also received training on adaptive teaching practises to better support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. The school continues to work proactively to identify and address any barriers to accessibility, demonstrating a strong commitment to inclusion.

Objectives and Action Plan

| Objective | Actions to be taken | Success Criteria | Person Responsible | Timeframe |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Improve accessibility of all classrooms and learning spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a full accessibility audit of all classrooms and learning spaces - Install ramps to eliminate steps where possible - Ensure doorways and corridors are kept clear and clutter free to accommodate wheelchair users - Ensure appropriate lighting, signage, and visual aids are in place | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All classrooms and learning spaces are fully accessible to pupils with physical disabilities - Feedback from pupils, staff, and visitors indicates improved accessibility | Site Manager, SENCO Principal Academy Manager | End of 2024-2025 academic year |
| Enhance sensory regulation in classrooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess each classroom environment for potential sensory issues - Provide mind up sensory boxes with sensory equipment and tools in every classroom. - Allow sensory breaks if needed. - Implement adaptations such as LED daylight lighting, quiet zones, and sensory equipment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classrooms are designed to minimise sensory overload - Pupils with sensory needs are able to effectively regulate and engage in learning | SENCO, Class teachers | Ongoing, with full implementation by end of 2024-2025 academic year |



| Objective | Actions to be taken | Success Criteria | Person Responsible | Timeframe |
|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide ear defenders where required. - Provide staff training on supporting pupils with sensory needs | | | |
| Improve accessibility of outdoor spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct an audit of outdoor areas, including playgrounds and sports facilities. - Ensure pathways, ramps, and doorways are kept clear at all times. - Assess accessibility of play equipment. Ensure any new installations are fully accessible. - Ensure appropriate shading, seating, and sensory elements are available - assess steps from classrooms to the outdoors and investigate installation of portable ramp if needed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All outdoor spaces are fully accessible to pupils with physical disabilities - Pupils with disabilities can participate in outdoor activities and play | Site Manager, PE Lead | End of 2025-2026 academic year |
| Ensure accessibility of school events and trips. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review accessibility of all school events, including parents' evenings, performances, and trips. - Provide alternative formats of written communications, such as large print, braille, and audio recordings - Ensure website and digital platforms are fully accessible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All school events and communications are accessible to pupils, parents, and visitors with disabilities - Positive feedback from the school community on accessibility | Office Manager, Communications Lead | Ongoing, with full implementation by end of 2024-2025 academic year |
| Provide specialist equipment and assistive technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess the needs of individual pupils and purchase necessary equipment, such as height-adjustable desks, specialist seating, and communication aids - Ensure staff are trained on the use and maintenance of assistive technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils with disabilities have access to the specialist equipment and assistive technology they require to fully participate in the curriculum - Feedback from pupils and staff indicates the equipment is supporting learning and inclusion | SENCO, IT Lead | Ongoing, as needs are identified |



Section 2: Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum

Current Good Practice

The school has a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of disability, special educational need and/or their social/economic background, are given access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is knowledge-based and aspirational. Staff have been trained in using metacognitive strategies to help all pupils retain, apply and deepen their knowledge, and activities are scaffolded where appropriate to give all pupils access to the same curriculum. The school promotes an inclusive environment, with fluid seating arrangements and regular assessment to identify and support the progress of pupils with SEND. The school has a well-established system of Pupil Passports, with SMART targets agreed with pupils and parents, and Quality First Teaching is complemented by adapted teaching and targeted interventions to address identified gaps in learning. The school has also undertaken recent training on Adaptive Teaching to further enhance staff's ability to support pupils with disabilities and SEND.

Objectives and Action Plan

| Objective | Actions to be taken | Success Criteria | Person Responsible | Timeframe |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Enhance the accessibility of the school's curriculum for pupils with disabilities and/or SEND | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the curriculum and identify areas where further adaptations or differentiation may be required to ensure full participation for pupils with disabilities and SEND - Provide targeted training for staff on effective strategies for adapting the curriculum and teaching methods to meet the needs of pupils with a range of disabilities and SEND - Ensure that all staff are aware of the specific needs of pupils with disabilities and SEND in their classes and have access to appropriate resources and support to enable their full participation - Regularly review and update individual Pupil Passports, involving pupils and parents, to ensure that targets and support strategies remain appropriate and effective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All curriculum areas have been reviewed, and adaptations implemented where necessary to improve accessibility - Staff feedback indicates increased confidence and competence in adapting the curriculum and teaching methods to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities and SEND - Pupil and parent feedback indicates high levels of satisfaction with the support and adaptations provided to enable full participation in the curriculum - Termly progress data shows that pupils with disabilities and SEND are making at least expected progress against their individual targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principal Curriculum Lead - SENCO - Subject Leaders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial review by end of spring term 2025 - Ongoing review and adaptation throughout the 2024-2025 academic year |



| Objective | Actions to be taken | Success Criteria | Person Responsible | Timeframe |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Enhance the range of extracurricular and enrichment activities available to pupils with disabilities and SEND</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the current extracurricular and enrichment offer to identify any barriers to participation for pupils with disabilities and SEND - Consult with pupils, parents, and external specialist providers to identify new activities and adaptations that could be introduced to improve accessibility - Provide training and support for staff leading extracurricular activities to ensure they are equipped to meet the needs of pupils with a range of disabilities and SEND - Actively promote the extracurricular and enrichment opportunities available to pupils with disabilities and SEND, and monitor participation rates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A wider range of extracurricular and enrichment activities are available that are accessible to pupils with disabilities and SEND - Staff leading extracurricular activities report increased confidence and competence in supporting the participation of pupils with disabilities and SEND - Pupil and parent feedback indicates high levels of satisfaction with the extracurricular and enrichment opportunities available, participation rates for pupils with disabilities and SEND have increased | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vice Principal (Personal Development) - Academy Manager - SENCO - PE Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial review by end of spring term 2025 - New activities and adaptations implemented by Spring term 2025 - Ongoing monitoring and review throughout the 2024-2025 academic year |
| <p>Ensure that all pupils with disabilities and SEND have access to appropriate specialist equipment and resources to support their full participation in the curriculum</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a comprehensive audit of the specialist equipment and resources currently available in the school, and identify any gaps or areas for improvement - Allocate funding from the school's Pupil Premium and Notional SEND budgets to purchase any necessary additional equipment and resources - Provide training for staff on the effective use of specialist equipment and resources to support pupils with disabilities and SEND - Regularly review the suitability and availability of specialist equipment and resources, and make adjustments as needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has a comprehensive inventory of specialist equipment and resources available to support pupils with disabilities and SEND - All pupils with identified needs have access to the appropriate specialist equipment and resources they require - Staff feedback indicates increased confidence and competence in using specialist equipment and resources to support pupils with disabilities and SEND | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SENCO - Academy Manager - Site Manager | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial audit completed by end of Autumn term 2024 - Necessary equipment and resources purchased by Spring term 2025 - Ongoing review and adjustment throughout 2024-2026 |



Section 3: Improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities

Current Good Practice

The school already uses a range of methods to ensure information is accessible for all pupils, including the use of pictorial representations, visual timetables, dyslexia-friendly fonts, and the provision of information in different languages via the school website. The school has also developed strong support systems for pupils with SEND or from disadvantaged backgrounds, with two dedicated safeguarding officers and regular reviews of Pupil Passports and EHCPs. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure appropriate support and information is provided.

Objectives and Action Plan

| Objective | Actions to be taken | Success Criteria | Person Responsible | Timeframe |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Improve the delivery of written and electronic information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review all written and electronic information (e.g. handouts, timetables, textbooks, school event information) to identify areas for improvement - Implement the use of text-to-speech software, simplified language, and alternative formats (e.g. large print, Braille, audio) for key documents and communications - Provide training for staff on creating accessible information and communications - Ensure the school website is fully accessible, with options to adjust font size, contrast, and language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All key written and electronic information is available in a range of accessible formats within a reasonable timeframe - Positive feedback from pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities on the accessibility of information - Staff demonstrate confidence in creating accessible information through lesson observations and work scrutiny | Academy Manager SENCo IT Lead Senior Leadership Team | By end of academic year 2024-2025 |



| Objective | Actions to be taken | Success Criteria | Person Responsible | Timeframe |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Enhance the delivery of information to pupils with communication and language difficulties</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with speech and language therapists to identify effective strategies for supporting pupils with C&L needs - Provide training for staff on using visual aids, symbols, and alternative communication methods - Ensure all classrooms have access to a range of communication resources (e.g. visual timetables, communication boards) - Regularly review and update Pupil Passports to reflect each child's communication needs and preferred methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils with C&L difficulties demonstrate improved understanding and engagement with information delivered in the classroom - Positive feedback from pupils, parents and outside agencies on the effectiveness of communication support - Evidence of consistent use of communication resources in lesson observations | <p>SENCo Class Teachers Teaching Assistants</p> | <p>Ongoing, with review at the end of each term</p> |
| <p>Improve the accessibility of information for parents and carers of pupils with disabilities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review current methods of communicating with parents and identify areas for improvement - Offer a range of options for parents to receive information, including email, text, paper copies, and online platforms - Ensure all key documents (e.g. newsletters, policies, event information) are available in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents and carers report high levels of satisfaction with the accessibility of information - Increased engagement from parents of pupils with disabilities in school events and activities - Evidence of effective communication with parents in case studies and feedback | <p>Senior Leadership Team Office Manager SENCo</p> | <p>By end of academic year 2024-2025</p> |



| Objective | Actions to be taken | Success Criteria | Person Responsible | Timeframe |
|-----------|--|------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| | accessible formats - Provide training for staff on effective communication with parents of pupils with disabilities | | | |