



ST JOHN HENRY NEWMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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¹The Governing Body are free to delegate approval of this document to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head Teacher

²This document should be reviewed every 3 years

REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	March 2012
2	Front Cover ONLY updated to take account of revised Statutory Policy Guidance issued by the DfE	January 2013
3	Reformatted only	February 2014
4	Reformatted only	February 2015
5	Reformatted only	May 2017
6	Very minor updates AND 'Date Complete' added to all Action Plans (Appendices)	September 2018
7	Reviewed – links checked	October 2019

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition.
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities are under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

2. DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

It should be noted that this definition is *not just regarding physical difficulties* but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- 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

3. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage the pupil faces in comparison to his non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

There is as yet no clarity on what may be 'reasonable' although the Code of Practice will include factors that should be taken into account. It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities have to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a statement of

SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

As in the previous legislation we are not under a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our Accessibility planning.

4. AIMS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The planning duties on schools and Local Authorities are the same as the duties in the previous DDA. Schools are required to have an Accessibility Plan detailing how they will improve access to the physical environment, increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils, and how they will improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. The LA is required to have an Access Strategy.

In St John Henry Newman Catholic School, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum, increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Furthermore, under our equality duties, we intend to improve the physical environment of the school to enable any disabled person (pupil, parent/carer, employees or visitor) to access facilities and services and improve the availability of accessible information to any disabled person.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people through specific targets.

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

Compliance with the disability duty under the Equality Act is consistent with the school's aims and Single Equality Scheme, and the operation of the school's SEND policy.

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Plan will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

We strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

5. KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse

the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework ([Click here to access](#)) which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

6. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- St John Henry Newman Catholic School, Scalegate Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA2 4NL;
- Good size, with outside space, school yard, multi-use games area and playing fields;
- A smaller than average school with currently 550 pupils on roll; pupils are aged 11-19.
- Voluntary aided school;
- A non-selective school that supports all ability ranges

7. DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The Purpose and Direction of the School's Plan: Vision and Values

Our School:

- has high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life;
- is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled students in all aspects of school life;
- values the individual and the contribution they make to all aspects of school life;
- will strive to ensure that its disabled pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and teaching resources so as to develop fully in their education;
- acknowledges a commitment to embrace the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement;
- will continue to focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school;
- is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school community.

7.2 Information from Pupil Data and School Audit

At the start of each academic year, school identifies the number of pupils regarded as having a disability under the terms of the DDA. These are grouped as:

- hearing impaired,
- physical mobility problems (non-wheelchair users),
- visual impairment,
- ADHD,
- Autistic,
- diabetic,
- Dyslexia

A small number of pupils have an EHCP, but not all pupils with an EHCP are regarded as disabled.

A small number of pupils with a disability currently in feeder nursery/primary schools who may wish to come to St John Henry Newman Catholic School will be identified through the local feeder primary school.

The school Senior Leadership Team and SENDCo review its strengths and weaknesses regularly in working with disabled pupils in the short, medium and long term.

In order to ensure that our data is up to date and accurate we will:

- liaise with the Local Authority so as to identify and therefore plan a response to pupils with a disability in a timely manner;
- improve the information dissemination from our Learning Support facility;
- identify early-on in their school career any obstacles to the effective learning of disabled pupils;
- use all available data to inform the planning of individual pupils learning patterns;
- use any information held to assist to develop an action plan to reduce obstacles for the school community.

7.3 Views of those Consulted during the development of the Plan

St John Henry Newman Catholic School will:

- ensure the development of the plan involves coordination with the Local Authority in line with the LA Accessibility Strategy and ensure that we provide the best choices for pupils wanting to enrol here;
- consult the full governing body/SEND governor/relevant sub-committee;
- consult staff including specifically SENDCo and heads of year/departments;
- set up a structure to allow the views of pupils, both able and disabled to be taken into account;
- survey parents/carers to ascertain their views on our provision for disabled pupils and any developments they feel would be of use to the pupils and also offer parents alternative ways of answering the survey;
- involve outside agencies who already exist to assist disabled pupils in their education and future careers;
- ensure the views of ALL those consulted are taken into consideration and the plan modified where reasonable to meet the needs of stakeholders;

8. SCOPE OF THE PLAN

8.1 Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- to investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled pupils to access can be improved;
- to further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled pupils;
- to investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled students to learn including liaison with the LA Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Statementing and Provision Team.

We plan to increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or off-site visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

St John Henry Newman Catholic School will:

- consider whole-school ways of increasing participation in activities such as after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities, as well as off-site visits, particularly for difficult-to-include pupil groups, such as those with physical or behavioural challenges;
- review threats to participation are analyse using risk assessment proforma and action taken to reduce those identified risks;
- identify how classroom support arrangements, such as deployment of teaching assistants, provision of ICT, contribute to, and enhance learning opportunities;

- decide how the implementation of specific strategies such as flexible or shared timetabling, nurture groups, counselling provision, access to therapy, first day absence response, have enhanced attendance and participation;
- consider how classroom/group organisation has been targeted to ensure that all pupils achieve increased levels of school success;
- Plan a description of action to increase curriculum choice and/or flexibility to enhance the access to appropriate qualifications/attainments;
- consider the schools response to pupils through the application of the SEND Code of Practice has improved pupil attainment and how effective communication regarding specific pupil needs has been achieved and is monitored;
- consider how liaison, increased communication and relationships with external agencies has supported and enhanced pupils' access to the curriculum and how this is monitored and improved targeted;
- identify how staff training needs in order to effectively meet the diverse abilities and disabilities of all pupils, including prospective pupils who may require manual handling, signing, personal hygiene support etc. has been identified and supported;
- identify pupil peer support mechanisms and the ways that the school has ensured pupils have a voice in decisions that affect them;
- take action to ensure that disabled members of the school community are seen in a positive light through publications promoting disability and providing positive role models of adults with disabilities to encourage success and achievement;
- ensure action has been undertaken to ensure that parents and carers see themselves as partners in their children's education and are increasingly willing to actively support their children's education;
- enhance the positive culture and ethos of the school by undertaking quality marks or other additional intervention to improve the schools ability to include those with disabilities.

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

- in consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the site;
- improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas;
- investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

The school will take account of the needs of pupils 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. This is required regardless of whether the school has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

- Investigate various improvements to the site;
- Improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas;
- Investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

St John Henry Newman Catholic School has:

- three floors, ground, first and second floor
- access to practical subject classrooms at ground floor level, this includes, IT, DT, Food, Art, and Physical Education.
- school Restaurant, Reception, Assembly Hall, Hygiene Room and pupil entrance is at ground floor level
- general teaching rooms are on all three floors however there is a lift available for pupils who need to use it
- accessible toilets are on all three levels

- ramp access not required to get into school
- stairwell wheel chairs in case of emergency use
- access to doors, stairs, toilet, changing facilities, and correct signage, colour schemes and colour contrast, lighting, heating etc
- disabled parking etc
- lights and fire alarms appropriate to those with hearing impairments etc
- access to and maintenance of, auxiliary aids, ICT apparatus such as computer hardware/software
- storage implications for wheelchairs and other mobility devices
- application and progress on capital funding for major access works funded by the Schools Access Initiative through the Local Authority, and details on schools funds delegation to support targets such as provision of suitable floor coverings, furniture and layout of school yard

8.3 Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are disabled

St John Henry Newman Catholic School will:

- produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired pupils;
- investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site.

The school plans to improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

8.4 Financial Planning and Control

The Head teacher with Senior Leadership Team, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the School Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process. The objective is that over time School Accessibility Plan actions will be integrated into the School Development Plan.

We will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

9. IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Management, Coordination and Implementation

St John Henry Newman Catholic School's Senior Leadership Team will undertake a disability audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents/carers (refer to Section 7.3).

As a result of the audit, we shall:

- Produce action plans, for the implementation of the actions implicit in the plan;
- Present the plan to the governing body for their approval;
- Modify the plan based on the views of stakeholders;
- Review the plan and the associated action plans to see if milestones are being met. This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary every three years.

9.2 Monitoring

St John Henry Newman Catholic School recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

SENDCo will review the needs of existing and new disabled pupils and identify any areas for improvement. These will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and incorporated into the action plan.

Governors will review the Accessibility Plan every 3 years or more frequently if required and a report of this will be issued to parents if required. This evaluation will include:

- changes in physical accessibility of the school building;
- access to the curriculum and resources for existing disabled pupils;
- feedback from pupils, their parents/ carers, teachers and support staff;
- evidence that increased numbers of pupils with disabilities are actively participating in the curriculum and extra-curriculum / lunchtime activities

9.3 The role of the LA in increasing accessibility

Governors may wish to comment in their report to parents on the impact the LA has had upon supporting the school to achieve successful implementation of their accessibility plan (where relevant). This may include identifying how the LA has:

- provided training and awareness opportunities on issues regarding inclusion to staff, governors and parents and how this has been used in school to promote inclusion e.g. uptake of Dyslexia Friendly status, Inclusion Quality Mark, attendance on courses, use and adaptation of LA provided information, etc.;
- promoted collaboration through the provision of information aimed at sharing good practice;
- encouraged liaison between special and mainstream schools to share expertise and pupil placement;
- ensured that schools are aware of support services that provide advice to schools and staff;
- provided specialist help to identify ways forward in increasing the inclusion of all pupils;
- linked building adaptations to refurbishment and capital building works;
- informed schools how information can be provided in a number of different formats

9.4 Accessing the School's Plan

St John Henry Newman Catholic School will do this by:

- presentation in a section on the school website open to all visitors to the site;
- Primary liaison and SENDCo discussion with parents / carers

The plan will be available in paper format or on the school website. A larger font is available via the School Office. We will ensure that the plan is available in different formats where requested.

The school will achieve successful implementation of the accessibility plan with continued support in the areas of:

- providing training and awareness opportunities to staff, Governors and parents/carers on issues regarding equality and inclusion;
- providing targeted training for particular groups of pupils/staff;
- promoting collaboration through the provision of information and the sharing of good practice;
- encouraging liaison between other local schools including special schools;

- seeking support/advice from outside the school, from services, other agencies and organisations;
- ensuring that the school is aware of all support services that provide advice to schools and staff.

10. RELATED POLICIES

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum Policies
- Single Equality Scheme/Objectives
- Staff Training and Development Plan
- Governor Training Plan
- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy, Local Offer Response & Information Report
- Off-Site Visits Procedures
- Rewards and Behaviour Policy & procedures
- School Development Plan
- Complaints Procedures

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