

# Accessibility Plan



**2015 – 2018**

'Every teacher is a teacher of every pupil'  
DfE – letter to teachers 2014

# St. Paul's Academy

## Accessibility Plan 2015 – 2018

### Introduction

The governors and staff of St. Paul's Academy have high expectations for all students. St. Paul's Academy is a fully inclusive Catholic Academy which welcomes all students regardless of their level of need, ability or disability, ethnicity and socio-economic background.

We expect all students who come to the academy to achieve their potential and to have their achievements recognised and valued. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our students matter.

The **Disability Discrimination Act 1995** was amended by the **SEN and Disability Act 2001** and the **Equality Act 2010** to include Education. The Equality Act specifies that **'schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.'**

According to the Equality Act a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or She has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

### Purpose of the Accessibility Plan

All schools must plan, over time, to increase access to all areas of school life for all students with disabilities. This Accessibility plan is listed as a statutory document of the DfE's guidance on statutory policies for schools. It must be reviewed every three years and approved by the governing body. This plan shows how St. Paul's Academy intends, over time, to increase the accessibility of our school for disabled students, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

The aim is to achieve steady planned progress over three years, not to rebuild or re-equip the Academy.

### Context

The governors and staff of St. Paul's Academy are committed to using our best endeavours to ensure that all our students have access to all educational provision across the school. We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and accessibility and to develop a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

St. Paul's Academy has been in its current location since 2010. The Academy building is a purpose built school on two levels which was completed in late 2009. It is fully equipped with 2 lifts, disabled

toilets and two hygiene suites. All classrooms have been designed with regard to physical access, acoustics and lighting to maximise accessibility for students, staff and visitors.

The school has specific evacuation procedures to assist in the emergency evacuation of people with physical disabilities.

### **Current range of known disabilities in St. Paul's Academy**

St. Paul's Academy currently has students with a range of physical disabilities including 2 wheelchair users and a number of students with mobility issues who may need physical assistance in the course of the school day. A number of students have a lift pass and keys to the disabled toilets and the hygiene suites.

We also have 4 students with a hearing impairment, one of whom is profoundly deaf and 2 students with a visual impairment.

We have a large number of students with a diagnosis of ASD and social communication difficulties, and a significant number of students across the academy with Speech and Language difficulties.

There are also a large number of students with moderate learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia and DCD (Developmental Coordination Disorder).

Some students use specialised equipment e.g. adapted keyboards, adjustable desks, walking aids or assistive technology. These arrangements are organised in advance and monitored by the SEND Department.

Some, but not all, of the students described above have special educational needs.

### **Areas which need specific planning in the Accessibility Plan**

- Increasing the extent to which SEND & disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum (this includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school e.g. after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and school trips);
- Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services (including physical aids to access education)
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of written information which is provided to pupils who are not disabled – taking into account the views of students and parents.

#### **Action Plan**

**2015 – 2018**

##### **1. Increasing Access for Disabled Pupils in the school curriculum**

(See Inclusion & SEND Policy for further information).

Teaching and Learning is at the heart of the school's work. Through self-evaluation and Continuous Professional Development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote Quality First teaching and learning for all students. Students are in set groups for core

curriculum and humanities subjects. All staff have access to individual provision maps (including personalised teaching strategies) for students in their teaching groups. Students who require specialised equipment and/or resources will be catered for by the SEND department.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
Ensure that full information is gained on <b>all</b> pupils' needs before they start the Academy	SEND staff to meet with new students for initial assessment  SEND continue to be involved with planning for new intake	Annually and as needed with mid-year transfer students	Head of Additional Needs / Raising Standards Leaders	All necessary provision in place as soon as possible
Raise whole staff awareness in identifying barriers to learning	Awareness training for all staff  Written guidance for all staff on Shared Area	End of 2016 – ongoing	SEND team / Head of Additional Needs	Access to the curriculum for all  Staff confident in making referrals to SEND team
Develop teaching staff confidence in differentiating the curriculum	SEND Workshops in differentiation and full range of needs  Availability of printed guidance on Staff Shared Area SEND Support Strategies	Ongoing CPD  6 annual SEND Workshops	SEND team / head of Additional Needs	Increased staff confidence
Annual audit of whole staff training needs	Audit to be completed by individuals via learning zones	Annually	All staff / Head of Additional Needs	All staff sure of responsibilities towards meeting needs of all students
Ensure support staff and PE staff have specific training on physical disability	Provide frequent specific training on range of needs and requirements e.g. MOVE programme, physiotherapy  Moving and Handling and Intimate Care Training	As needed for specific staff	SEND team / Head of Additional Needs	SEN staff comfortable and confident with expectation  Students / parents and carers comfortable with provision

Review all statutory policies annual to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	Ensure that key staff involved in policy writing are fully briefed on Equality Act 2010	Annually	Head of Additional Needs / Principal / HOLZ	Accessibility information available for all
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## 2. Improving Access to the Physical Environment of the school

Provision is made at St. Paul's Academy when a student's needs are known. We have a range of resources and equipment available for day to day use.

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
All staff fully aware of needs of all students / staff / parents and visitors with medical and physical disabilities	Individual provision maps for teaching and support staff  Ensure all equipment is in place e.g. changing beds, adjustable tables, HI & VI equipment etc  Ensure all restaurant and housekeeping staff are briefed	Ongoing   Annually	Head of Additional Needs / SEND Team	Students have access to full curriculum and full range of activities on offer
Reception area access for all students / staff and visitors	Monitor automatic doors for wheelchair users	Ongoing	Head of Additional Needs / Premises staff	Access for all
Ensure all students / staff / visitors can be safely evacuated	Provide individual evacuation plans in place for students with physical disabilities  Ensure all staff are aware of their duties towards students with disabilities  Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in an emergency	As needed  Annually  Annually	Head of Additional Needs / Premises staff / Fire Wardens / Principal	Safety for all in the event of an emergency

Ensure all IT packages and IT equipment are accessible for all	Provide alternative equipment e.g. large keys keyboard Ensure that individuals have the access they need (follow HI /VI /OT guidelines)	As required	ICT Manager / Head of Additional Needs	All systems and equipment accessible to all students
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### 3. Improving the delivery of written information to whole school community

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
Review school information to parents / carers to ensure that it is accessible	Provide letters / newsletters / school publications in clear print and plain English.  School staff available to support and help parents to access information and complete school forms  Ensure school website and all documents accessible via school website can be accessed by visually impaired	Ongoing  Ongoing	All staff  Reception / key staff involved with supporting parents / carers  SEND / Website design team	All parents and carers receive information that they can access
Ensure all staff are aware of guidance on accessible formats	Guidance for teaching and support staff on Dyslexia and accessibility (See Shared Area – SEND & Support Strategies)  Annual SEND Workshop on Dyslexia and Exam Access Arrangements  Teaching strategies available on Individual Provision maps	Ongoing	Head of Additional Needs	Staff produce own suitably adapted resources
Improve delivery of information for students with VI needs	Provide suitably enlarged, clear print according to individual requirements. Follow VI team advice for individual students	As needed	SEND / liaise with teaching staff / MRO	All students access all teaching material without needing to ask

	Access VI library at CWS for specific text books			
Annual Review Information to be made more accessible for non-verbal students	Develop a range of options for EHC plan / Statement reviews e.g. talking mats, PECs, student voice	As needed	SEND	All SEND staff more aware of students' preferred means of communication
Languages other than English to be visible around the school	Some school signage to be multi-lingual and more visible, especially around reception area	2015 – 2016	SEND / EAL team	Parents / Carers feel more welcomed & confident to access education of their children
Provide information in other languages if requested  Sign language to aid students and visitors who have difficulty with language or hearing difficulties	Access to translators / interpreters to be considered and offered if available  Access to sign language interpreters to be considered and offered if available	As required	SEN / Inclusion team	Students / parents / visitors feel more included

### Questions from DfE Guidance on Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students'

#### 1. How does your school deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers and TAs have the necessary training to teach and support disabled students?	√	
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled students?	√	
Do lessons provide opportunities for all students to achieve?	√	
Are lessons responsive to student diversity?	√	
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	√	
Are all students encouraged to take part in Music, Drama, and physical activities?	√	
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled students to use equipment in practical work?	√	

Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding of for disabled students who cannot engage in some activities e.g. alternative form of communication or alternative form of exercise in PE?	√	
Do you provide access to technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	√	
Are all trips including overseas trips, made accessible to all students including those with disabilities?	√	
Does the school have high expectations of all students?	√	
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	√	

## 2. Is your school designed to meet the needs of all students

Question	Yes	No
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities, classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all students?	√	
Can students, who use wheelchairs, move around the academy without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?	√	
Are pathways around the academy site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	√	
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform all students, including students with SEND and disabilities: including alarms with both visual and auditory components?	√	
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings, including lifts with tactile buttons?	√	
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for students with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?		√
Are areas to which students have access well lit?	√	
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired students such as considering a classroom's acoustics, noisy equipment?	√	
Is furniture and equipment and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	√	

## 3. Is written information accessible to all?

Question	Yes	No
Do you provide information in simple language , symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for students or prospective students who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	√	
Do you ensure the information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud presentations and describing diagrams?	√	
Do you have facilities such as IT to provide written information in different formats?	√	
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	√	

**This Accessibility Plan should be read alongside the following policies and school documents:**

- Health and Safety Policy
- Inclusion and SEND Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Disability Equality Policy (to be updated)

This Accessibility Plan is due to be reviewed in April 2018

**Prepared by Áine Allen**

**Head of Additional Needs  
24.3.15**