

DRAFT Accessibility Policy



ST CLARE
Catholic Multi Academy Trust



“Let all that you do be done with love”

Date adopted: December 2025

Review date: By 31.12.2028

ST CLARE CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Accessibility Policy

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

*"Let all that you do be done with love."
(1 Corinthians 16:14)*

1. Mission Statement & Catholic Ethos

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that every child is welcomed, valued and enabled to flourish, regardless of need or disability. Rooted in the Gospel values of love, dignity, justice and inclusion, we recognise each person as uniquely made in the image of God.

Our accessibility arrangements reflect the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, particularly:

- **Human Dignity** – every child has equal worth
 - **The Common Good** – barriers to learning are removed for all
 - **Solidarity** – we stand alongside those who experience disadvantage
 - **Preferential Option for the Vulnerable** – we prioritise the needs of those who need us most
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2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out how the school:

- Ensures access to education for pupils with disabilities
- Meets its duties under the **Equality Act 2010**
- Improves access to:
 - the **curriculum**
 - the **physical environment**
 - **information and communication**

This policy should be read alongside:

- SEND Policy
- Equality Information & Objectives
- Inclusion Policy

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- LAC & PLAC Policy

3. Statutory Framework

This policy complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- **Equality Act 2010** (including Schedule 10 – Accessibility Plans)
- **Children and Families Act 2014**
- **SEND Code of Practice (0–25)** (DfE & DoH, 2015)
- **The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**
- **Catholic Education Service guidance**

Under the Equality Act, the school has a duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

4. Definition of Disability

A pupil is considered disabled if they have:

“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

(Equality Act 2010)

This includes pupils with:

- Physical disabilities
- Sensory impairments
- Medical conditions
- Neurodivergence
- Social, emotional and mental health needs

5. Accessibility Aims

The school aims to:

1. **Increase access to the curriculum**
So that all pupils can learn, participate and achieve
2. **Improve access to the physical environment**
So that pupils, staff and visitors can move safely and independently
3. **Improve access to information and communication**
So that all members of the community can engage fully with school life

6. Access to the Curriculum

We promote curriculum accessibility by:

- High-quality, inclusive classroom teaching
- Reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment
- Use of:
 - visual supports
 - assistive technology
 - adapted resources
- Flexible approaches to recording and demonstrating learning
- Deployment of trained support staff where appropriate
- Individual planning through:
 - SEN Support Plans
 - EHCPs
 - Medical Care Plans

Staff receive regular CPD to ensure inclusive practice is embedded, not exceptional.

7. Access to the Physical Environment

The school continually reviews and improves access by:

- Conducting regular accessibility audits
- Considering mobility, sensory and medical needs when planning changes
- Ensuring:

- o safe access to classrooms and shared spaces
 - o clear signage
 - o appropriate lighting and acoustics
- Making reasonable adjustments where physical barriers exist

Accessibility is considered as part of all site development and refurbishment planning.

8. Access to Information & Communication

The school ensures information is accessible by:

- Providing alternative formats where required (e.g. large print, simplified language)
- Supporting parents and carers with communication needs
- Using visuals, symbols and plain English where appropriate
- Working with external agencies (e.g. SENDIAS, sensory services)
- Ensuring digital platforms are as accessible as possible

Communication is guided by the principle of partnership with families.

9. Roles & Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensures compliance with statutory duties
- Monitors the effectiveness of the Accessibility Plan

Headteacher

- Leads and promotes an inclusive school culture
- Ensures reasonable adjustments are made

SENCO

- Advises on accessibility and reasonable adjustments
- Works with staff, families and external professionals
- Supports individual planning for pupils with disabilities

All Staff

- Uphold inclusive values

- Remove barriers to participation
- Act with compassion, dignity and professionalism

10. Accessibility Plan

The school maintains a three-year Accessibility Plan, which:

- Identifies current barriers
- Sets out actions, responsibilities and timescales
- Is reviewed annually by governors

The plan is available on the school website.

11. Review & Monitoring

This policy will be:

- Reviewed every three years, or sooner if legislation changes
- Monitored through:
 - o governor visits
 - o pupil and parent voice
 - o SEN reviews
 - o accessibility audits

12. Conclusion

At St Thomas of Canterbury, accessibility is not simply a legal duty but a moral and spiritual commitment. We strive to be a community where every child belongs, every voice matters, and every individual is supported to become the person God calls them to be.