



St Aidan's Catholic Academy

'We believe that God has created each person to celebrate life to the full'



Accessibility Plan

2024-2025



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Vision and Values

St. Aidan's Catholic Academy expects all pupils to be able to participate and achieve in every aspect of the life of the school.

As an Academy, we are committed to inclusion and to equal opportunities for all of our pupils in respect of access to all subject areas and entry for examination courses.

The Academy will set suitable learning challenges for all pupils in response to their diverse needs. We recognise the varying needs of pupils with a disability and/or a special educational need. We will seek to identify and then put in place strategies to overcome potential barriers to learning for individuals and groups of pupils.

Pupil Information

Currently, St. Aidan's Catholic Academy has 8 pupils with a disability. This is from a school population of 856 in years 7 -11 and 135 in sixth form.

The nature of the disabilities is as follows:

- 6 pupils with hearing impairments.
- 1 pupils with visual impairments.
- 3 pupils with physical disabilities.
- All of these pupils have full access to the mainstream curriculum and participate in all aspects of school life.

Patterns of attendance are very good, all above 90%.

All pupils with a disability are making good progress in respect of examinations.

Pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, but pupils are given a degree of choice.

Whilst the above figures are undoubtedly small, it is worth putting them in the context of SEND provision within St. Aidan's. We currently have 106 on the SEND register: 7 of those pupils are in 6th form. Six pupils have EHCPs (in year 7, 8 and 9) and the rest are "K" or school support. Our numbers of pupils with Sensory and Physical Difficulties are in line with other national secondaries as are our numbers of pupil on the SEND register. We differ in that we have fewer EHCPs and a larger contingent of pupils with Communication and Interaction diagnoses.

Close liaison takes place with all of our feeder primary schools so that we are aware of any upcoming disability issues and can make plans accordingly.

Accessibility Consultation

The views of pupils with physical disabilities and/or special education needs, together with the views of their parents, are considered in reviewing the Accessibility Plan.

Pupils

Having consulted the physically impaired pupils, none reported barriers to them taking a full and active part in the curriculum. In talking to the hearing impaired pupils, all felt that they were coping well in terms of accessing the curriculum. Some observations were made by the pupils which the school has taken on board in respect of classroom organisation. One of our HI pupils has binary



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cochlear implants (year 9), two choose not to wear hearing aids (year 8 and year 11) and three use hearing aids (years 7, 10 and 12).

Parents

Consultation takes place with all parents during Parents' Consultation evenings. In addition, there are review meetings with the parents of all of the pupils who are on the code of practice. These discussions help to inform our planning within school. Parents are also welcomed and encouraged to contact school to discuss potential issues or concerns. Last year we trialled a year 7 introductory review for the parents of SEND pupils; this was very successful. We have followed this up this year by using extensive welfare phone calls and the use of TEAMS meetings. This has also been successful and allowed us to reach parents who would not normally physically be able to attend school. The school liaises with all relevant agencies and support services where appropriate to enhance the access for pupils to the curriculum.

Improving the physical environment

The physically impaired pupils are able to access all parts of the curriculum without the need for specialist support – one of the pupils is range 1 only. They access the curriculum in a way that all other pupils in the school do, i.e. in a mixed ability grouping with the need for teachers differentiating work.

Pupils with hearing impairments have regular contact with the Hearing Support Service and their advice is integrated into provision maps and distributed across the school. They also provide bespoke training to staff on pupil needs.

Pupils with visual impairments also have contact with the Visual Support service.

All of the pupils with a disability are fully integrated within the pastoral and social life of the school, having established and developed good relationships and friendships with other pupils and staff.

To date, none of our physically impaired pupils has required any physical alterations to the environment of the school to enable them to access the curriculum. One pupil has a lift pass and has transport provided but still manages to participate in school life to the full, including a recent visit to Scafell.

The school, however, recognises that this may not always be the case. Currently, liaison with our feeder primary school in respect of pupils with Special Educational Needs begins during Year 5.

Therefore, there would be the opportunity for the school to make any necessary physical alterations before the pupil joins in Year 7.

The school recognises also that there are many pupils and staff who have impairments that would not be officially classified as such but which nevertheless need to be considered, e.g. vision – ensuring that the edges of steps completely visible for all, and that handrails are made available on staircases.

In order to improve the delivery of the curriculum to all pupils, the Academy will consider such issues as:

- the layout of worksheets/handouts;
- use of pastel coloured paper in place of white;
- use of enlarged texts, including exam papers where appropriate;
- the layout and size of timetable information;
- the suitability of textbooks;
- the use of homework diaries; and



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- alternative methods of recording including the use of software
- use of accessibility features with TEAMS
- use of OBS lessons and live streaming when appropriate.

Management, Coordination and Implementation

The overall responsibility for the school's accessibility plan lies with the Governing Body of St. Aidan's Catholic Academy. However, all staff within the school needs to understand the duties in the DDA and their role within it. These people include the Head Teacher, learning support assistants, class and subject teachers, dinner staff, the SENDCo, the premises manager, curriculum coordinators and heads of departments, administrative staff and, of course, the Governors.

Currently, the Governors feel that there are no obstacles to any of our pupils accessing the curriculum. This has been confirmed by the pupils themselves. In light of this, the Governors do not believe that there is any necessity at this stage to embark upon major physical alteration. Nevertheless, this situation is constantly kept under review by the SENDCo and the Head Teacher through their liaison with primary schools and parents. They will in turn inform both the Governors' Curriculum Committee and the Governors' Equal Opportunities Committee of any change in circumstances immediately. As a routine monitoring tool, the issue will be discussed at least annually by both of these Committees.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.