

# SACRED HEART HIGH SCHOOL



## ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

**DECEMBER 2023**

*Review every 3 years (December 2026)*

*This Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Curriculum Access policy,  
Admissions Policy and all other school policies*

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous discrimination law and provides a single piece of legislation covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful.

Schools and Local Authorities have to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils.

Our school's accessibility plans are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided, and
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

We recognise the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and will regularly review them.

### Notes

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one. A disabled person is someone who has a

- Physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included.

If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoveries and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

## 2 MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission statement recognises the value and worth of the individual pupil and it is this which lies at the heart of our Curriculum Access policy and Accessibility Plan.

Every student is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and all-round educational experience.

Furthermore, an explicit aim of the Mission Statement is that each student should be guided towards mental and physical well-being and should leave the school with a sense of her own giftedness. The Mission Statement also commits us to respecting the uniqueness, worth and development of each individual, both as a learner and as a person called by God in dignity and faith.

All members of staff together with the authorities (Governing Body and Local Authority) have a responsibility to ensure that every pupil has an equal opportunity to attain their potential in all aspects of the curriculum.

The accessibility plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is committed to ensuring staff are training in equality issues with reference the Equality Act 201, including understanding disability issues. The school supports available

partnerships to develop and implement the plan including working with the Hammersmith and Fulham Local Authority - <https://beta.lbhf.gov.uk/send-local-offer>

If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, the complaints procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of our Accessibility Plan including, Mrs S O'Donovan (Headteacher), Mr Y Khan (School Business Manager), Mr L Andre (Site Manager), Ms F Vitija (Assistant Headteacher, Curriculum and Inclusion), Ms M Fraser (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and Head of Curriculum Access), Ms Sharma (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Governor).

### **3 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

This document meets the requirements of **schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010** and the Department for Education (DfE) **guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010**.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice**, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a pupil with disabilities faces in comparison with a pupil without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

### **4 ENGAGEMENT**

We actively seek the views of disabled members of our community within any programme to adjust the school facilities or access. We have an established Pupil Voice programme within the school which enables students to communicate their views to the senior leadership team. Students with disabilities are enabled and encouraged to represent their form groups on the Student Council.

We have established a "parent mail" email communication system which enables all parents to contact and receive information directly from the school. We meet requests for information in other formats (e.g. large print).

Disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers are invited to attend additional pastoral meetings, transition planning sessions and parent teacher meetings; access arrangements are considered and put into place (e.g. a few classrooms have communication support for those with hearing impairments). We use a variety of communication media in order to address all accessibility issues but we recognise that wheel chair accessibility is still a challenge due to size of classes and environment.

In order to ensure full inclusion and engagement of students with disabilities, we hold an accessibility meeting to consider various changes and support that is needed. Students and their parents are invited to meet with the SENCO before and after these meetings to discuss what they would like and need and what it will look like at our school.

Consultation took place in relation to the design of our new science/sports building and the new build, the design of which is now fully Disability Discrimination Act compliant.

## 5 IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY: THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### 5.1 What is Already in Place?

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The age and design of Sacred Heart High School creates access and mobility difficulties which are not all possible to resolve. Scope for improvements is further complicated by the building's Listed Building status.

Nevertheless, a number of features are already in place which aim to improve accessibility for pupils, staff and visitors. The following list describes features already in place and identifies recognised mobility limitations.

The Calder Building is constructed and equipped as Disability Discrimination Act compliant including easy access toilets, lift access to all floors.

Easy Access toilets are available in the Student Services area, the Design Technology department and at ground level in both the new building and in the existing main building (in the reception area at the front entrance onto Hammersmith Road).

The main toilet facilities are available in the basements of the East and West Wings. Staff toilets within the Barat main building are only accessible by stairs.

Mobile ramps are in use to overcome split levels where possible.

Wheelchair access is available into the main Barat building through the Bishop's door. Access to the ground floor West Wing, Cloisters and Chapel and Technology Block is then possible. A lift provides access to all floors of the main Barat building and the Technology/Science block but not to the West Wing or the East Wing.

Movement from one part of the school to another is difficult and potentially hazardous, because of narrow corridors. This raises serious health and safety concerns for people with impaired mobility and safety of other pupils.

In the event of a pupil being temporarily confined to a wheelchair, room changes would be made but this would not be practicable on a permanent basis.

Before any wheelchair bound pupil, staff or visitor was admitted to the school plans would be put in place to cover evacuation. The school has a 'Fire Safety for those with Disability Risk Assessment' which would be used in such cases. Changes to classroom layout may also be required, but our remote access Teaching and Learning Observatory can also be used where accessibility is compromised.

For students with other mobility needs, the school has adapted classrooms for those individuals and their classes to be closer to lifts and have let students leave lessons early to move around the site in a safer way.

The school has an operational medical room on the days when the school nurse is on site. This is located on the ground floor with easy access to the front entrance (meeting Room 2, School Nurse's office). On other days, unwell children are monitored from the Student Services office.

In order to help parents make an assessment of the difficulties the building presents for pupils with mobility difficulties or any other disability, the school will encourage the parent and child to visit the school when it is in session.

The school has a marked parking space for anyone with disabilities.

### 5.2 Further Improvements

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The school will continue to take advice and seek improvements as far as it reasonably can to address the existing mobility restrictions but our scope for this is limited.

- Accessibility meetings held on a case-by-case basis including the site team, Senior Leadership Team and the school's business manager.
- Pupil voice about experience in Sacred Heart building;
- Improved access for wheel chair users on ground floor;
- Environment made easier to access for those with sight difficulties i.e. corridors to be kept clear of obstacles.

## **6 IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY: THE CURRICULUM**

### **6.1 What is already in place?**

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Sacred Heart has moved all classes to non-prior-attainment groupings with a focus on teachers scaffolding information. This is in line with evidence and research that tells us that groupings that are mixed creates equal expectations for all students and removes narrowing of expectations; particularly students with SEND, lower ability students and students from minority groupings.

As part of differentiation the school makes reasonable adjustments to enable all pupils to take part in activities such as adjustments to furniture, special chairs, writing slopes, stationary equipment such as pencil grips, and scissors.

Pupils are given exit cards should their medical condition require quick access to toilets.

Class seating arrangements reflect accommodation to the pupil's needs.

If the pupils find their disability is preventing them from accessing the full timetable, temporary arrangements are made to enable the pupil to manage their learning and regain confidence to return to the classroom fulltime. As such, Sacred Heart has further developed curriculum access provision in the establishment of The Janet Stuart Centre to facilitate this. The centre will provide students who present with behaviour, physical, SEND or attendance needs with interventions and programmes designed to minimise the barriers presenting them from accessing learning.

Pupils have been involved in training staff about their needs since 2012 (ADHD, Dyslexia, Aspergers, Irlene Syndrome and Hearing Loss).

As a result of pupil voice an introduction to hidden disabilities such as hearing loss, dyslexia, autism and attention deficit disorder and medical needs such as diabetes are part of the PSHE programme with the aim to create awareness, encourage tolerance, understanding and a respect for others.

Access arrangements in place for pupils whose 'limitations go beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people.' Candidates who are at a substantial disadvantage have arrangements such as extra time, special production of exam papers, scribes, readers and a small classroom.

Sacred Heart works with a range of local authorities and agencies to ensure students with Education and Health Care Plans-have access highly skilled support.

Staff receive ongoing and high-level training on Curriculum Access and SEND with priority put on supporting staff with knowledge and skills at the beginning and throughout the academic year. Staff have had training on all four areas of need (Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Physical and Sensory, and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs). Training and lesson observations with a focus on SEND is thorough and ongoing.

## **7 IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY: WRITTEN INFORMATION**

### **7.1 What is already in place?**

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The SENCO and (when appropriate the School Nurse) updates training for staff every September at the start of the academic year. Pupils also feed into training for staff.

We already have systems in place to ensure accessibility to the printed word, presentations, learning resources, through guidance on typeface, font size, background, layout, etc. This includes working with specialists and the IT department to ensure students have access to the highest level of technology possible to support with lesson access.

We also have further auxiliary aids: writing slopes, pens and colour filters. The school additionally uses software to increase access to learning:

- Typing Club – touch typing proficiency
- Read and Write Gold Software programme
- IT resources such as Google Classroom
- Use of IT in exams

Laptops (Chromebooks) are provided for pupils with temporary injuries or surgery. Laptops have been made available to students on a longer-term basis to support with access to education where a special educational need or disability prevents them accessing lessons through ordinary means.

### **7.2 Further improvements**

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- Carry out a review of signage throughout the school to improve clarity, for example easy access to toilets and lift.
- All classrooms to have writing slopes for pupils to use in class.
- Continue to expand language friendly classrooms across the departments.

## 8 ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim	Current good practice Include established practice, and practice under development	Short, medium & long-term objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
<p><b>Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability</b></p>	<p>Explain your school’s approach here. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our school offers a differentiated curriculum for all pupils including a range of strategies such as scaffolding, chunking, use of visuals and many others. SENCO has shared strategies with staff to use in staff training sessions and in staff shared area.</li> <li>• Sacred Heart has non-prior attainment groupings</li> <li>• We use resources tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum</li> <li>• Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities</li> <li>• Curriculum progress is tracked for all pupils, including those with a disability</li> <li>• Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for pupils with additional needs</li> <li>• The curriculum is reviewed to make sure it meets the needs of all pupils</li> </ul>	<p><b>Short term:</b> To ensure all our students have full access to the curriculum.</p> <p><b>Medium Term:</b> To audit provision at Sacred Heart High School.</p> <p><b>Long Term:</b> To find further ways of making our listed site accessible for all students with disabilities.</p>	<p>Updated Curriculum Access and Accessibility Policy.</p> <p>Audit of school accessibility to be taken.</p> <p>Accessibility meetings held on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Working with outside agencies to improve access to school site using innovative ideas and technology.</p> <p>Staff to be continuously trained in all different areas of SEND.</p>	<p>All staff, including governors, Headteacher, Business Manager, and SENCO</p>	<p>Ongoing – long term goals to be met within the next 5 years.</p>	<p>Increased student wellbeing particularly for students with SEND.</p> <p>Increased population in school of students with a diverse range of SEND.</p> <p>Students with disabilities fully accessing the curriculum and making progress.</p> <p>The school working well with outside agencies.</p>

Aim	Current good practice Include established practice, and practice under development	Short, medium & long-term objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptations and modifications are made to the curriculum where needed for example, through the use of technology or enlarging print or use of a microphone.</li> <li>• Reasonable adjustments are made in the classroom in terms of equipment.</li> <li>• Seating arrangements are adjusted for the individual needs of pupils.</li> <li>• Access arrangements are given for students with SEND for exams.</li> <li>• The creation and development of the Janet Stuart Inclusion Centre is there to support students who are missing education for various reasons and it aims to find ways of bringing them back into the classroom safely and securely.</li> </ul>					
<b>Improve and maintain access to the physical environment</b>	<p>The environment is adapted to the needs of pupils as required within the limitations of the listed building statut.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ramps</li> <li>• Elevators</li> <li>• Disabled parking bays</li> <li>• Disabled toilets and changing facilities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Short term:</b> To use regular communication and feedback with parents and students to reasonably adapt to the needs of pupils with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Medium term:</b> to have student ambassadors who run an accessibility committee in the school.</p>	<p>Increased wheelchair accessibility within scope of Grade 2 Listed building.e.,g</p> <p>Find solution to accessibility to buildings without lifts e.g., the Stuart Building (West Wing – Geography) and</p>	<p>Governors, Headteacher, Business Manager, SENCO and site team.</p>	<p><b>Short term:</b> ongoing.</p> <p><b>Medium term:</b> By the end of the 2023-24 academic year</p> <p><b>Long term:</b> within the next 5 years</p>	<p>Improved access to the physical environment of the school.</p> <p>Students learning and thriving in Sacred Heart’s unique and special building.</p>

Aim	Current good practice Include established practice, and practice under development	Short, medium & long-term objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement of classrooms to facilitate lack of access to areas of the school with no lift access e.g., Geography lessons and Maths lessons.</li> <li>• Students with mobility needs support in their movement around the school by a teaching assistant. Students allowed to leave lessons earlier to avoid dangers of the busy corridors.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Long term:</b> to improve the accessibility of the school further.</p>	<p>the Digby Building (East Wing – Maths and Library).</p> <p>Small, accessible library to be created in Janet Stuart Inclusion Centre.</p> <p>Continued student voice and parent feedback.</p>			
<p><b>Improve the delivery of information to pupils with a disability</b></p>	<p>Our school uses a range of communication methods to make sure information is accessible. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for staff on how to create resources that use accessible type-face, font size, background.</li> <li>• Staff can print resources rather than a student reading it from the board.</li> <li>• Internal signage</li> <li>• Large print resources</li> <li>• Pictorial or symbolic representations</li> <li>• Use of technology</li> <li>• Writing slopes</li> <li>• Adapted pens/ pen grips</li> <li>• Colour filters for reading</li> <li>• Software for touch-typing</li> </ul>	<p>To ensure students can access all information at school.</p>	<p>SENCO to provide resources on a case-by-case basis for example, braille for visually impaired student or induction loops for a student with hearing impairment.</p> <p>School to ensure all information to parents is fully accessible.</p>	<p>All staff, including governors, Headteacher, Business Manager, and SENCO</p>	<p>Ongoing, by the end of 2024.</p>	<p>Student and parent voice to feedback that they are able to access information from school regardless of any special educational need or disability.</p>

Aim	Current good practice Include established practice, and practice under development	Short, medium & long-term objectives	Actions to be taken	Person responsible	Date to complete actions by	Success criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictation software</li> <li>• Google classroom</li> <li>• Access arrangements for exams such as a reader/ prompter/ scribe/ use of a laptop/ extra time/ rest breaks</li> <li>• Chromebooks for selected students</li> </ul>					

## 9 MONITORING

Progress with implementing the above will be monitored by Senior Leadership Team and reports on progress will be submitted to the Premises committee termly.

We will additionally track the experience of identified students in the course of a normal school week and monitor their accessibility.

## 10 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This Accessibility Plan is linked to the following policies and documents

- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Equality Plan and Statement for Publication**
- **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report**
- **Curriculum Access Policy**
- **Supporting Student with Medical Conditions Policy**

which can all be found on the school website here: [Policies and Reports](#)

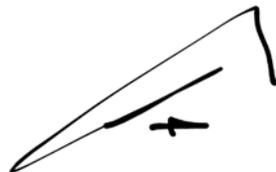
This Accessibility Plan is also linked to our **Admissions Policies** can be found here: [Admissions](#)

## 11 RATIFICATION

This Policy was reviewed in November 2023. It was approved by the Headteacher and Staffing Management & Finance and Curriculum Committees in November 2023 and ratified at the Full Governing Body meeting in December 2023. The Plan will be reviewed three yearly. Renewal date December 2026.



Mrs S O'Donovan  
Headteacher



Glen Hodgson  
Chair of Governor

