

2024-2027 Accessibility Plan

'A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life in conditions that promote dignity, independence and an active role in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide free care and assistance to children with disability'

Article 23 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

As a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, St Matthew's has placed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our school's ethos and culture to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. Our school is a place where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted. Our commitment to children's rights and equal opportunities is an important aspect of our overall commitment to be a fully inclusive school.

This plan outlines how St Matthew's aims to increase access to education for pupils with disabilities in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act 2010 (i.e. the curriculum, physical environment and information).

A person is regarded as having a disability under the Act where they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This plan aims to:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- Improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities.

The above aims will be delivered within a reasonable timeframe, and in ways which are determined after taking into account pupils' disabilities and the views of parents and pupils. In the preparation of an accessibility strategy, the LA must have regard to the need to allocate adequate resources in the implementation of this strategy.

The governing board also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and will:

- Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
- Provide appropriate support and provision for employees with disabilities to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
- Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

The plan will be resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised in consultation with:

- Pupils' parents.
- The headteacher and other relevant members of staff.
- Governors.

- External partners.

This plan is reviewed every three years to take into account the changing needs of the school and its pupils. The plan is also reviewed where the school has undergone a refurbishment.

Definitions of SEND

'A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.'

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or a disability if he or she:

- has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or colleges.'

(SEND code of Practice 2014)

'Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010- that is'... 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEND definition.' (SEND code of Practice 2014)

The Equality Act 2010

'The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years' providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities have towards disabled children and young people;

They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people

They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory- it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.

Public bodies, including FE institutions, LA, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and when carrying out their functions must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of

opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. They must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.' (*SEND code of Practice 2014*)

The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. (*SEND code of Practice 2014*)

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with-

- The LA admissions policy
- The School Nursery Admissions Policy
- The School Website
- The Equality Policy and Objectives
- The Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- The Special Educational Needs Policy
- The Local Offer and School SEND Information Report

All policies will be checked to ensure that they do not, unintentionally, treat pupils with disabilities less favourably.

The Accessibility Plan

All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services. Most providers must also make reasonable adjustments by making physical alterations. Schools and LA education functions are not covered by this last duty but they must publish accessibility plans'....'setting out how they plan to increase access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information.' (*SEND code of Practice 2014*)

'Where a child or young person is covered by SEN and disability legislation, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements should be considered as part of SEN planning and review.' (*SEND code of Practice 2014*).

The full range of needs and required support for all pupils identified as SEN Support or with an EHC Plan will be considered at least termly. The discussions will involve staff, parents and children plus outside agencies, as necessary.

The action plan below identifies key activities that will take place to ensure that the school becomes increasingly accessible for pupils with disabilities.

Current position

Since the last plan, there have been considerable staffing changes with the SENDCo role. However, the SENDCo attends all local network meetings and briefings to stay up-to-date on best practice and the local offer. SEND is a standing item at SLMT meetings, weekly staff briefings and governor meetings, so this information is passed on to staff through these means. Staff have received training from an educational psychologist with regards to the SEND Code of Practice but a recent audit suggests further training on this and the Trafford Graduated Approach is required. Regular training has been held for staff regarding medical conditions and Health Care Plans have been maintained

and reviewed regularly (at least annually). The school has purchased 'Provision Map' to assist with the recording and monitoring of provision and interventions.

The physical building has undergone some improvements since the most recent plan. New external doors have been fitted which give greater access. New external gates have also been fitted or repositioned which makes access easier. The reception area is easier to access and the majority of paths around the site are wide enough for access.

Curriculum:

- Having high aspirations for all pupils and a broad and balanced curriculum at the core of our school vision.
- Offer a bespoke curriculum to our children with the highest needs and EHCPs who attend our Blossom Provision - a specialist class that is run by our SENDCo and ELSA HLTA.
- Obtaining data on future pupil population to facilitate advanced planning. This includes liaison with the Local Authority (LA) SEN advisory service and admissions.
- Liaising with LA SEND service and external services and agencies regarding individual pupils (physical, sensory, learning, behaviour).
- Ensuring a compliant admissions policy is in place.
- Using specialist staff to support learning and to give pastoral and inclusion support.
- Organising Teaching Assistant (TA) deployment to cover a mix of curriculum and learning needs. Guidance has been provided for teaching staff regarding the best deployment of TAs in light of EEF evidence – this ensures there is a balance between meeting individual needs and missing time from a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensuring that where appropriate, pupils have access to national and internal assessments facilitated by provision of extra time, readers etc.
- Staff refer to the individual needs of pupils on their provision map to ensure these are met in lessons. Staff have access to an inclusive toolkit in each classroom to support them in meeting their needs.
- Provision of a bank of disability specific, specialist resources, available to support individual pupil needs.
- Provision of a bank of disability specific, specialist assessments, available to support individual pupil needs.
- Setting clear learning objectives that are appropriately scaffolded or differentiated where this is required for individual pupils.
- Ensuring that parents/pupils are included in the target setting process.
- Encouraging the use of clear, well-presented visual aids to the support learning of all pupils e.g. visual timetables, Now/Next/Last boards.
- Taking full advantage of the opportunities available outside school to provide educational visits that are accessible to all pupils.
- Where children do have physical needs, work closely with SENAS to seek advice in making reasonable adaptations to ensure they can fully access the curriculum.
- Have a UNICEF Rights Respecting ethos within St Matthew's.
- Developing an ethos of prioritising outdoor learning.
- Developing areas and provision around school to further enhance and develop learning: bedding plots, fire pit and den making facilities.

- Using Zones of Regulation to help children feel safe and secure and to identify and manage their own emotions effectively.
- Become a part of Trafford's Belong Programme, 2024 - to support staff understanding and become a trauma and attachment aware school.
- Speaking and listening, as well as self-esteem and confidence interventions are delivered to ensure children can participate in discussions and presentations.
- Using a range of teaching methods and styles to facilitate access for all pupils: for example, appropriate use of language, questioning techniques, collaborative learning styles
- Using ability groups to target additional needs, with skilled TAs to support learning.
- Buddy schemes to support vulnerable pupils where required.
- Making every effort to enhance inclusion at all times.
- SENDCo provides support for teachers setting online learning to ensure all pupils can access this. 1:1 or group interventions can be provided by TAs to ensure children can access learning from home.
- For disabilities that affect numeracy, literacy and speech, assessments help provide teachers with detailed analysis of their needs and gaps in learning to assist teachers in planning to address these needs and learn knowledge and skills from prior year groups where necessary.
- Creating a culture of understanding and tolerance so that all ability groups and all disabilities are accepted as part of our school community.
- Development of mutual support and understanding between colleagues when working with pupils with challenging disabilities.
- Where needs are suspected, schools work closely with parents to appropriately identify and address these needs e.g. sensory questionnaires will be sent home to parents to have full knowledge of the child's needs across the day.
- Targeted interventions to support emotional well-being.
- Close workings with the Virtual Schools team for looked after children.
- Staff training and development with external consultants such as Thrive, SLT for Kids, Educational Psychology.
- Close working with Kickstart Childcare who run extra-curricular activities to ensure all pupils can access these activities.
- School holds regular review meetings with parents where parents can give feedback on the accessibility plan, or they can email their feedback to SENDCo@stmatthewsce.co.uk.

Physical Access:

- The school building is accessible for pupils with physical difficulties.
- The majority of school toilets have been refurbished for greater access and support of those who require additional care. There is a disabled toilet in the reception area for use should additional space and/or privacy be required by any individuals.
- The outside play areas are flat and almost completely accessible to wheelchair users.
- Wheelchair access to all buildings that are used day-to-day.
- 1 disabled car park space by the ramped entrance to the front door of the School for disabled users or to enable pupils and staff with ambulatory impairments or wheelchairs to access school.

- The school works closely with Trafford Sensory Impairment Support Service to support children with hearing impairments to ensure they have access to teaching provision as well as well as important notifications such as fire alarms.
- Suitable flooring is used in all rooms and adequate lighting is available across the school, most of which is movement activated and doesn't require the physical switching on of lights.
- Disabled toilet facilities available with wheelchair access.
- Adapted/specialised furniture provided to meet individual needs.
- Private meeting to enable confidential meetings to take place with SENDCo, staff, support agency staff and parents.
- Posters and signs around to school indicate access routes are clearly identified.
- Site manager monitors external surfaces to ensure they are safe, and liaises with external companies where work is required to maintain them.
- Where needed, signs around school also have pictures to support those with language difficulties or EAL e.g. safeguarding posters. School also used PECS for those with communication needs.
- Space for small group work and individualised work for targeted learners.
- Children's work is shown to be valued by use in displays around the school.
- The outdoor learning environment is being developed to enhance pupil's health and well-being.
- Access issues take priority in adaptations and improvements of the learning environment.
- Some communal spaces are 'clutter-free' to facilitate easy movement around the buildings.
- Site Manager's regular tasks includes ensuring access routes are clear from leaves, litter, snow etc and clear from obstructions.
- Ramps are available to the main school building, the Nursery building and the Annex. Where necessary (Annex and Nursery), these have handrails to one side. Ramp surfaces are regularly checked to ensure they are clear, free from obstruction and provide slip-free access. External lighting is available for all ramps.
- External doors are clearly identified through signage. Doors can be operated at seated or standing positions. Power-operated doors are identifiable. Entrances have adequate lighting and the Site Manager ensures they are clear from hazards.
- Display boards, blackboards and whiteboards, etc., are all viewable from seated and standing positions.
- Bookshelves and other items are accessible to everyone.
- For fire alarms and lockdown procedures, staff should be aware of the whereabouts of all children and provide assistance where this is required to alert them of the emergency and support them in escaping where necessary.
- Fire drills are held regularly to check these effectiveness of the procedures in place. The SENDCo highlights any children who may require a PEP and this is provided where necessary.
- Staff have areas they are responsible for ensuring are clear and safe for all users.

Information Access:

- Visual timetables and information supported by signs/symbols for targeted pupils. PECS used for individual children where this is deemed necessary.
- Signage includes symbols where necessary to support those with hidden disabilities or have communication needs.

- The school can provide larger versions of letters on request, however as the majority of these are sent out electronically, technology assistance e.g. text to speech, can be used by receivers.
- Home-school books for targeted children to ensure effective communication.
- Provision of verbal or large print information for targeted pupils.
- Regular news and messages shared with parents via Weduc Parent App.
- Clear and accessible school website which can be translated.
- Use Weduc to share information with our parents and carers.
- School Twitter account to share information with wider school community
- Developing a school Instagram account to share information with the wider school community. .
- School uses a translation service to provide translators for key meetings and information.

Future Planning

The following details specific anticipatory activities aimed to increase accessibility for pupils with SEND to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information:

Action Plan					
Curriculum					
Time	Objectives	Tasks	Resources	Lead	Monitor
Short Term	To embed the use of year group toolboxes with staff and children so tools to support learning are accessible to all	Training from SENDCo	Time, Budget to replace resources	SENC	SEN report, monitoring
Medium Term	To ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and Trafford's Graduated Approach, as well as specific needs and resources pertinent to the school's context	Training provided by the SENDCo /Thrive Consultant in Staff Development Meetings, and through regular staff meetings. SENCO to continue to attend termly LA SEN network meetings and access support with SENAS.	INSET & Staff Development Meeting time	SENC	Monitoring cycle Head teacher report to Governors
Long Term	To further improve our use Provision Map to ensure school is meeting individual needs within each cohort, ensuring best pupil outcomes	Teachers confident to use Provision Map to map and adjust TA support to meet the most relevant individual/ group needs Dedicated SENDCo time to review	SLT Staff release time Staff training	SENC	Monitoring cycle SEND report

		outcomes for SEND pupils with TAs			
Physical environment					
Time	Objectives	Tasks	Resources	Lead	Monitor
Short Term	To improve accessibility to the school by ensuring staff are aware of the barrier of the new door system on entry	Pressure release door to be removed for safeguarding purposes. Sign stating that the door no longer swings open.	Budget		Governor reports
Medium Term	To improve accessibility to the outdoor learning area	Ensure all paths are maintained and grass removed that may to make areas difficult to access - overgrown weeds and grass will cause barriers to access.	Site Managers Time Budget		Governor reports FPP committee
Long Term	To improve accessibility to the KS1 playground from the classrooms	Explore the possibility of ramp access from Year 1 and 2 to the playground, or other suitable alternatives	Budget		Governor reports FPP committee
Information					
Time	Objectives	Tasks	Resources	Lead	Monitor
Short Term	To ensure visitors to the site have access to key information on arrival	Ensure large-print versions of initial information leaflets/forms are available at reception. Explore the need to provide alternative-colour / audio versions of this information.	Admin time Budget		Equality report
Medium Term	To ensure good accessibility of information on the new school website	HT works with developers to ensure translation remains an option on all web pages. Share ways of improving accessibility to the site further e.g. test to speech, large text.	HT time Budget	HT	School website report
Long Term	To explore further training for staff to be able to communicate	Seek out and evaluate training for staff to better	Staff release time	HT, SENCO	Equality report

	and support visitors with sensory disabilities	support those with sensory disabilities	Budget		
--	--	---	--------	--	--

Monitoring

The performance of individuals continues to be monitored on a termly basis through progress meetings with the Head or Deputy Headteacher. The performance of groups, including those with SEN and/or a disability, takes place on an annual basis with each class teacher.

The school maintains a 'Discrimination Record' through CPOMS and Staff Safe which details any reported incidents of discrimination, including disability discrimination, and the subsequent action that has been carried out by the staff. All such incidents will be reported to the LA and will be included in the termly report to governors. The SEN Governor also checks this document on at least an annual basis.

Parents are encouraged to share feedback about this plan through review meetings or by emailing the SENDCo: SENDCo@stmatthewsce.co.uk.

Ratified: Full Governing Body, March 2025