

# ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Accessibility Plan 2022-23

(To be read in conjunction with the SEN information report)

### Introduction

This plan has been written to meet the requirements of school to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils as stated in the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School recognises its duty:

- ✚ Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions and provision of education and associated services.
- ✚ Not to treat disabled pupils less-favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- ✚ To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.
- ✚ To publish an accessibility plan.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School aims to:

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

This plan will be reviewed regularly and will be updated every three years.

Definition of Disability under the Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if: *They have a physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long term affect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.*

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles. We endorse the key principles which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- ✚ Setting suitable learning challenges
- ✚ Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- ✚ Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

The three areas to be considered in the action plan are:

- a) Improving education and related activities  
St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School will seek and follow the advice of LA services and appropriate agencies, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the NHS Trusts.
- b) Improving the physical environment  
St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access and lighting.
- c) Improving the provision of information

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

### **Contextual Information**

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an average size Catholic primary school, with full time Nursery provision for 26 children. It is situated in an area of high deprivation (well above the national average) in the west of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The population of the school is increasingly diverse; around 73% are from different ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language. There are more than 20 languages spoken in the school, the most prevalent being Polish, Kurdish and Bengali.

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average.

The number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. Needs vary and can include language difficulties such as communication (speech and language), dyslexia, autism, hearing impairment, visual impairment.

St. Joseph's has effective partnerships with a wide range of agencies providing additional specialist support for individual pupils and their families. These partnerships have a significant impact on the well-being and progress of pupils.

St. Joseph's is very effective in promoting and achieving equality, tolerance and harmony. This is due to an inclusive policy which is integral to the ethos of the school. The contribution to community cohesion is good.

Staff are trained as appropriate to support pupils in meeting their needs where necessary. Most support staff members hold current first aid qualifications. All class-based staff are trained in the use of epipens/jext pens.

Where children have significant health problems (including food allergies) all appropriate adults are informed and photos of these children are displayed in the staffroom/classroom.

Transition meetings are held between class teachers each year and between feeder schools/nurseries in the case of age-related transfers. A thorough system of reviews takes place for pupils on the SEN register. Pupils have care plans in place where appropriate and where medication is required.

Through effective communication staff are aware of the issues faced by our pupils and act to resolve them.

### **Curriculum**

Our expectation is that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement.

The following good practice is in place at St. Joseph's

- ✓ Effective procedures for the identification and support of pupils with Special Educational Needs
- ✓ Comprehensive tracking systems and data analysis
- ✓ Appropriate information given to all relevant staff in order to support pupils
- ✓ Regular home school liaison
- ✓ Differentiated curriculum to enable pupils to feel secure and make good progress
- ✓ Effective deployment of Teaching Assistants to support a range of needs
- ✓ Effective links with outside agencies

- ✓ Teaching which includes a range of strategies to support different learning styles
- ✓ Consideration of accessibility when planning educational visits

### **Physical Environment**

The school was built in 1905. Significant refurbishment of the school building and grounds has taken place over recent years. There is accommodation on 3 levels.

Ground floor level provides small group teaching space, library, meeting area, children's toilets and an Accessible Toilet with an alarm cord.

The first floor provides office accommodation, EYFS, KS1 and LKS2, small group teaching space, the hall, staffroom, children's toilets and an Accessible Toilet with an alarm cord.

The second floor provides accommodation for 3 classes (UKS2 children) and a computer suite.

Access to and the interior of the building does not allow for full accessibility due to steps at every entrance and classrooms only accessible by staircases.

The following good practice is in place at St. Joseph's:

- ✓ Emergency and evacuation procedures are accessible to all at the present time. Alarms are auditory and assembly point is on the playground. We have regular evacuation practices for all pupils.
- ✓ Personal Evacuation Plans - no pupils identified in need of PEP at the present time.
- ✓ Furniture and equipment are selected appropriate to age/size of pupils. Consideration is given to classroom layout to facilitate ease of movement around the room / access to equipment and resources.
- ✓ Installation of window blinds/shutters in all rooms.

### **Information**

The school makes good use of skills and expertise of external agencies to support pupils with special needs and their families. Where necessary, meetings are arranged to ensure families have access to information to enable the pupil to participate fully in the life of the school.

The following good practice is in place at St. Joseph's:

- ✓ Translators are used in meetings to ensure parents have full access to information being shared as required/appropriate.
- ✓ A texting service is provided to support communication between school and home.
- ✓ Class Dojo is used in Early Years and KS1 to share information with families.
- ✓ School operates an 'Open Door' policy with staff available on the school yard beginning/end of the day to talk to families.
- ✓ Written information is sent home in the family's first language if deemed necessary and appropriate.

The plan will be reviewed as part of our school development planning process and when pupils with additional needs are admitted to school.

## Targets for 2022-2024 and how we intend to achieve them

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Success Criteria
Improve the physical environment of the school.	Regular maintenance checks and cleaning.	Ongoing	The outdoor areas can be utilised all year round.
Ensure disability needs are included in curriculum plans.	Discuss the needs of children with a disability in staff meetings and in transition meetings.	Ongoing	The needs of all children are identified in lesson plans / provision provided. All children participate fully in school life.
Ensure that learning and mobility needs of the children are adequately provided for.	Vigorous monitoring and information gathering/sharing by relevant parties including SLT, class teachers and outside agencies and other key professionals. PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan) for children with additional needs.	Ongoing	Children and parents are well supported. All practitioners have the information they need to ensure the children's needs are met.
Improve transition arrangements for SEN / disabled parents and children	SEN / disabled parents and parents of children with SEN / Disability meet new staff in advance. Staff from St. Joseph's join parents/carers on visits to Secondary schools if requested.	Ongoing	Better understanding of the needs of our families.

Ensure that all written communication is as clear as can be for all groups of children / families.	<p>Where appropriate alter font size, colour and layout.</p> <p>Ensure newsletters are accessible to all families.</p> <p>Audit signage around the school to ensure all school users find it accessible.</p>	Ongoing	Children and families will receive information that is relevant and accessible
Ensure doors in the school are wide enough to allow wheelchair access	We recognise that some doorways in school are not wide enough to allow wheelchair access.	Completed	Wheelchair access in lower ground floor area.
Safe, secure access to school grounds.	New electric gate with intercom to be installed at Bishops Road entrance/exit. Electric gate with intercom will ensure ease of access for families with wheelchairs/pushchairs and emergency vehicles.	Installed Autumn 2022	Better and safer access to school grounds.
Safe even surface of school playground	Re-surfacing of school yard	Completed 2022	