



Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company

Accessibility Policy and Plan

2024 - 2027

Responsible for Policy	Martyn Alcott
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Holy Cross Catholic Multi Academy Company (the '**MAC**') is accountable for all policies across its schools. All policies whether relating to an individual school or the whole MAC will be written and implemented in line with our ethos and values as articulated on our website. In particular our values include treating all people with dignity and respect and providing our pupils and staff with hope for a positive future. Leaders implementing this policy should be mindful of these values when dealing with staff throughout the procedures within this policy.
- 1.2 MAC is an equal opportunities employer and treats its employees equally.
- 1.3 A Scheme of Delegation for the MAC sets out the responsibilities of the Local Governing Body and Headteacher. The Headteacher of each school is responsible for the implementation of all MAC policies.
- 1.4 All employees of the school are subject to the MAC's policies (both individual school policies and policies applicable to the MAC as a whole).
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of each headteacher to put in place an Accessibility Plan for their own school and for the Local Governing Body to ensure the appropriateness of this plan. The Local Governing Body should monitor progress towards the full implementation its school's Accessibility Plan during each year. Headteachers should ensure that an up-to-date copy of the school's Accessibility Plan can be easily found on their website, and should provide hard copies of the document to anyone requesting this within 10 working days of the request.

2.0 Terms of Reference

- 2.1 For all employees employed by the MAC, either in schools or central staff.
- 2.2 **Meaning of 'Headteacher':**

In this policy "Headteacher" also refers to any other title used to identify the headteacher, where appropriate, or other senior manager delegated to deal with the matter by the headteacher.

3.0 Context

- 3.1 This policy seeks to address the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and to further the aims of our MAC in particular towards ensuring that:

Our Mission

Our school communities are united as the family of God to provide an outstanding Catholic education for all our pupils. With Christ at the centre of all we do, we will inspire every child to be the best person they can be by developing their God given gifts and talents.

- 3.2 This policy sets out the content to be included in each school's Accessibility Plan and the procedures for establishing and reviewing these plans.
- 3.3 It is a requirement of the MAC that headteachers carry out an Accessibility Audit (See example in **Appendix 1**) and put in place three-yearly Accessibility Plans (See template in **Appendix 2**) and review these at least annually.

4.0 Definition (Equality Act 2010)

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities"

5.0 Disabled pupils

- 5.1 The MAC has three key duties towards disabled pupils, under the Equalities Act 2010:
- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
 - to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage; and
 - to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.
- 5.2 The MAC's board of directors ('**Board**') delegates responsibility for adequate management of funding to headteachers to ensure that school premises are fit to teach in, by maintaining and reviewing the upkeep of the fabric of the school. The Board will take reasonable endeavours to apply funding available to it to meet those needs identified by headteachers through this process so far as is reasonably practicable, taking into account the overall needs of the MAC and each school comprised in it and their statutory and other duties.

6.0 The purpose and direction: vision and values

- 6.1 We are a fully inclusive MAC serving the needs of our local communities. We want all our pupils to develop their intellectual, spiritual, and creative talents; through

recognising and encouraging the successes and achievements of our pupils we want them to develop positive self-esteem; we want all our pupils to value and respect the rights and opinions of others. We are proud of being known as a caring MAC with a strong sense of community and we strive to ensure we are fully inclusive. We will continue to regularly review our provision to ensure, so far as is reasonably possible, that all our pupils can access the full curriculum.

7.0 Integration

7.1 It is very important to us as a learning community that all our pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (**SEND**) are integrated in as much of the whole curricular and extra- curricular learning as is practically possible. All staff who teach SEND pupils should receive regular training and up-dated information about the specific pupils needs – the duty to provide this is delegated to our headteachers and it is the duty of the Local Governing Body to ensure that such training is in place and effective.

7.2 Each school must have in place an Accessibility Plan that aims to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the following areas:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the environment to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of the facilities; and
- ensuring that disabled pupils are provided with the appropriate sources of information so that they are not disadvantaged.

7.3 Each school must set out what it already does to achieve the above three aims and its plan to improve accessibility. Examples of such actions include:

i. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum:

Examples: Timetables/class organisation are sympathetically reviewed to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not scheduled in unsuitable rooms; the redevelopment of the building will lead to any pupils who uses a wheelchair being able to access all areas; laptops are currently available for use by some pupils who require support and this includes the potential for the pupil to be provided with a lap-top at home; mentors are provided for pupils who are unable to attend the school through longerterm ill-health.

ii. Improving the physical environment to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

Examples: Width of door frames, contrasting colour of door frames, lighting, signage and disabled toilets.

iii. Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled:

Examples: Pupils and staff can collect/request information in an appropriate format e.g. large print or Braille.

- 7.4 It is a requirement that each school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. The Board accepts that, currently, many of the MAC's buildings have not been constructed and/or designed to modern standards, which makes this difficult, given the pressures on school funding. However, the Board will assist headteachers by allocating, so far as is practicable, sufficient funding to enable identified needs to be met. In addition, headteachers are encouraged to work with providers of external funding for such purposes (such as Coventry City Council and grant aiding bodies) to finance adaptations to buildings identified as being necessary improve accessibility. The MAC's executive staff will assist headteachers in doing so.

8.0 Consultation

- 8.1 All sections of the school community should be involved in the development of school Accessibility Plans.
- 8.2 The SEND coordinator should be consulted about very specific details of the provision.
- 8.3 All pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (formerly a statement of educational need) must have an annual review where pupils and parents/carers are consulted about the provision offered and are able to contribute evaluative commentary.
- 8.4 Parents/carers visits to schools prior to admission also helps us with our planning and information gathering.

9.0 Management, coordination and implementation

- 9.1 The coordination of our school plans will be led through the Local Governing Bodies who have oversight of our sites and all facilities. The headteacher is responsible for its implementation.

10.0 Getting hold of the plan

- 10.1 Hard copies of each school's Accessibility Plan will be available upon request within ten working days and a copy made available on each school's website.
- 10.2 The MAC's Complaints procedure can be utilised for complaints regarding each school's Accessibility Plan and its implementation.

- 10.3 Each school's Accessibility Plan will be monitored by its Local Governing Body and by the MAC as part of its quality assurance procedures. It may also be reviewed by Ofsted as part of the Ofsted inspection process.
- 10.4 We acknowledge that there is a need for ongoing awareness-raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter. Governors or school staff who feel that they have a training need should initially contact their headteacher who will identify appropriate training provision; headteachers should contact the MAC's CSEL for any training needs that they have or when they cannot access training for their staff / governors.

11.0 Impact Assessment

- 11.1 Impact assessment is a systematic approach to the analysis of the effects of a policy. The main mechanism by which schools will assess the impact of this Accessibility Policy will be by bringing together:
- the issues identified through the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents; and
 - the information that is held regarding disabled pupils, staff and parents.
- 11.2 During the lifetime of each school's scheme there will be regular assessment of the impact on disabled people of the current policies. Disabled people will be involved in prioritising needs. Impact assessment will be incorporated into the planned review and revision of existing policies and into the process of developing new policies.

Accessibility Audit Checklist – Cardinal Newman School

Questions taken from various school/local authority templates posted on 'The Key for School Leaders' website.
Questions are primarily based on the Social Model of Disability.

School:	Cardinal Newman Catholic School	Date undertaken:	23.05.24
Undertaken by:	Helen Ruddy & Mat Clark		

Section 1 – Premises & Layout

1=Yes, 2=Almost/working towards, 3= No/not yet started

Question	1	2	3	Notes
Does the size and layout of areas: including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms allow access for all pupils?		✓		Blocks with second floors cannot be accessed by persons with mobility issues. There are very narrow corridors in blocks like Bosco.
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?			✓	Currently auditory but not visual in most blocks apart from toilets, reception and the new canteen building.
Are non-visual guides used to assist people to use buildings?	✓			Changes in surfaces approaching steps, ramps and entrances to buildings.
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well designed?			✓	Buildings are old and have been added to overtime with increasing numbers of students.
Could any of the décor be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?			✓	Blocks look very similar but there is good signage. ASD children can take longer to orientate.
Could any signage be considered confusing or inadequate?		✓		Support is required around orientation.
Are areas to which pupils have regular access well lit?		✓		Internal corridors and offices without natural light can be dark.
Does the layout or untidiness of storage areas or cloakrooms prevent disabled pupils from accessing aids and equipment?	✓			Areas are generally tidy.

Question	1	2	3	Notes
Are steps made to prevent the exclusion of people with disabilities that affect their hearing and vision from arranged events? E.g. considering a room's layout and acoustics, noisy equipment and presentation of material.	✓			Ofsted supports that SEND students are ' <i>fully included in all aspects of school life</i> ' (Feb 24).
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?		✓		We are limited by the size and location of rooms. furniture is specifically sourced for students with needs e.g. stand-up desks, stools with backs etc.
Are quiet/calming rooms available to pupils who need this facility?	✓			Yes there are 2 low arousal rooms that are specific for SEND students. Other rooms such as the library and TLC are also well utilised.
Does the school have a wheelchair accessible toilet?	✓			There are 4 wheelchair accessible toilets on site.

Section 2 – General Access

1=Yes, 2=Almost/working towards, 3= No/not yet started

Question	1	2	3	Notes
Can pupils, staff and visitors who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?		✓		Site is not flat so self-propelling wheelchair users will find this challenging but there are ramps everywhere making the whole site accessible.
Do all corridors have an unobstructed width of at least 1.2m?	✓			Yes – corridors for general use by students are at least this width.
Is each corridor/passageway/aisle wide enough for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre and for other people to pass?		✓		Generally, yes but this would be challenging at times of transition and there would need to be special provision in place.
Is each corridor, etc., free from obstruction to wheelchair users and from hazards to people with impaired vision?	✓			Yes, corridors are free from obstruction.
Is it possible for a person with mobility impairment or using a wheelchair to get through the main entrance door unaided?			✓	Doors are manual and wheelchair users would need assistance.
Are there other alternative entrances suitable for unaided wheelchair/mobility impaired access?			✓	

Section 3 – Teaching, Learning & Curriculum

1=Yes, 2=Almost/working towards, 3= No/not yet started

Question	1	2	3	Notes
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?	✓			CPD focuses on the needs of the current cohort.
Do staff, governors and pupils receive training and education in disability equality issues?	✓			Governors and staff receive regular training. Students would address this in PSHE or tutor programme.
Do staff seek to remove barriers to learning & participation wherever possible?	✓			Ofsted identified that teachers adapted lessons.
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?			✓	They are not designed for disabled students; timetabling of disabled student needs to be well planned.
Do staff recognise, understand and allow for the additional planning necessary for pupils with disabilities to be fully included in the curriculum?	✓			Ofsted have stated (Feb 24): <i>'Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive a high level of support'</i>
Is teaching appropriately differentiated to meet individual needs so that children make good progress?	✓			Ofsted stated (Feb 24): <i>'Teachers adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. The precise curriculum combined with effective teaching are ensuring that all pupils make strong progress.'</i>
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	✓			Teachers have been observed employing a variety of grouping in lessons.
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	✓			SEND students take part in all parts of school life.
Are there a variety of activities, including discussion, oral presentation, writing, drawing, problem solving, use of library, audio-visual materials, practical tasks and information technology?	✓			Observation of teachers demonstrates a wide range of activity in lesson.
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?	✓			Staff are given clear information: <i>'Leaders provide staff with detailed information about pupils' needs and how they can meet these needs in class. This enables these pupils to learn alongside their peers'</i>

Question	1	2	3	Notes
				<i>effectively</i> ' (Ofsted Feb 24), this include allowing extra time for pupils with SEND to access.
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example, some forms of exercise in physical education?		✓		
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	✓			
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	✓			Laptops and reading pens are provided for access.
Are school trips, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	✓			
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	✓			<p>Ofsted stated (Feb 24): '<i>Subjects are well planned and sequenced. Expert teachers regularly check on pupils' learning. Teachers adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. The precise curriculum combined with effective teaching are ensuring that all pupils make strong progress.</i>'</p> <p>Outcomes in 2023 support that SEN students are making strong progress.</p>

Section 4 – Information & Communication and Governance

1=Yes, 2=Almost/working towards, 3= No/not yet started

Question	1	2	3	Notes
Do you provide information in large print, simple language or symbols, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?		✓		Teachers adapt materials and font size for use in lessons. All information for prospective students is provided electronically. This means they can change the size of the font suit their requirements. Braille is not used.
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities which affect their vision, e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	✓			
Do you have the facilities to produce written information in a variety of font sizes?	✓			
Do you make use of RNIB guidelines on producing written information in accessible formats?	✓			We follow the guidelines issued by sensory services which would incorporate best practice, e.g. seating position to lip read, materials produced etc. Students provide good feedback.
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?		✓		More training may be required.
Are the leadership teams and local governing bodies aware of their duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act	✓			Staff are aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments and to provide fair access.
Do school general plans take account of the duty to make reasonable adjustments?	✓			Ensuring leadership roles e.g. school counsellors, prefects etc include SEND students and that there are afterschool clubs and provisions e.g. homework club to meet Sens.
Does the school have an adequate internal complaints procedure?	✓			Complaints procedure is accessible and transparent.

Accessibility Action Plan for Cardinal Newman School

Section	Actions	By whom	Start	Finish	Evidence of achievement/progress
	N/A				