The Catholic High School Chester

Accessibility Policy

Approved By	Governing Body
Category	Inclusion and SEND
Policy Owner	Jo Wraige
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1. Statement of Intent

The Catholic High School, Chester is committed to taking all steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage and works closely with pupils with disabilities, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove any potential barriers to their learning experience. The school is active in promoting an inclusive, positive environment by ensuring that every pupil is given equal opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy school life. The school continually looks for ways to improve accessibility within the school through data collection, parent questionnaires and discussions.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 1996
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- DfE (2015) 'Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years'

This policy will be used in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equality Statement objectives
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

3. Definition

A person is defined as having a disability if they have 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 Equality Act 2010 means that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Staff members will act in accordance with the school's Accessibility Policy at all times.

The headteacher, in conjunction with the governing board or select committee, will create an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving the school's accessibility.

The governing board, or a select committee, will be responsible for monitoring the Accessibility Plan.

The full governing board will approve the Accessibility Plan before it is implemented.

All staff members are responsible for ensuring that their actions do not discriminate against any pupil, parent or colleague.

The headteacher will ensure that staff members are aware of pupils' disabilities and medical conditions where necessary.

During a new pupil's induction, the headteacher will establish whether the pupil has any disabilities or medical conditions which the school should be aware of.

The headteacher is responsible for consulting with relevant and reputable experts if challenging situations regarding pupils with disabilities arise.

The SENCO will work closely with the headteacher and governing board to ensure that pupils with SEND are appropriately supported.

Designated staff members will be trained to effectively support pupils with medical conditions.

5. **Accessibility Plan**

All our pupils, staff and visitors should feel valued, cared for, listened to and encouraged to challenge themselves to be the best they can. It is our aim to reduce and eliminate barriers to the curriculum, fuller aspects of school life and the school environment for pupils and prospective pupils, staff, parents and visitors with a disability. Whilst we are aware that our building is over 60 years old and presents certain restrictions and constraints with regard to disability access, it is our aim to be as inclusive as possible. The Catholic High School, Chester has adopted this Accessibility Plan in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy with the aim of ensuring that our school is socially and academically inclusive, that all pupils have access to a full curriculum and that all pupils are appropriately challenged.

Here, we outline how we will endeavour to promote disability equality for all disabled pupils, staff, parents, governors and visitors to our school, over the next three years.

The Accessibility Plan will be structured to complement and support the school's Equality Statement objectives, as well as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy.

The school's Accessibility Plan demonstrates how access will be improved for pupils with disabilities, staff, parents and visitors to the school within a given timeframe.

The plan has the following key aims:

- To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- To improve and maintain the school's physical environment to enable pupils with disabilities to take advantage of the facilities and education on offer
- To improve the availability and delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities

The intention is to provide a projected plan for a three-year period ahead of the next review date, which will be in July 2026.

If it is not feasible to undertake all the plans / works during the lifespan of the Accessibility Plan, some items will roll forward into subsequent plans.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to measure the necessity of making reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities where practicable.

The Accessibility Plan will be used to advise other school planning documents and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

Both the Accessibility Policy and the Accessibility Plan will be published on the school website.

The school will provide adequate resources for implementing plans, ensuring pupils are sufficiently supported.

6. Equal Opportunities

The school strives to ensure that all existing and potential pupils are given the same opportunities.

The school is committed to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness.

Staff members will be aware of any pupils who are at a substantial disadvantage and will take the appropriate steps to ensure each pupil is effectively supported.

The Accessibility Plan will detail any barriers which are hindering the opportunities for pupils with SEND. The aim of the plan is to take appropriate measures in order to overcome these barriers, allowing all pupils equal opportunities.

Wherever possible, teaching staff will adapt their lesson plans and the curriculum to allow all pupils to reach their full potential and receive the support they need.

The school will ensure that all extra-curricular activities are accessible to all pupils and make reasonable adjustments to allow pupils with SEND to participate in all school activities.

7. Admissions

The school will act in accordance with the Admissions Policy.

The school will apply the same entry criteria to all pupils and potential pupils.

The school will support pupils with SEND by making any reasonable adjustment

necessary during entry exams, e.g. publishing exam papers in a larger font.

The school will strive not to put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at the school.

All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all opportunities available to any member of the school community.

Information will be obtained on future pupils in order to facilitate advanced planning.

Prospective parents of pupils with an EHCP and other identified SEND students have an enhanced transition programme.

The Catholic High School Accessibility Plan 2026-2028

1. Improving access to the curriculum

Current good practice:

- There are established procedures for the identification and support of pupils with SEND at the school
- Teachers deliver lessons that are varied in pace and content and adapted to suit the needs students
- All students follow a broad and balanced curriculum
- Teacher knowledge and understanding about supporting students with SEND is good, with continued CPD for all staff
- Pupil passports outline areas of need and support strategies
- Pupil voice is used to gather information about specific needs and support strategies
- Pupil support plans are put in place to maximise progress across all areas of need
- Resources are tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum, for example large print reading books, coloured overlays and specialist resources e.g. subject specific equipment for VI students
- The school offers a range of supportive interventions within Trinity including ELSA, Social Skills and a Social Emotional Learning Programme
- Barriers are removed to ensure that SEND students are included within enrichment activities
- ICT resources are used to support specific curriculum areas e.g. Sparx Reader, Sparx Maths and Heart Math
- A number of classrooms are designed to minimise distraction, to enable a clear focus on learning
- Our Nurture Group supports students with emotionally based school non-attendance
- Physical Education lessons are adapted, wherever possible, to allow pupils with disabilities to participate in lessons
- Effective, well established communication links promote positive parent - school relationships to remove barriers to learning

Objectives – what needs to be done	How will this be achieved?	Person responsible	When	Cost	Success criteria	Review date
Curriculum is reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all students	Curriculum review by CLLs to ensure that it is accessible for all students Consideration of alternative curriculum to support KS4 learners	SENCO CLLs AHT	By July 2028	Medium	Curriculum continues to meet the needs of all pupils SLT and teaching staff are aware of the accessibility gaps in the curriculum Tracking of SEND and vulnerable students to monitor progress and implement supportive actions	July 2028
Examples of curriculum resources including people with disabilities	New resources developed to incorporate examples of people with disabilities or with consideration of disability Assessment of curriculum plans Development of displays within Trinity to promote equality Continue whole school assemblies on SEND e.g. autism awareness week	CLL SENCO ARC lead	By July 2026	Low	People with a disability are represented as equal throughout school	July 2028
A CPD programme is regularly reviewed to ensure that all staff have an awareness of a range of SEND needs and the impact of these conditions on health, learning	Whole school staff awareness training as appropriate Continue induction programme for new staff to inform school specific procedures to support students with SEND Pupils with healthcare needs will continue to be supported with an Individual Healthcare Plan in line with the 'Supporting Pupils with a Medical Condition' policy and Allergy Policy	All staff SENCO SENCO	Ongoing	Low – medium	Pupils and their families feel supported and their needs understood Pupils with SEND continue to achieve in line with their ability Teachers and support staff are confident in meeting the needs of pupils with healthcare needs	Annually

and emotional well-being, including strategies that can be used to support such pupils	Continue to create pupil passports and where necessary risk assessments, outlining pupil need and support strategies. Observations and learning walks focus on SEND progress and support, including the effective use of TAs Continue to regularly update and share the SEND register and Medical Needs registers (combined to form the Disability Register) Regular reminders of how to support students who have suffered from adverse childhood experiences and trauma	SENCO / TA CLLs, TAs SENCO SENCO TILs			Staff are aware of relevant strategies to supporting pupil progress, including mental health support Updated provision mapper and resources shared effectively with pastoral staff Use of EBSN toolkit to identify and support students who are at risk of low attendance and to support mental health needs Students are able to access education confidently and make good academic progress	
All out of school activities need to be planned in advance to ensure that they are accessible for all pupils with a disability	Ensure all school staff are aware of the duties on schools set out within the Equality Act 2010 and the need to provide reasonable adjustments Review all upcoming out of school activities ensuring that sites are suitable for all children with a disability wherever possible. Consider any reasonable adjustments required to enable pupils with a disability to take part in the out of school activities, including travel requirements	SENCO SLT	Start of each academic year	Low – Medium	No out of school activities are planned without consideration of how pupils with a disability will be included Wellbeing questionnaire Pupils and their families feel included in out of school activities Where it is deemed that this is not possible, it must be shown that a thorough risk assessment has been completed and a suitable alternative is offered	Annual review

2. Improving the physical environment

Current good practice:

- The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff members, parents and visitors have equal access to areas and facilities within the school premises
- The school has 3 toilet facilities suitable for people with disabilities which are fitted with a handrail and an emergency pull cord
- Where entrances to the school are not flat, a ramp is supplied for access
- Wide doors are fitted throughout the school to allow for wheelchair access
- The corridor flooring and lighting is designed to support those who are visually impaired
- Two disabled parking bays provided
- Highlighting tape has been added on all thresholds and steps and yellow paint on edges of pathways for pupils with reduced vision. There is good lighting throughout school, making use of natural light where possible and reducing glare through the use of blinds in classrooms
- All floor spaces are kept uncluttered where possible
- The plumbing and heating are regularly serviced and are not too noisy
- Structured and supportive break time and lunchtime activities are available for students

Objectives – what needs to be done	How will this be achieved?	Person responsible	When will this be completed?	Cost – low, medium, high	Success criteria	Review date
The environment is adapted to the needs of pupils as required	Continued maintenance of site to allow access by students with a physical disability, including ramp access, paving quality, disabled toilet maintenance, textured staircase surfaces and illumination strips and hazards denoted for the visually impaired. Ensure all adjustments to current building is DDA compliant, where achievable Ensure that when future refurbishments are undertaken actions are considered which would improve access for people with disabilities	Site staff All staff	Ongoing Ongoing	Medium Medium	Increased access for pupils with a disability across the whole school, including specialist rooms where applicable Students have equal access to all areas of school	July 2028

	Consideration of lift access to first floor in main building and electronic door pushes Consideration of a kitchen in Trinity to support life skills and preparation for adulthood pathways Staff awareness of seating position, clutter free classroom environment to suit the needs of a student with a physical disability Purchase of specialist equipment to suit the needs of individual students e.g. padded chairs with arm rests and stable padded science stools Evacuation Plans in place for students as appropriate	SENCO	Ongoing through professional advice	High Medium Low	Students are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their confidence and independence Staff aware of how to support students with a physical disability within the school All students with a disability have equal access to all subjects where possible All students are able to safely evacuate in the event of an emergency	Annually
Continued improvement of the quality of environment to suit students with visual impairments	Continued site improvements as detailed on the environmental audit supplied by the VI team.	Site staff SENCO	Annually	Medium – High	School is accessible for students with a Visual Impairment	Annually

3. Making written information more accessible

Current good practice:

- Our website and CMS generated code are compatible with W3C accessibility recommendations
- Modification of materials in large print for students as required
- Regular communication, training and implementation of advice from outside agencies e.g. hearing and vision support services
- Where appropriate, social stories are used to explain school rules to students
- Large print versions of all school information is available by request
- Use of ICT resources to enlarge information and support learning
- Use of ICT to support students with exam access requirements e.g. reader
- Use of 'blue screen' setting on the computer screen where necessary, coloured exercise books, worksheets and overlays for children with visual stress or dyslexia
- Use of reading rulers in class
- Use of dyslexic friendly font by staff
- Visual timetable available for specific students

Objectives – what needs to be done	How will this be achieved?	Person responsible	When will this be completed?	Cost – low, medium, high	Success criteria	Review date
The availability of written information in accessible formats needs to be reviewed, starting with content on the school's website	All information is communicated electronically to enable full access Parents are consulted where applicable with regard to appropriate communication requirements	SENCO AHT	Ongoing	Medium	All students and parents are able to access all information	July 2028
Ensure that written information is accessible to	Continue to provide written information in alternative formats where required using a clear layout, suitable font and colour	Teachers, support staff Site staff	Ongoing	Low	All advice from VI team continues to be actioned with the necessary equipment purchased and training	July 2028

students with visual impairments	Install and maintain window blinds to reduce glare in classrooms Use of specialist equipment to support students in lessons	SENCO.			implemented where necessary Students with a VI make good progress in lessons, in line with their ability	