St Matthew's CE (Aided)
Primary School and
Nursery Centre

Accessibility Policy

'To provide quality education for our children in a happy and secure Christian environment, encouraging pupils to achieve their full potential academically, spiritually and socially'.

2026-2027

St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School

Accessibility Policy 2026-2027

St Matthew's Accessibility

Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that "schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation". According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan will be reviewed every 3 years or where operational needs dictate and approved by the Governing Body.

St Matthew's Primary School aims to treat all stakeholders, including pupils, prospective pupils, staff, governors and other members of the school community favourably and, wherever possible, takes reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a substantial disadvantage. The school aims to work closely with disabled pupils, their families and any relevant outside agencies in order to remove or minimise any potential barriers to learning, which puts them at a disadvantage, but allows them to learn, achieve and participate fully in school life. As part of the school's continued communication with parents, carers and other stakeholders we continually look at ways to improve accessibility through data collection, questionnaires and parental discussions.

The purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to show how St Matthew's Primary School intends, over time, to increase the accessibility of our school for disabled pupils. Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. This Accessibility Policy pays due regard to Government statute and local Telford and Wrekin directives, including the Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014) Part 3 which links into the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2024) and to previous legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995, the SEN and Disability Act 2001, and Telford and Wrekin Schools Accessibility Strategy.

The effect of the law means that "schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools.

The Plan must be reviewed every three years; and the Policy upon legislative or local changes, both must be approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Head.

Aims:

Our Aims are:

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, medical condition or other access needs
- To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils, staff and other members of the school community with a disability, medical condition or other access needs can access education and associated services.
- Improve the delivery of information to pupils, staff, parents/carers and other members of the school community

The Accessibility Plan has been developed and drawn up based upon information supplied by the Local Authority, and consultations with pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school. The document will be used to advise other school planning documents and policies and will be reported upon annually in respect of progress and outcomes.

Public Sector Equality Duty

In accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the school will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between different groups.

Definition of Disability

A person has a disability under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The school recognises that disabilities may be visible or hidden and include neurodiverse conditions, sensory impairments, mental health needs and long-term medical conditions.

What will the Accessibility plan do?

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality and Diversity Policy and the SEND Policy, both of which can be accessed via our website.

St Matthew's Primary School is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

The St Matthew's Primary School Accessibility Plan will evolve to meet the specific requirements of disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable. The Accessibility Plan contains actions to:

1. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This encompasses teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in

2. After-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe.

3. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary – this covers any improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe.

4. Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.

Current good practice

We gather information about any disability or health condition in early communications with parents and carers of children who are new to school. Wherever possible discussions take place with parents prior to the child starting at the school. For parents and carers of children already at the school, we ask parents to keep the school informed of any changes to the information they have provided.

Physical Environment

There are no areas of the school to which disabled pupils have limited or no access at the moment. Disabled pupils and pupils with health conditions participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extracurricular activities present particular challenges, for example lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction impairments, after-school clubs for pupils with physical impairments and school trips for pupils with medical needs,

however all reasonable adjustments are made to support as full an involvement as possible and risk assessments conducted.

Curriculum

Through planning for individual need, we aim to provide as inclusive an approach as practically possible. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, however all reasonable adjustments are made to support as full an involvement as possible. We seek advice and support from the relevant professionals in order to ensure that we have made adequate and reasonable adjustments.

Information will be made available, where required, in alternative formats including:

- Large print
- Easy Read
- Electronic formats
- Translated materials
- Use of assistive technology
- Accessible website content

St Matthews recognises that some pupils may experience mental health needs which meet the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments will be considered to support participation, attendance, learning and wellbeing.

Digital learning resources and online communication platforms will be reviewed to ensure they are accessible to pupils, parents and carers with disabilities wherever reasonably practicable.

Staff Training

Whole school training will recognise the need to continue raising awareness of equality issues for staff and governors to comply fully with the Equality Act 2010.

The Governing Body will:

- Monitor implementation of the Accessibility Plan.
- Review progress against objectives annually.
- Ensure accessibility considerations form part of school improvement planning.

- Ensure sufficient resources are allocated to support accessibility improvements.

Associated Policies

This Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

- Behaviour Policy,
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health & Safety Policy,
- SEND Policy
- School Improvement Plan for Inclusion
- The school will ensure accessibility arrangements support the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, promoting inclusive practice and equal access to learning, development and care opportunities.
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Access Audit

The school is housed in 3 separate one storey buildings. All entrances to the school are either flat or ramped and all have wide doors fitted. The main entrance features a secure lobby and has been fitted with a low reception hatch, this being fully accessible to wheelchair users. Whilst we acknowledge that the size of the school site could potentially present challenges when moving between buildings, we make reasonable adjustments as the need arises. The school does not have any dedicated visitor parking. Visitors to the school use on-street parking, however suitable arrangements for disabled visitors are made when appropriate. There are disabled toilet facilities available in 2 of our buildings. These are fitted with a handrail and a pull emergency cord. The school has internal emergency signage, and escape routes are clearly marked. Personalised evacuation plans are put in place as required.

Management and review

- We consult with other professionals and services when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.
- The Governors and Senior Leadership Team work closely with the Local Authority.
- We work closely with parents to consider their children's needs.
- The policy is reviewed annually and/or as children's needs change.
- The annual review is then shared with staff.
- We make links with other schools to share best practice through regular SENCo network meetings and other communications as needed.
- The school will maintain an Accessibility Statement on its website and work towards compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations, ensuring reasonable adjustments are made where accessibility barriers are identified.

Complaints

St Matthews CofE Aided Primary School, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs. If there are any complaints relating to the provision for pupils with access needs these will be dealt with in the first instance by the Headteacher. The SEND governor or chair of governors may be involved if the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily. The school recognises that children with SEND and disabilities can be disproportionately affected by bullying, online abuse, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, mental health concerns and barriers to communication. Staff will remain alert to these additional vulnerabilities and ensure safeguarding arrangements are adapted where necessary to meet individual needs.

Accessibility Plan 2026-2029

Priority 1: Increase Access to the Curriculum

Objective	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Success Criteria
Ensure all pupils can access a broad and balanced curriculum	Review curriculum plans to ensure differentiation and reasonable	Headteacher / SENDCo	Ongoing	Curriculum accessible to all learners

	adjustments are embedded			
Improve staff understanding of SEND, neurodiversity and disability	Deliver annual training on inclusive practice, adaptive teaching and assistive technology	SENDCo	Annual	100% staff training completed
Support pupils with sensory, physical and communication needs	Ensure specialised resources and equipment are available where required	SENDCo	Ongoing	Pupils' individual needs met effectively
Improve early identification of barriers to learning	Regular review of pupil progress data and support plans	SENDCo / Teachers	Termly	Gaps in achievement reduce
Promote inclusion in extra-curricular activities and educational visits	Accessibility considered during planning and risk assessments	Educational Visits Coordinator	Ongoing	Participation rates increase

Priority 2: Improve the Physical Environment

Objective	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Success Criteria
Maintain safe and accessible routes around school	Conduct annual accessibility audit and address identified concerns	Site Manager	Annual	Audit actions completed
Improve signage throughout the school	Review and update signage using clear symbols and accessible formats	Site Manager	2026-27	Improved navigation for visitors and pupils
Ensure accessibility is considered in all building projects	Include accessibility requirements in refurbishment and maintenance plans	Headteacher / Governors	Ongoing	Accessibility included in all projects
Improve access for pupils and visitors with mobility needs	Review entrances, pathways, parking and classroom layouts annually	Site Manager	Annual	No identified barriers remain unaddressed

Improve access to outdoor learning areas	Assess and adapt outdoor areas where reasonably practicable	Site Manager	By July 2028	Increased accessibility of learning environments

Priority 3: Improve Access to Information

Objective	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Success Criteria
Ensure information can be accessed by all stakeholders	Provide documents in alternative formats on request (large print, electronic, Easy Read, translated formats)	School Office	Ongoing	Requests met promptly
Improve communication with families	Use a range of communication methods, including electronic platforms and accessible formats	Leadership Team	Ongoing	Positive parental feedback
Ensure website accessibility	Review web content for compliance with accessibility expectations and improve where necessary	Website Lead	Annual	Website remains accessible
Support pupils with communication needs	Use visual supports, assistive technology and alternative communication systems as required	SENDCo	Ongoing	Improved pupil engagement
Ensure accessibility information is available	Publish Accessibility Policy and Plan on school website	Headteacher	Annual	Documents available and current

Priority 4: Equality, Inclusion and Safeguarding

Objective	Actions	Lead	Timescale	Success Criteria
Promote awareness of equality and diversity	Deliver assemblies, curriculum opportunities and awareness events	Leadership Team	Annual	Inclusive culture evidenced

Ensure disabled pupils are protected from discrimination	Review policies annually for equality impact	Governors / Headteacher	Annual	No discriminatory practices identified
Strengthen safeguarding for pupils with SEND and disabilities	Ensure safeguarding training reflects the additional vulnerabilities and barriers faced by some pupils with SEND and disabilities	DSL	Annual	Staff understanding evidenced through monitoring
Monitor accessibility concerns	Accessibility included within governor monitoring and school improvement planning	Governors	Termly	Actions regularly reviewed