

St Michael's

Church of England High School

'Jesus grew in wisdom and stature' (Luke 2 : 52)



Accessibility Plan

2021-2025

We will ensure that each individual is valued and achieves success within a caring Christian community. This policy is intended to reflect the Christian values held by the school, its Governors, staff and students and should be considered in the light of this. We intend that this policy, when put into practice day by day, will be another way in which the St Michael's family demonstrate our core Christian values.

St Michael's Church of England High School

Disability Equality Scheme 2021-2025

Reviewed Annually – next review Sept 2025

Signed _____ Governor Signed _____ Headteacher

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Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was a landmark in equality legislation, making it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of his or her disability. It also required organisations to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that a person could take a job, participate fully in their workplace or access services.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 amended the 1995 legislation. It introduced the duty to promote disability equality, which partly parallels the duty to promote race equality introduced under the race relations (Amendment) Act 2002. The duty to promote disability equality contains two elements – a general duty for all public bodies and a specific duty, which applies to a more limited number of specified public authorities, including maintained schools. The Code of Practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission states that the 'overarching goal of the duty is to promote equality of opportunity'. In many cases the disadvantage and discrimination that disabled people experience arise from attitudinal and environmental barriers. The duty to promote disability equality aims to overcome these barriers.

The scheme sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled students, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life, in the wider community and in the non-educational services they might provide.

This scheme builds on our accessibility plan and develops work further to include:

1. A definition of both disability and inclusion that is wider than 'special educational needs' and applies to all vulnerable groups
2. Taking a proactive approach in making reasonable adjustments
3. Work with students, staff, parents, carers
4. Involving the views of disabled students, their carers and staff where appropriate in identifying priority actions with the school improvement plan.

The General Duty

The Disability Equality Duty requires all public bodies, including schools, to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. Schools must have due regard to the following six strands in the operation of their organisation:

- ✓ Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled persons;
- ✓ Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- ✓ Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- ✓ Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- ✓ Encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- ✓ Take steps to take account of a disabled person's impairments, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other persons.

The duties apply to disabled students, staff, parents, carers and members of the public who may use the school's facilities. Schools must identify students, parents, carers, staff and users of their service likely to be considered disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

The main aim of the duty is to promote disability equality. Schools must look at everything on a day to day basis and consider how equality of opportunity for disabled people can be effectively promoted and reflected in all management and policy development.

The Specific Duty

The specific duty requires a designated public authority, which includes schools, to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme. This provides a framework in which to work by including establishing certain measures, action planning and reporting mechanisms necessary to meet the general duty.

The Disability Equality Scheme must include:

- ✓ A statement of how disabled students, parents, carers, staff and disabled members of the community who may use the school's facilities have been involved in using the scheme;
- ✓ An action plan which outlines the steps the school will take to meet the duty;
- ✓ Arrangements for gathering information about performance of the school on disability equality;
- ✓ Arrangements for assessing the impact of policies, procedures and practices of the school on disability equality and improving them when necessary;
- ✓ Details of how the school is to use the information gathered, in particular, in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and preparing subsequent schemes;
- ✓ Reviewing procedures which meet the requirements of the Duty. This means the scheme must be reviewed and reported on every year and revised every three years.

This is a positive duty which builds in disability equality at the beginning of the process rather than making adjustments at the end. It covers all education and associated services for students and prospective students – in essence- all aspect of school life, including the curriculum, teaching and learning, classroom organisation, timetabling, grouping of students, homework, access to school facilities, curriculum and non curriculum trips, school sports, school policies, breaks and lunch times, school meals, assessments and exam arrangements, rewards and sanctions, exclusion procedures, school clubs and activities, admissions, work with other agencies and all school transitions.

Definition of Disability under the DDA

The disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has ‘a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse effects on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

To fall within the Act, a person must be substantially affected by their disability in one of the following capacities:

- Mobility
- Physical co-ordination
- Manual dexterity
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing, eyesight
- Memory or ability to learn, concentrate or understand
- Perception of risk or danger

Some people who do not come within the capacities definition will nevertheless be considered disabled. The definition was therefore amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act:

- All those with cancer or surviving cancer are now included;
- Those with HIV or Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis;
- For a mental impairment, the need for it to be clinically well recognised has been removed.

Disability Equality in Education recommends that students identified with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all students with long term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

Schools have a duty under the legislation even where there is no definite diagnosis as a child could later be diagnosed as having a condition, which meets the definition of disability.

Vision and Values

At St Michael's Church of England High School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled students, staff and those receiving services from the school. We aim to create a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability, confident that this information will be used positively by the school to make reasonable adjustments to meet their individual needs and allow them to participate fully in school life. We will strive to identify and remove barriers to student's achievements in every area of the school.

We will:

- Set appropriate and challenging learning objectives
- Respond to student's diverse needs
- Make all students feel welcome irrespective of race, colour, creed or disability
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure the inclusion of all

The achievement of disabled students will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching, we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the school environment is as accessible as possible. We will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment.

Every member of staff at St Michael's Church of England High School shares the responsibility to remove barriers to learning and ensure access to all activities for our students including those with disabilities.

Information from student data and school audit

St Michael's Church of England High School is an identified resourced school for students with dyslexia and autism. We have a high number of students on our SEN register but a much higher than average number of students with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs). In addition we have disabled students who do not have special educational needs.

Disabled students currently in school includes the following needs:

- ADD
- ADHD
- Arthritis

- Asthma
- Autism Spectrum Condition
- Cerebral Palsy
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Diabetes
- Dyscalculia
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Epilepsy
- Hearing Impairment
- Hirschsprung's disease
- MLD
- Russell Silver Syndrome
- SEBD (Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties)
- Speech and Language Difficulties
- Visual Impairment

Amongst these groups we have students who use wheelchairs for mobility.

Strengths in working with disabled students

St Michael's is committed to removing barriers to achievement and considers the latest strategy for SEN to be a key in achieving this goal. The four strands are:

- Early intervention
- Removing barriers to learning and embedding inclusive practice within the curriculum
- Raising expectation and achievement of students with SEN and disabilities
- Delivering improved partnership with parents

St Michael's Church of England High School works closely with primary schools to ensure all students admitted have needs identified prior to their transfer. A pupil passport is written and distributed to all staff for all students on the SEN register with the student's strengths and weaknesses identified. Strategies are outlined to ensure barriers to learning are reduced and reasonable adjustments are in place for those with disabilities. This is a proactive approach which seeks to anticipate need, rather than respond to difficulties. Students are invited to carry a smaller pupil passport to ensure they can communicate their needs to an adult not known to them, such as a supply teacher.

Transition is a high priority at all key stages. In Year 6-7 transfer work begins in the primary school. Wherever possible we meet with the student's parents or carers and arrange a transition package tailored to their needs. It might also include additional visits for the young person or time allocated in St Michael's for them to begin their transfer early. In all cases we will seek advice from outside agencies and work closely with them to ensure a smooth transition for the young person. Sefton's advisory Inclusion Service is currently working with school to support transition.

At KS3-5, the school works closely with parents and the connexions service to ensure our young people are prepared and supported to move on to the next stage of their learning. Where students have complex needs, individual target setting is used to ensure appropriate support and access.

Robust systems are in place to monitor academic progress and data is regularly reviewed and tracked. This ensures we can track student achievement and identify needs. We can also monitor support procedures and measure their effectiveness. Outside agencies provide excellent support and we work closely with the school's Educational Psychologist and Advisory Teachers to review student progress.

Examination success is important to all our young people and we make relentless efforts to ensure all special concessions and arrangements are in place for students with disabilities. Rigorous assessments are held to ensure students have access to their entitlement for special concessions and so have full access to examination success.

Specifically we have the following provision in place:

- Students with literacy barriers who meet the criteria are awarded readers, scribes or have access to computer technology. They are also encouraged to use their additional time. They sit examinations in small alternative venues which will allow them to have a degree of privacy and security. Separate provision includes increasing invigilation to allow for small group support and 1:1 support. This in turn ensures that these students are able to receive the additional attention they need.
- Students who are eligible for rest breaks are made fully aware of this facility and encouraged to make full use of their entitlement. A private and secure setting is organised to ensure students feel free to use this facility.

- Students with medical needs have full access to the facilities and the support they require to allow these needs to be met during examination periods. Again due consideration is given to ensure the students privacy and dignity is upheld.
- The school is fully accessible for all examination venues. We have lift access to ensure students can access both floors in E Block where examinations are held. Doors are fully accessible for wheelchair access.
- We are aware of the needs of students with VI. Attention is given to ensure that lighting is good to enable full access. Brailled, enlarged or modified papers are organised for VI students. Computer access is available with speech technology for those students who require this facility. Brailers are also available should any student choose this means of communication.
- VI students have access to a range of accessible equipment to ensure they have full access to the examination. This includes speaking calculator, tactile ruler etc.
- The school has access to a loan facility for other additional resources should they be needed, such as a hearing loop.
- All of the provision listed above is used for both internal and external examinations. This provision is used from Year 7-13 and so is custom and practice for our young people.

St Michael's Church of England High School has strong links with Health professionals who attend regular meetings at school and provide advice. Arrangements are in place for the administration of medicines.

The school is committed to meeting the needs of the child and this includes their health needs. We have excellent facilities for those who require disabled access. This includes a physiotherapy room, a hygiene room and electronic hoists.

Students requiring physiotherapy can receive this daily by trained support staff. Support staff are monitored closely within school and by the senior physiotherapist. Moving and handling training is held as required. All disabled students follow a full and balanced curriculum. They are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life including extra-curricular activities and off site visits.

Monitoring Impact of Policy

We recognise that our policies and practices may impact on disabled people and in particular on the educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled students.

We acknowledge that information gathered from a wide range of sources will be required in order to identify the actions we will need to promote disability equality. We will ensure that information is gathered to inform the impact of the school's Disability Equality Scheme. This will be reviewed regularly by identified staff. This will include the following:

- Student Achievement – tracking academic achievement led by Progress Leader
- Analysing attendance - Attendance Co-Ordinator
- Analysing social progress of students with disabilities – pastoral team
- Participation in the wider life of the school and representation in roles and responsibilities such as School Council/Prefects, Awards, etc – pastoral team
- Admissions, transitions and exclusions – Assistant Head/SENDCo
- Rewards and Sanctions – Assistant Head
- Bullying and Harassment incidents – Assistant Head/SENDCo

The Action Plan

We have developed a disability equality action plan to ensure we fulfil our general and specific duties under the Disability Equality Duty. Our existing accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to improve:

- Curriculum Access
- Provision of information for disabled students and parents
- Physical access

We have now incorporated this plan into our overall disability equality scheme action plan.

This action plan has been developed in consultation with disabled people as previously outlined. The action plan began in September 2021 and will run until July 2025. This will be a live document which will be amended as appropriate throughout a four year schedule. It will be monitored and reviewed throughout the year with the working group. Its progress will be reported on at Leadership Meetings, Governors meetings and Curriculum group so that all staff and students can be kept informed of its progress. We will formally report annually on the progress we have made on promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people, we will ensure that disabled people are involved in this process.

Following the four year plan, a new action plan will be written responding to issues identified through our impact assessment and include in our annual reports.

The school development plan, school policies and the SEF will be reviewed regularly to provide evidence that they promote Disability Equality. Disability Equality will be on the agenda for the SLT to review. The action plan will inform the school improvement plan/SEF.

Overall responsibility for the school's accessibility plan lies with the governing body, but improving access for disabled students requires everyone at the school to understand the duties of the DDA and apply this knowledge in their own area of responsibility: the head teacher, class and subject teachers, teaching assistants, welfare staff, the site manager, curriculum managers, administrative staff and governors themselves. St Michael's Church of England High School will ensure that all staff are made aware of the disability discrimination duties as they apply to schools. We will secure the commitment of all staff to removing barriers to learning and increasing access.

The main priorities for the school's plan

Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum

- Adding individual adjustments into future planning, so that there is a gradual incorporation of adjustments into the curriculum
- Building accessibility considerations into all new curriculum development work
- Developing a planned approach to increasing access to different areas of the curriculum over the four year life of the plan
- Ensure the mental health of all students is maintained

Improving the physical environment

- Planned improvements to the physical environment to increase access for disabled students to education and related services
- This is within the classroom or around the school, within and beyond the school day, on or off site.
- Specialist curriculum areas;
- The whole school site including the playground, driveway etc;
- Facilities used beyond the school day;
- Off-site provision;
- A diversity of equipment, materials and consumables
- Sensory room

Information for disabled students and parents

- Plan to make information available in different formats
- Consider student's impairments and preferences expressed by them or their parent – different approaches for different groups
- Plan for more specialised formats and raise awareness on how to access these services.

Timescale	Targets	Activities	Outcomes	By Whom	Resources	Success Criteria	Completed
Already started – target July 2022	Students with ASC will feel fully included throughout all aspects of the school	<p>Improve building work</p> <p>Improve layout of classrooms</p> <p>Students to have designated areas around the school</p>	<p>Improve the inclusion of students with ASC</p> <p>Improve the accessibility for students with ASC</p> <p>Provide an ASC friendly environment and make the school an autism friendly school</p>	LA and School funding		Improved inclusion of students with ASC	
July 2022	To continue to improve social and communication skills	<p>Lego therapy</p> <p>Social stories</p> <p>Comic strip conversations</p> <p>Social and communication groups</p>	<p>Improve communication skills and understanding</p> <p>Improve social skills</p> <p>Pastoral staff to be trained to se social stories and comic strip conversations</p>	<p>ASC Base staff</p> <p>Pastoral Team</p>	<p>Time allocated</p> <p>Lego – charity donation</p> <p>S&L Therapist</p> <p>Time for therapy</p>	<p>More staff will be trained to support students with social and communication difficulties</p> <p>Students will have improved communication skills</p>	
July 2022	Increase access for students with VI and HI	<p>Identify resources in order to enable students</p> <p>Liaise with special services</p>	<p>Introduce or develop access to 1:1 support</p> <p>Training for all staff on specialist equipment</p>	SENDCO Specialist services	<p>Load2Learn</p> <p>Ipad</p> <p>Digital magnifier</p> <p>Sloping boards</p>	VI and HI students are able to access all parts of the curriculum	
July 2022	Increase access for students with learning disabilities	<p>Increase provision to include laptops/iPads with assistive technology</p> <p>Staff to be trained on Quality First Teaching Strategies to support all learners within the classroom</p>	Improve attainment for students with disabilities	School funded	Laptops	<p>Monitored by school data</p> <p>Student voice</p>	

July 2022	Identify students who require social and emotional skills input	Access training support staff Organise extra curricular group	Extra curricular group organised 6 week programme	SEN Department	Access resources	Improved social skills Improved communication skills Improved self-regulation skills Greater access and participation	
Dec 2022	Increase independence of students with learning disabilities	Train students to access ICT technology to increase independence	Students to work independently in the classroom and in exams	School approach	Read, Write, Gold Dragon software Reading Pens	Access to independent learning	
July 2023	To develop data tracking systems for students working below National curriculum levels	Include the use of B Squared assessment tools in all areas of the curriculum, when needed Create an alternative assessment plan for those who may need to be entered in for Entry Level certificates or ASDAN awards	Personalised curriculum planned Alternative accreditations to be explored Heads of Departments to highlight key students	SEND CO Heads of Departments	ASDAN School funding	Improve progress for students and information and identification for parents Allow student participation Improve tracking of student data and progress	
July 2023	Further Enhance student transition programme	Liaise with primary schools, professionals and parents at earliest possible time Plan for post 16 transition from the earliest time possible	Students to have a smooth transition to High School and post 16 provision	SEND CO Parents Primary schools Professionals Career Connect	Time allocated	Students well prepared, confident and comfortable moving on to secondary school or post 16 provision	

Dec 2023	Review fire procedures	To allow full evacuation of building for all disabled students Have alternative evacuation area for ASC students	Health and safety improved	SENDCO Site Manager SLT	New evacuation chairs installed Training delivered for evacuation procedures	Staff and students are confident in the use of procedures Fire orders are written to include these arrangements	
July 2024	Audit participation of disabled students in wider school life	Audit participation in extra-curricular activities, school council, roles and responsibilities	Data base to track levels of participation Possible barriers identified Awareness raised with staff to raise participation	SENDCO Progress leaders PE department Music department Librarian	Time for analysis Information provided by appropriate staff Administrative support to record data	Greater access to participation	
Dec 2024	Review and improve procedures for applying special concessions for examinations. Include students not covered by SEN but identified disabled in consideration of exam concessions	Use identification to gain views of student and parent/carers In house assessments for special concessions Ongoing review to ensure access for all Increase the use of technology to support independence	Increase availability of assessment in house Improve exam success	SEN team	Access appropriate training	Increase accessibility for exam concessions Improve internal assessments for disabled students	
July 2025	Include DES in the PSHE Curriculum	Raise disability issues in PSHE	Increased awareness amongst young people	SLT PSHE Co-ordinator	Time allocated	Raised awareness Positive images of disabled people	

		Promote positive images of disabled people		Dept line manager		Inclusive ethos embedded with students	
		Raise understanding and awareness of DDA with students					
July 2025	To create an environment providing opportunities to develop life skills	Have a resourced room	Increase independence	School resources	Allocated time	Students will leave skills with independent life skills	
July 2025	To improve mental health and well-being of students and staff	To identify specialist therapy for individuals and groups To have a number of trained staff to support staff and students with their mental health	Improve mental health for all	SEN SLT Therapist CAMHS	Mental Health First Aid Course	School to have a mental health first aider Students and staff to have support when needed	
July 2025	Regular in house training programme for staff, parents and students	Parent workshops Student groups – individual, class, year Teacher and TA training	Increase expertise and knowledge of staff and improve inclusion	SEND SLT	Time allocated	Improve participation of parents in school Increase inclusion and expertise in class Increase understanding of students to their peers	