



“I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.”  
John 10:10

## Accessibility Policy and Plan

<b>Policy accepted by FGB on:</b>	<i>22/2/2017</i>
<b>Next review:</b>	<i>Spring 2020</i>
<b>Signed (Chair of Governors):</b>	
<b>Statutory policy:</b> <i>Yes/No</i> <b>On school website:</b> <i>Yes/No</i>	

# **ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

(To be read in conjunction with *Somerset's Strategy for the Accessibility of Disabled Pupils in Schools for which Somerset Local Authority is responsible 2015–2017.*)

## **1. Rationale**

Christ Church C of E First School and Nursery staff and governors are committed to providing an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs.

As a Christian learning community we are committed to ensuring that all children at Christ Church are free to experience “life in all its fullness” (John 10:10) as healthy, happy, confident, socially responsible, well-educated individuals. We recognise that for all children to flourish we must fulfil our planning duty:

- 1) To improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- 2) To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school's curriculum.
- 3) To improve the availability of accessible information for pupils with disabilities.

See the Accessibility Plan (Appendix A) for details.

## **2. Related school policies**

- *Admissions Statement*
- *Equal Opportunities Policy*
- *Equality Duty Policy*
- *Off-Site Visits and Activities Policy*
- *Responding to Learning (Marking and Feedback) Policy*
- *School Behaviour (Pupil Discipline) Policy*
- *SEN Policy*

## **3. Our school ethos and values**

Christ Church is committed to upholding the biblical principle that all human beings are made in the image of God and, as such, should be welcomed, accepted and valued as unique individuals of equal value and dignity.

We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit Christ Church. We promote a positive culture of inclusion, in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

At Christ Church we aim:

- to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability;
- to ensure that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued, welcomed and treated with respect;
- to establish creating an environment characterised by awareness, sensitivity, tolerance, mutual respect and inclusion;
- to promote equality in wider society by tackling discrimination and challenging negative attitudes and stereotypes about disability and accessibility;
- to welcome and support individuals who are not always treated respectfully in wider society;
- to provide all pupils with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity and give them the confidence and courage to speak out against unfairness and injustice.

We recognise that people have different needs and we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating them all the same. When people face particular difficulties they need extra support to help them achieve success and we try to do this for people in our school community.

We also try to make sure that people from different groups are consulted and involved in our decisions, for example, through talking to pupils and parents and carers, and through our School Council.

#### **4. Definitions of disability and discrimination**

Disability is defined by 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."

Discrimination can take place in two ways:

- Treating a person less favourably for a reason relating to their disability.
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a person with a disability is not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

#### **5. Responsibilities of the Local Authority**

Section 10 of the Equality Act requires each local authority to prepare an accessibility strategy for schools for which it is responsible.

#### **6. Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

Section 10 of the Equality Act states that a school's Governing Body is ultimately responsible for: (a) ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of sex, age,

disability, race, religion or belief, sexual identity or social status, and (b) ensuring the school has an accessibility plan.

With specific regard to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils with a disability the Governing Body will:

- Take all reasonable steps to avoid any discrimination and be able to demonstrate in defence of a claim what steps have been followed.
- Check that the school is continually reviewing its policies and procedures to ensure that pupils with a disability are not placed at a disadvantage.

## **7. Overall planning duty**

### **7.1. To increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school's curriculum.**

At Christ Church we aim to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum by ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options, and staff information and training.

We acknowledge that the DfE expects schools to plan to progressively improve access to the curriculum for all pupils with disabilities, although many adjustments to access will be dependent on individual needs and may be provided through the SEND framework.

At Christ Church, individual Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) will include accessibility strategies wherever they are relevant to the needs of individual pupils.

### **7.2. To improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided.**

Christ Church is a fully accessible flat site with no stairways, steps or lifts. Where there are slopes these have a handrail, and lines marked on the ground indicate changes in gradient for people with a visual impairment. The disabled toilet includes a full hoist. The front entrance doors into the foyer by the school office are powered and can be opened using large, accessible, low-level button pads. Corridor and classroom exterior doors are mag-locked for security and ease of access and exit. All interior doorways are sufficiently wide to be wheelchair accessible.

As required, Christ Church will provide pupils with physical aids to assist learning, e.g. enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept keyboards, switches, specialist desks and chairs, and portable aids for children with motor coordination difficulties and poor hand-eye skills, such as extra-robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

The provision of a special piece of equipment or extra assistance will be made through the SEND Code of Practice and, to a lesser extent, through the planning duty which applies to all schools. The distinction between auxiliary aids and services provided through the SEND route and those provided under the planning duty is that the SEND duties relate to the individual, whereas the planning duty relates to the provision of aids or services in terms of the population (and future population) of the school. For example, a pupil with visual impairment might have low-vision aids provided through their EHCP but the school might, as a general measure, provide blinds and adjustable lighting through the planning duty.

### **7.3. To improve the availability of accessible information for pupils with disabilities.**

At Christ Church, wherever it is helpful to do so, we will make information normally provided by the school in writing to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available in an appropriately accessible format to pupils with a disability. This may include Braille, audio tape and large print, and also the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or sign language, through a recognised symbol system or ICT. This information will be made available within a reasonable time frame and take account of the pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats.

## **8. Life in all its fullness**

We aim to include all pupils, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this will include the following:

- Having high expectations of all pupils.
- Finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music and drama.
- Planning out-of-school activities, including all school trips and excursions, so that pupils with disabilities can participate.
- Setting admissions policy and criteria which do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities or treat them unfairly.
- Devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities.
- Planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities.
- Raising awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through a programme of training.
- Providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user-friendly.
- Using language which does not offend in all its literature and make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language.

- Examining our library and reading books to ensure that there are examples of positive images of disabled people.

#### **9. Monitoring procedures**

We recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning. We will monitor:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Effects of pastoral strategies
- Rewards and sanctions
- Exclusions
- Response to teaching styles/subject
- SEN Register
- Setting and groups
- Impact of “mastery” approach to teaching and assessing in English and Maths
- Progress and attainment
- Extracurricular activities
- Homework
- Selection and recruitment of staff
- Governing Body representation
- Parental involvement in the life of the school (representation of PTFA, attendance at parents’ evenings, in the classroom, school productions, sports day, fetes, etc).

#### **10. Accessibility Policy and Plan review**

Annual review by the Governing Body in conjunction with the SENCO.

## **APPENDIX A: CHRIST CHURCH C OF E FIRST SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2016–17**

Note: There are very few parts of the premises and grounds at Christ Church C of E First School to which disabled pupils have limited or no access. This Accessibility Plan focuses on those areas which need ongoing maintenance or can be further enhanced.

<b>1. Improving access to the physical environment</b>				
<b>Targets</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
School staff and governors are aware of the access needs and issues of disabled children.	<p>Individual children’s access needs will continue to be detailed in their Passports and/or EHCP/ Annual Review form.</p> <p>Where required, these children will continue to need an EVAC PEEP (evacuation plan in the event of an emergency).</p> <p>The Physical Impairment and Medical Support Service from Somerset County Council will provide information and training on general and specific access needs as required.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>SENCO</p> <p>SENCO</p> <p>SENCO</p>	<p>All staff aware of all pupils’ access needs. Appropriate paperwork in place to meet access needs.</p>
Signage and external access continues to be suitable for visually impaired people	<p>Monitor and maintain high visibility yellow paint stripes on edge of all external changes in gradient or level.</p> <p>Seek advice from the Vision Support Team on appropriate colours/styles for fire exit and evacuation signs (including large print and Braille if required).</p> <p>Replace external light bulbs immediately when “blown”.</p> <p>Maintain wheelchair accessible toilet with fixed hoist (servicing required) and changing facilities.</p>	<p>Ongoing premises repair and maintenance</p>	<p>SENCO, Inclusion Support Service, School Business Manager, Site Manager and H&amp;S Governor</p>	<p>Visually impaired people feel safe in the grounds.</p> <p>Access around the site easier for all.</p> <p>Premises repair and maintenance has a high priority and is understood by all staff and governors as an essential part of the school’s “Accessibility Plan”.</p>

## 2. Improving access to the curriculum

Targets	Actions	Timescale	Responsibilities	Outcomes
Continue to develop confidence of staff in differentiating the curriculum and ensuring access to learning for all pupils	Continued training for staff on areas including dyslexia, ASD, visual impairments, hearing impairments and attachment disorder, as required.	Staff meetings 2016–17	SEN Support Services, SENCO & Headteacher	Raised confidence of staff in strategies for differentiation and increased pupil participation.
Ensure TAs have access to specific training on disability issues	TAs to access relevant CPD courses each year in relation to their role: a) Training in feeding, manual handling, etc. is kept up to date. b) Staff will continue to receive training in low and hi-tech communication aids and STC to support access to the curriculum. c) Additional training in specific strategies will continue to be delivered, e.g. delivering touch typing training, adapting visual resources (including computers), adapting computing equipment/software, electronic reading resources and hearing aid maintenance.	Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing	SENCO  SENCO  SENCO	Raised confidence of TAs in strategies for differentiation and increased pupil participation.
Ensure pupils with disabilities can participate equally in after school activities	Survey participation in after-school clubs. Liaise with parents to enable children to attend.	Ongoing	SENCO & Headteacher	Children with disabilities are confident and able to participate equally in out-of-school activities.
Ensure all pupils are able to participate in external visits	Continue to risk assess destinations or activities to ensure accessibility is good and the venue is suitable.  Maintain a good staffing ratio on external visits to allow for additional support as needed.	As needed	Class teachers/ visit coordinator	Children with disabilities are fully included in external visits.

<b>3. Improving access to information</b>				
<b>Targets</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>
Review information to parents/carers to ensure it is accessible	<p>Ask parents/carers about access needs when child is admitted to school.</p> <p>Review letters home to check reading age/Plain English.</p> <p>If required, produce newsletter in alternative formats.</p> <p>Where needed, parents supported to read essential letters.</p>	Ongoing	Administrators SENCO & Headteacher	All parents accessing information in format that they can access, e.g. large print, Braille or being supported to access it.
Continue to ensure inclusive discussion of access to information in annual reviews/parents' evenings	As part of the review of every child's Learning Passport at three yearly reviews, parents/carers and children are asked about how their needs can best be met and this is updated on their One Page Profile.	Ongoing	Class teachers SENCO	Staff more aware of pupils' preferred methods of communication.
Increase support for parents of children with disabilities	Continue to engage parents of disabled children when reviewing the SEND "Local Offer" for the school.	Jan 2017	SENCO	Increased confidence of parents of children with disabilities and those with SEN to support their children's education.
	Continue to signpost parents to appropriate services and support groups available in the community.	Ongoing	SENCO	
	Routinely distribute information from SENDIAS or the Parent Carer Forum.	Ongoing	Headteacher/ office staff	
	Include information on SEN/disability issues on school website, noticeboards and in newsletters.	Ongoing	Headteacher/ office staff	