

# ST AGNES

## Catholic Primary School

*With Jesus beside us, we do our best*



# Accessibility Plan

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## Our Vision and Values

At St. Agnes we believe that although we are all very different we have a way of living, behaving and doing things that allow us to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our school motto is: **With Jesus Beside Us We Do Our Best to:**



### Believe

We are all valued in God's family and the school family. We **believe** in ourselves and in our abilities.

### Persevere

When things get difficult we will **persevere** so that we will grow stronger, realising we can turn to each other and God.

### Contribute

We will **contribute** to the life of the school, the parish, the local community and the wider world to which we all belong.

*By doing these we will:*

### Achieve

By being the best we can be, we will **achieve** in making a difference to others and living as God would want us to.

## Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- 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;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils;

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of St. Agnes School to increase access to education for disabled

pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled;

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary. Included is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

## **1A: St. Agnes School Vision and Values**

St Agnes School is committed to removing the barriers in every area of school life. We believe in equal opportunities for all and stand by our mission statement 'With Jesus beside us we do our best'. Our definition of disability is as follows:

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

The staff at St. Agnes School have a shared belief in developing a plan which can support our vision for all disabled pupils. Through the involvement of every staff member in developing our accessibility plans, we have created a sense of

ownership of the values underpinning the requirements set out by the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act).

**The school has set the following priorities for the development of the vision and values that inform the plan:**

- To develop a more inclusive curriculum enabling all disabled pupils to participate
- To improve the physical environment of the school
- To disseminate information about disabled access and inclusion to parents, pupils and the wider community

**1B: Pupil Data and School Auditing**

St. Agnes School currently has 44 pupils on the SEN register, 10 of whom have EHCPs. Amongst the children 31 have communication and interaction difficulties, 15 have cognition and learning difficulties, 24 have sensory and or physical difficulties and 25 have SEMH. Many are comorbidities.

Our existing provision is able to provide:

- Wheelchair access to the school corridor, staff room and to both school halls
- A disabled toilet and shower room
- Floor level access to the school building, playground and car park
- Application forms which inform of possible need and allow us an opportunity for planning individual access needs for pupils and parents
- Curriculum differentiation allowing us to meet individual education needs

- Significant access to external services and agency support
- Detailed information sharing meetings amongst staff, governors and parents
- Special arrangements for SAT testing, as required
- Resource purchasing according to need
- Provision mapping and risk assessment forms prepared and shared with pupils, parents and necessary staff or external agencies
- TA classroom support in all classrooms including access to voice activated software for dictation purposes on named lap tops.
- Targeted Sen Teaching Assistant support to named individuals

In addition to current provisions, we hope that our accessibility plan will allow us to cater further for children with identified disabilities. In particular, the growing needs of children with hidden disabilities must take priority.

In a climate of inclusive provision, we at St. Agnes School are very aware of the possible future implications for disabled pupils. Staff are able to develop a good understanding of the needs of disabled children in our school and are supported through both internal and external training and/or the current SEN and Inclusion coordinator. In an audit of current provisions, we assessed our strengths to be:

- High levels of support staffing

- Motivated and highly trained support staff
- Cooperative and supportive staff relationships with opportunity to share good practice
- Regular and responsive agency contacts
- Regular and thorough attainment reviews to monitor pupil progress
- Good parental partnerships
- Attainment is high for all groups and progress significant by the end of Key Stage 2
- The school is on one level and can be easily accessed by the front door
- Our ethos is fully inclusive and strives to make all children, parents and staff feel valued
- Diversity is respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here

As a staff, we feel we must improve upon:

- Providing access to off-site activities (e.g. swimming) for children with global needs, particularly where the child has physical disability needs
- Providing access to classrooms from the playground
- Install handrails in the Foundation classrooms
- Ensure minimum width of doors – 80cm
- Provide easier accessibility for children with Sensory Needs to sensory facilities.

St. Agnes School has established routines which impact upon disabled pupils. In order to monitor key needs, such as allergies, medical conditions or impairments, the staff room has a large board which highlights key children across the school. This enables staff at all levels, as well as adults who visit our school, to recognise key children and identify possible need. This has been particularly successful for our children who have

significant medical needs, such as diabetes, and who need an adult to respond to them very quickly in an emergency.

Medical needs are addressed through the office and pupils are aware of where to go for medicine administration. Foundation and Key Stage 1 classrooms monitor and administer 'asthma' medicines and, where necessary, relevant staff have been trained in the use of asthma pumps. All classrooms have a first aid kit and both Key Stages have a dedicated and regularly retrained first aider. Currently, Nursery has a qualified nursery nurse to support provision. The school nurse used to make more regular visits. Information from visits were highlighted to all staff, and has enabled key staff in the past to be trained in dealing with children with epilepsy and diabetes. She had also provided relevant training to both adults and children across the school.

**The school has set the following priorities for the development of information and data to inform the plan:**

- To set up a regular parent and carer link in order to collect and disseminate information
- To maintain and update the current disability and medical 'information board'
- To maintain regular auditing amongst staff members
- To consider how to audit pupils at all levels of the school

### **1C: Consultations for Planning**

In order to develop an effective plan, we have accessed the views and aspirations of the school staff, a key parent



group, the governing body and through the advice of Richard Reiser, disability adviser to the borough of Tower Hamlets.

**The school has set the following priorities in respect of consultation on the plan:**

- Be more proactive in seeking advice/views from a wider scope of the school community – to include parents and children
- Improve provision in the physical environment e.g. to allow access from classroom to playground
- Refocus the curriculum with the aim of celebrating disability month in December
- Liaise with Maria Martin, previously of the Specific Learning Difficulty Team to support provision for those who are significantly behind their peers in English and Maths
- To work with a virtual teacher to support LAC (Looked After Child) children when appropriate
- To provide a play therapist to support Social and Emotional Mental Health.
- To use staff trained by Rainbows to endeavour to meet children's emotional needs who have experienced loss.

## **2A: Inclusive Disability Practice within the School Curriculum**

In order to develop curriculum access for disabled pupils, we have chosen to use the school development plan (SDP) to

lead our focus. Our SDP currently highlights our vision for improved success in writing. For our disabled pupils, we will therefore ensure that disabled pupils have the necessary resources, including adults, to support them in language development. Laptops, stored in the foyer, that have speech recognition set up are 06, 07, 38, 53 and 54. They are accessed through MS Word, the Windows button is pressed with R to start the speech recognition function.

Successful individual and group programmes are targeted to achieve specific needs and goals, including ICT programmes such as IDL aimed at word and sentence level objectives, mathematics development, and developing general ICT skills.

In 'formally' taught lessons, disabled pupils have the right to expect access to all areas of the current National Curriculum. High expectations are set by all staff within the school to ensure that resources are deployed in an effective manner enabling this to be possible. We also employ a speech and language therapist and play therapist to support children who may need to develop additional key skills and have the support of outside agencies as and when they are required. These include Phoenix Outreach Team, The Specific Learning Difficultly Team, The Visual Impaired Unit and The Occupational Therapy Team. We have also through a consortium of schools employed an Educational Psychologist (E.P.) to work two days a week in school every third week.

A successfully planned approach might include:

- the deployment of appropriate learning support staff
- pupil groupings
- use of peer support
- additional physical resources
- access to external agency advice and expertise

- specific timetabling of activities

In addition, curriculum access must also include informal learning time. Our school therefore aims to provide support in recreational activities, movement around the school, special event access, school trips and after-school clubs

**The school has set the following priorities for increasing curriculum access:**

- To ensure that all pupils have access to a wide and varied curriculum
- To ensure that all staff are aware of individual pupils needs and ways in which they can be effectively supported across the curriculum
- To continue to monitor resourcing for ICT
- Investment in training for staff and increased liaison with multi-agency teams

## **2B: Physical Environment Improvements**

Changes to our physical environment might include:

- improvement in lighting, signage, colour contrast, acoustics, flooring
- Improvement to EYFS Setting

- changes to common areas such as the playground
- provisions for ramps and doorway access
- provisions of specialised furniture and equipment

In recent times, the school building has had significant adjustment enabling us to offer a more accessible site. We now have good access to the playground and can offer an independent washing and changing facility. New resources, such as individual workstations or ICT equipment, have been bought through the SEN budget or borrowed from THATLL (Tower Hamlets Lending Library based in Stephen Hawking School). The EYFS has had a major rebuild which has extended their setting. A new Sensory Room has been built to support early needs. There is greater linkage between Nursery and Reception. The Reception playground has been revamped and a sink placed outside. In all new building work, including our new hall, disability access has been considered and, where possible, accounted for.

However, as a school we are very aware of the changing environment and of the inclusive practices we must now undertake. In view of the hearing impaired children currently within our provision, an acoustic audit of all areas would be a necessary procedure. Plans are in place to enhance the sound in the hall by installing acoustic panels. Further areas to address might include signage around the school and doorway access to classrooms, which are currently un-ramped.

**The school has set the following priorities for physical improvements to increase access:**

- To provide ramping for all classrooms via the main playground

- To audit key signage needs around the school
- To organise an acoustic sound test for key areas
- To further develop the EYFS Unit creating a space for children/parents to work/meet.

## **2C: Access to Information for Disabled Pupils and Parents**

Access to the information provided for pupils who are not disabled may be improved for particular groups of children by using different approaches. These approaches might be as simple as providing a 'simplified' version of the information or may need access of relevant support services, such as writing letters in Braille.

Information for disabled pupils and parents, unable to access that of their peers, might include:

- handouts
- visual timetables
- worksheets
- notices
- information of events

and might be provided in the format of:

- Braille
- large print
- simplified language
- audio-tape
- video-tape

- sign language
- a symbol system

**The school has set the following priorities for providing information for disabled pupils:**

- To ensure that all staff are aware of individual needs in accessing information for pupils and/or parents and carers
- To investigate the Dupal (enlarged text) programme for accessible website text

### **3A: Management, coordination and implementation**

The Governing Body takes responsibility for our school accessibility plan and, through regular meetings, is able to set a clear direction for development. The plan will have a three year time span, after which it will be revised and reviewed by all current contributors to include pupils, parents and external agencies. These agencies will also have an opportunity to evaluate the success of previous targets.

In order to implement our plan, we have set the following guidelines:

**Lead professionals responsible for plan:** B. McDaid, Luke McDonald, (Chair) SCABAL (Building Consultants)

**Time scale of plan:** 3 years

**Resources to Access:** LC VAP (funding for capital projects available through the diocese of Westminster; THATLL(Tower Hamlets Lending Library based in Stephen Hawking School). ; Delegated budget;

## **Review mechanisms: Annual Governor Meetings**

### **3B: School Plans**

The school makes its accessibility accessible in the following ways:

- school website
- availability in large print, as required
- readable and simplified language, where possible

**The school has set the following priorities for making its plan available:**

- To assess needs of those who might need or want access to the document and address key issues
- Investigate the Dupal (enlarged print) programme

Targets	Persons responsible	Monitoring	Time/Resources	Outcomes
To set up a parent and carer forum to disseminate and collect information	I Baranco B McDaid	B McDaid	Termly - ongoing	Opportunities for parents to meet and share experiences and gather information.
To maintain and update the 'disability and medical' board	M Flores A Fields S Watts	B McDaid	Yearly - ongoing	An updated record of medical needs – easily accessed and maintaining staff awareness.
To deliver annual audits to	B McDaid P Shields Governing	B McDaid	Autumn Term	Awareness of needs within the school are

pupils and staff	body			identified and responded to.
To ensure adequate medical supervision on trips	B McDaid K Hooper	B McDaid	Termly - ongoing	2 members of staff on a rota basis to go on a trip for support.
To create a play therapy room for one day a week.	Melisa McClean	B McDaid	Autumn 2022	Investigate use of space in EYFS Unit. Cost provision and make a judgement.
To audit signage around school	P Shields I Barranco	I Barranco	Spring 2023	Signage to be adequate across the school building.
To test the acoustics of key areas around school esp new hall	P Shields I Barranco	B McDaid	Autumn 2022/Spring 2023	Discover areas with poor acoustics. Cost provision and make a judgement.
To assess disability needs of parents regarding the transmission of information	B McDaid A Shields	B McDaid	Autumn 2022	Make reasonable adjustments to transmission of information where possible
To consider adjustments to external area of Reception Class	B McDaid P Shields SCABAL	B McDaid	Spring 2022	External area more accessible.
To arrange a visit from John McCorkell, a disabled spokesman	J McCorkell	B McDaid	Autumn 2022	Whole school awareness raised on the issues affecting disabled



				people and the need for inclusion.
To continue to develop awareness of disabilities e.g. December	All staff	B McDaid	Autumn 2022	Whole school awareness raised on the issues affecting disabled people and the need for inclusion.
To ensure early identification of need	B McDaid P Shields L Wilcox – shared SENCo	B McDaid	Autumn 2022	The needs of individual pupils will be identified quickly and an effective response made to support their curriculum.
To investigate the use of the Dupal text	A Shields B McDaid	B McDaid	Spring 2023	The website will be more accessible to all.