



Disability Access Policy and Accessibility Plan

Approved by: LAC

Last reviewed on: March 2022

Next review due by: 2025

St Thomas More School Accessibility Plan 2022 -2025

1. Purpose:

- 1.1 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that St Thomas More School executes its statutory duties regarding the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) and meets the requirements of the Equality Act (2010).
- 1.2 The policy will ensure that:
 - those pupils with a disability receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum and appropriate inclusion in all school activities
 - pupils with a disability are valued equally with all other pupils and will be enabled and encouraged to develop their potential to the full
 - the organisation of the school will ensure an appropriate support framework to respond to pupil's identified needs.

2. Policy:

- To ensure, wherever possible, that disability will not prevent a young person from selection if he/she would have been selected under the school admission policy
- To respond to the individual needs of potential new admissions by seeking to implement further reasonable adjustments where that is possible
- To make St Thomas More School as accessible as possible for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities.

3. Facilities:

- Wheelchair access is available to all buildings and there are lifts in the science block and Marian, where wheelchair access is not possible (first and second floors of main buildings) lessons will not be timetabled in these rooms for wheelchair users.
- Disabled toilets. There are disabled toilets on the ground floor of the Marian, main teaching block and Emmaus.
- In the event of a fire evacuation chairs (evac chairs) are available for students and staff with mobility issues. A number of staff have been fully trained and all staff have been made aware of procedure regarding the use of them.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 The ultimate responsibility for SEND/access issues rests with the Local Academy Committee and the Head Teacher.
- 4.2 In the discharge of their duties the Governors will ensure:
 - Due regard has been taken of the Code of Practice and the Equality Act when undertaking its responsibilities.
 - Funding is made available to support this policy.
 - The effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

4.3 The SENCo will act as Designated Disabilities Advisor and will:

- Provide information and guidance to all students with disabilities
- Ensure that staff are aware of individual students and their access requirements with regards to modification/alteration of the physical classroom environment
- Ensure that staff are trained to undertake any procedures required to ensure safe and easy access to, and egress from, all areas of the school for individuals with mobility issues
- Foster positive attitudes amongst staff and students towards people with disabilities.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

5.1 The Local Academy Committee are responsible for ensuring the school adheres to this policy and that this policy is periodically monitored and reviewed.

St Thomas More School

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

1. We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
2. St Thomas More School plans, over time, to increase the accessibility of provision for all pupils, staff and visitors to the school. The Accessibility Plan will contain relevant actions to:
 - Improve access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.
 - Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits. It also covers the provision of specialist aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum.
 - Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame.
5. Attached are Action Plans, relating to these key aspects of accessibility. These plans will be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis. New Plans will be drawn up every three years.
6. We acknowledge that there is a need for ongoing awareness raising and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter.
7. The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this first Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The audit will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.
8. The Plan will be monitored through the local academy Committee

St Thomas More School Accessibility Plan 2019 - 2022

Improving the Physical Access at St Thomas More School

Item	Activity	Timescale	Cost £
Fire alarms	Include visual as well as auditory function in older parts of the building	2022-24	Quotes to be obtained
Lift in main block	Investigate viability of installing a lift in the main teaching block	2022-25	Quotes to be obtained

St Thomas More School Accessibility Plan 2022 -2025

Area	Accessibility Review/Audit
Access & Egress	Access & Egress is provided by steps and ramps to all buildings. Disabled parking spaces are provided at the closest point in the carpark to the buildings. Access to the first and second floors of the main teaching block is not possible for wheelchair users but no lessons are timetable for these areas for such students. There are no specialist teaching facilities on these floors (e.g. science labs).
Internal doors	All internal doors meet the minimum width of 800mm with many being 900mm Corridors are served by double fire doors which are held open unless the fire alarm sounds at which point they will close. Most doors have vision panels in both the top and bottom half of the doors so wheelchair users have visibility through them.
Lighting	Much of the building is served by large windows to provide plenty of natural light. The internal lighting is currently undergoing an upgrade to LEDs. Some areas are still served by T5 lighting which is sufficient, but will be improved.
Corridors	The width of corridors varies from 1500mm – to 2550mm
Visual Contrast	There is good visual contrast between the wall colour and the floor colour and also between the stair coverings and the stair nosings on all stairs and external steps.
Accessibility btw floors	Lifts are available in the Marian and science blocks. There is no lift in the main teaching block so access to the first and second floors of the main teaching block is not possible for wheelchair users but no lessons are timetable for these areas for such students. There are no specialist teaching facilities on these floors (e.g. science labs).
Washrooms	We have an accessible washroom in 3 locations.
Emergency Situations	In the case of an emergency we have evac chairs stationed on the three main stairwells and staff trained in their use. There is an emergency pull cord in each washroom which sounds an alarm.

	PEEPS are put in place for all students and staff who may need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation and all visitors are asked on arrival if they would require additional assistance and a plan is put in place
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Improving the Curriculum Access at St Thomas More School

Target	Strategy	Outcome	Timeframe	Achievement
Training for teachers on adaptations to lessons/materials	Training to support the already established use of student profiles	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled children's needs with regards to accessing the curriculum.	Ongoing	Increase in access to the National Curriculum. Needs of all pupils are met
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum	Review the specific needs for pupils living with a disability, in terms of basic daily living skills, relationships and future aspirations.	Teachers are aware of the relevant issues and can ensure that this group has equality of access to life-preparation learning. The use of other professional partners has been made available.	Ongoing	Needs of all pupils are met. Good progress made by all learners
All out-of-school activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Review all out-of-school provision to ensure compliance with legislation	All out-of-school activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements	Ongoing	Increase in access to all school activities for all disabled pupils
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process in classrooms within which students with disabilities have lessons.	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils. All pupils are included in the learning	Ongoing	Increase in access to the National Curriculum. Needs of all pupils are met
Training for Awareness Raising of Disability Issues	Provide training for governors, staff, pupils and parents Discuss perception of issues with staff to determine the current status of school	Whole school community aware of issues relating to Access	Ongoing	Society will benefit by a more inclusive school and social environment. Diverse needs of all pupils are recognised and celebrated.

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Improving the Delivery of Written Information at St Thomas More School

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	ACHIEVEMENT
Availability of written material in alternative formats	The school convert written information into alternative formats as required	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes as required	Ongoing	Delivery of information to pupils improved
Make available school prospectus and other information for parents and carers on website and in paper format	Review current school publications and promote the availability in different formats	All school information available for all	Ongoing	Delivery of school information to parents and the local community improved
Review documentation with a view of ensuring accessibility for pupils with visual impairment	Customised materials as required	All school information available for all as required	Ongoing	Delivery of school information to pupils & parents with visual difficulties improved.
Ensure that parents and carers receive information from school in a format that meets individual needs	As part of the admissions process parents will be asked if they need materials in a particular format	Parents and carers will receive information in the medium of their choice	Ongoing	School is more effective in meeting the communication choices of parents and carers. Staff will be aware of preferred format for communications amongst parents/carers
Ensure that all school communications use plain English	School operations manager to check all communications to parents/carers before distribution	All communications will be easy to read and have clarity of purpose	Ongoing	Parents and carers will be clear as to purpose of communications