

# St Francis Church of England (Aided) Junior School



## Accessibility Plan

### Our Vision

Through our planned curriculum, enrichment activities and school ethos, we aspire to develop our children into responsible global citizens who will be able to enjoy fully our diverse world and have many choices and opportunities open to them.

We hope that by Year 7 our children are able to shine their light further into the community (rather than hiding it), while maintaining a strong sense of self-identity, valuing who they are and showing humility and endurance in lifelong learning.

We take inspiration from Matthew 5: 14-16:

<sup>4</sup> “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Written: May 2018

Reviewed: October 2022, March 2024

Review: March 2025

Approved by: Governing Body / Curriculum Committee

## **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

# **St Francis' CE (Aided) Junior School**

## **2024**

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:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) 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 must be reviewed every three years and approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Headteacher. The Plan will form part of the School Development Plan and will be monitored by the Headteacher and evaluated by the relevant Governors' committee. The current Plan will be appended to this document.

We are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning which reflects our Christian Ethos. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

1) The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10 regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.

2) St Francis CE (Aided) Junior 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 education, 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.

3) Our Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for 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 relevant and timely actions to 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.

4) This Accessibility Plan has been drawn up in consultation with the Local Authority, pupils, parents, staff and governors of the school and covers the period from May 2018- September 2020.

5) 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.

6) St Francis' CE (Aided) Junior 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; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of the Equality Act 2010). 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.

We aim to ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with new parents and carers. For parents and carers of children already at the school, we collect information on disability as part of our ongoing discussions and we have an open and genuine relationship with our parents.

Disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Some aspects of extra-curricular activities present particular challenges, for example: lunch and break times for pupils with social/interaction impairments, after-school clubs for pupils with physical impairments, school trips for pupils with medical needs.

There are no parts of the building which children or adults with physical impairments cannot access.

There are few areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils could have limited or no access. Some areas of the curriculum present particular challenges, for example: PE for pupils with a physical impairment, science and technology for pupils with a visual impairment, humanities for pupils with learning difficulties. Other issues affect the participation of disabled pupils, for example: bullying, peer relationships, policies on the administration of medicines, the provision of personal care, the presence or lack of role models or images of disabled people, in effect, all the school's policies and procedures, written and unwritten. We are a communication friendly environment and key staff are trained in a variety of communication ways, such as ELKLAN. Inclusion is at the heart of our practice.

7) 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.

8) 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.

9) The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- Curriculum
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Staff Development
- Health & Safety (including off-site safety)
- Inclusion
- Special Needs and Disabilities Information Report and Policy
- Behaviour Management
- School Improvement Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- School Brochure and Mission Statement
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

- Staff Handbook and Code of Conduct

10)The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. 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.

The school teaching areas are on a level ground floor with wide corridors and several access points from outside. The hall is on the first floor and is accessible to all by the use of a lift.

On-site car parking for staff and visitors will include a dedicated disabled parking bay. All entrances to the school are either flat or ramped and all have wide doors fitted. The main entrance features a secure lobby and will be fitted with a low bell, to assist wheelchair users. There are disabled toilet facilities available for children, these are fitted with a handrail.. The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked, this does not include refuge areas for wheelchair users as almost all rooms have direct access to the outdoors.

11)As curriculum policies are reviewed, a section relating to access will be added to that on Equality and Diversity. The terms of reference for all governors' committees will contain an item on "having regard to matters relating to Access".

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. The terms of reference for all governors' committees will include the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010.

12)The School Brochure will make reference to this Accessibility Plan.

13)The School's complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

14)The Plan will be monitored through the Pupil Outcomes and Finance & Premises Committees of the Governors.

15)The school will work in partnership with the local education authority and Diocesan Board of Education.

16)We will consult with experts when new situations regarding pupils with disabilities are experienced.

17)The Plan will be monitored by Ofsted as part of their inspection cycle.

## **St Francis' CE (Aided) Junior School Accessibility Plan 2024-2028**

### **Improving the Physical Access at St Francis' CE (Aided) Junior School**

An Access Audit was carried out by Mrs Lakey, Headteacher and Miss Hockaday (School Business Manager) in September 2018 and reviewed in September 2020, 2022 and March 2024 a number of recommendations made:

<b>Access Report Ref.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
1	Accessible car parking	Bays to be signed in accordance with Part M standards	Completed	£100
4	Dropped kerbs either side of main vehicle entrance.	Pedestrian access	Completed	DCC job
6/11	Doors	Anti-glare film to be applied to the main doors and staff entrance	Completed	£50
32	Staircases	Colour-contrasted handrails to both sides of staircases	Not applicable	
32/2	Doors at top of stairs to prevent wheelchair users accessing stair case.	Install doors	Not applicable	
29	Accessible toilet	To provide one unisex accessible toilet in A Block	To review if adult need occurs.	
27/33	Provision of a lift to access the upper floors	Lift to LRC Lift in B Block	Completed	
24	Improve Reception facilities	The counter is lowered to a maximum height of 800mm, with knee-space under.	Completed	
31	Light switches, power outlets and emergency alarm buttons	To be moved to wheelchair height, as money allows.	As funding is available	
29/3	Adapted wash basins to be at wheelchair height with space under for wheelchair to allow user to get close to wash basin.	To be moved to wheelchair height, as money allows.	As funding is available	

## **St Francis' CofE (Aided) Junior School Accessibility Plan 2024-2028**

### **Improving the Curriculum Access at St Francis' School**

<b>Target</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
Ongoing training for teaching staff on differentiating the curriculum and providing opportunities for children despite barriers to learning based on the Curriculum 2014 requirements.	Monitoring and assessment of learning and teaching to inform SMT of training needs for whole team and individual members of staff.	All teachers differentiate and adapt teaching and learning in order to address barriers to learning for all children including those identified with Special Needs and Disabilities.	Ongoing as part of whole school monitoring, assessment and school improvement.	All children can access and succeed under the Curriculum 2014 outcomes.
All after school clubs, breakfast clubs and educational visits are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of pupils	Review all out-of-school provision to ensure compliance with Equality Act 2010 and Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 0-25years (September 2014) legislation	All out-of-school activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements. Individual risk assessments, where appropriate will be undertaken in order to ensure the safeguarding of the whole school community.	Ensure that all out of hours provision is open to all and engenders inclusivity on an ongoing basis.	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 individual class bases	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual pupils. Staff rearrange furniture based on the needs of the pupils within the lessons.	Ongoing based on individual class needs.	Increase in access to the National Curriculum
To ensure full access to the	Use of specialist staff as necessary.	Advice taken and strategies evident in classroom practice. All	Ongoing	Increase access to the curriculum for



curriculum for all children	<p>CPD for staff.</p> <p>A differentiated curriculum with alternatives offered. The use of P levels to assist in developing learning opportunities for children and also in assessing progress in different subjects.</p> <p>A range of support staff including trained teaching assistants</p> <p>Multimedia activities to support most curriculum areas.</p> <p>Use of interactive ICT equipment.</p> <p>Specific equipment sourced.</p>	SEND children supported and accessing curriculum.		all SEND pupils.
To finely review attainment and progress of all SEN pupils against new curriculum expectations. Define good progress.	<p>SENCO</p> <p>Class teacher meetings</p> <p>Pupil progress</p> <p>Scrutiny of assessment system</p> <p>Regular liaison with parents</p>	<p>Progress made towards SEN Support Plan targets.</p> <p>Evaluated plans show clear steps and progress made.</p>	Ongoing	Increased use of attainment to fine tune outcomes.
To monitor attainment of Able, Gifted & Talented pupils	Policy and Able G&T list to be updated and monitored	Able G&T children making proportionate progress. Achieving above average results	Ongoing and at least annual review of list.	Higher than average outcomes for this group of pupils
To promote the involvement of SEND pupils in classroom	Within the Curriculum, the school aims to provide full access to all	Variety of learning styles and multisensory activities evident in planning and in the classrooms. Ensuring	Ongoing	Levels of successful involvement evident

discussions/activities	<p>aspects of the curriculum by providing (where appropriate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheelchair access</li> </ul> <p>Appropriate staff training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving alternatives to enable disabled pupils to participate successfully in lessons</li> <li>• Creating positive images of disability within the school so that pupils grow into adults who have some understanding of the needs of disabled people</li> <li>• To take account of variety of learning styles when teaching</li> </ul>	that the needs of all pupils, parents and staff are represented within the school regardless of need.		
------------------------	---	---	--	--

### **St Francis' CofE (Aided) Junior School Accessibility Plan 2024-2028**

#### **Improving the Delivery of Written Information at St Francis' School**

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	ACHIEVEMENT
Availability of written material in alternative formats	The school will make itself aware of the services available through the LA for converting written information into alternative formats.	The school will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes	ongoing	Delivery of information to disabled pupils improved

Make available school brochures, school newsletters and other information for parents in alternative formats.	Review all current school publications and promote the availability in different formats for those that require it  Google translate function on the website can be accessed.	All school information available for all	Ongoing, include use of digital formats to assist.	Delivery of school information to parents and the local community improved
Staff in school will communicate with pupils/ visitors/parents/carers and other professionals in a sensitive and appropriate way for that individual.	Arrange training courses if a need is identified.  Staff support if a different approach is needed.	Awareness of target group raised	Through regular face to face meetings, written and verbal communication. Use of website and gateway to inform and communicate.	School is more effective in meeting the needs of the school community.

#### General

To review all statutory policies to ensure that they reflect inclusive practice and procedure	To comply with the Equality Act 2010		Ongoing	All policies clearly reflect inclusive practice and procedure
---	--------------------------------------	--	---------	---

Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.

Improve physical environment of school environment e.g. The Trees and Hobbit Hole	The school will take account the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as	Enabling needs to be met where possible.	Ongoing	Any areas identified as requiring improvement are dealt with asap
---	--	--	---------	---

	improved access, lighting, and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.			
Ensure visually stimulating environment for all children	Colourful, lively displays in classrooms and inviting role play areas.	Teaching and support staff ensure the lively and inviting environment is maintained.	Ongoing	Display used effectively as a teaching and learning tool.
Ensuring all with a disability are able to be involved.	<p>Staff to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create access plans for individual disabled children as part of SEN Support Plan process</li> <li>• ensure that any information relating to parents/carers' access needs are met.</li> <li>• ensure that roles and responsibilities are allocated e.g. Mini Police and monitors etc.</li> </ul>	Staff to enable needs to be met where possible.	With immediate effect, to be constantly reviewed	Enabling needs to be met where possible.
To ensure that the medical needs of all pupils are met fully within the capability of the school.	To conduct parent interviews, liaise with external agencies, identifying training needs and establish individual plans and protocols where needed	Staff to meet pupil needs	With immediate effect to be constantly reviewed	Individual needs are met
Ensuring disabled parents have every opportunity to be involved	Adopt a more proactive approach to identifying the access requirements of disabled parents	Needs are met	With immediate effect to be constantly reviewed by the whole school team.	To ensure that disabled parents are not discriminated against and are encouraged to take interest and be involved in their child's education
To improve community links	School to continue to have strong links with schools in Durham Authority	All staff Improved awareness of disabilities/the wider community	Ongoing	Improved community cohesion

	and the wider community.	of Newton Aycliffe and the world and their needs		
Continue to develop playgrounds and facilities which could be suitable for all.	Regular review of grounds and premises	All pupils are able to play in a suitable environment	Ongoing as capital and budget allows	Inclusive child-friendly play areas
To ensure driveway, roads, paths around school are as safe as possible.	Communication with parents via safety messages /letters/walk to school week/signage Bikeability for children	Pupils are kept safe	Ongoing	No accidents