

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School Accessibility Strategy and Plan 2021-2024 (Reviewed Annually)



This Strategy was produced during the Covid-19 Pandemic following the lifting of National restrictions on 19.7.2021.

Annual Community Consultation	Summer 2021
Agreed by Staff	Summer 2021
Approved by Governors	Summer 2022
Review Date	(Annual Summer 2022)
Signed Chair of Governors	S. Howard

Mission Statement

At St. Bede's Catholic Infant School it is the mission of the whole school community to nurture a loving, safe, caring, supportive, quality environment in which the individual has the opportunity to develop intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially and emotionally in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Introduction

Our Mission drives our actions and response. Ensuring the most sensitive and effective recovery is based on what we are doing now and in the immediate future in terms of support for our existing community most specifically the children, parents and staff and for those who will become part of our community in September. Communication is key. Sensitive, compassionate communication and accurate information. (Incorrect information can be worse than no information at all.) The response will be ever evolving and responsive to any further National and Local restrictions including Lockdown and to Government, LA and PHE Guidance. As on each return to school including on return to school in September 2021 then our community feels supported not pressured.

The SEN and Disability Act, extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and was further enhanced and modified by the Equality Act 2010 to cover education. These acts were introduced with the aim of ensuring that all disabled people have an opportunity to participate equally in society. Under the Equality Act, Disability is a specific, 'Protected Characteristic'.

Responsibilities for the school under these Acts are:

- 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.

At St. Bede's Catholic Infant School we aim to ensure that not only our pupils but other people who visit or use our school can use our facilities with ease. In line with our Mission Statement we are committed to providing an environment that enables access to the curriculum and all aspects of school life. 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 school.

The Accessibility Plan is a statutory document approved by the Governing Body. The Plan covers 3 years but is reviewed and updated at St. Bede's on an annual basis. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body and at St. Bede's the Premises Committee will take responsibility for this. The Accessibility Plan is fully integrated into the School Development Plan. Monitoring of the progress towards objectives/targets is rigorous and ongoing by the headteacher, staff and governors as appropriate.

The plan covers the period Summer 2021 to Summer 2024 (as updated annually) and sets out proposals:

- To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in school's curriculum;
- To improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services offered by school;
- To improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to those who are not disabled.

DDA Definition of Disability

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

Access to this Plan

This plan will be available:

- On the school website;
- On request in a paper format.

Supporting School Policies/Plans

- Curriculum
- Disability and Equalities Statement/Action Plan Objectives
- Equal Opportunities
- SEND
- Inclusion
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Educational Visits
- Premises
- COVID-19 Risk Assessments and Action Plans
- Remote Education Plan and Policy

Accessibility Planning Process

Plans for accessibility are developed through our school development planning process. The Accessibility Plan has been developed and drawn up based upon information from relevant audits and consultation with the children, parents and wider community.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives and has been incorporated into the School Development Plan and published on the school website. The Accessibility Plan is fully integrated into the School Development Plan.

Current good practice

Curriculum Access

Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate. For example, they may give additional time to children with disabilities to complete certain activities. In their planning teachers ensure that they give children with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills in all aspects of the curriculum. Personalised learning and provision mapping is used to ensure that children's individual needs are met as appropriate.

The needs of staff are also considered to ensure that they are able to fulfil their role in delivering the curriculum ensuring that all children achieve their potential.

On return to school in September 2021 the school's intention is that pupils will continue to return to their normal rates of outstanding progress very quickly, supported by early assessment of needs and appropriate provision of support/intervention including Personal Health and Well-being and basic skills in English and Mathematics. Teachers in Reception will focus on the prime areas of learning, including: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development. They will also assess and address gaps in language, early reading and mathematics, particularly ensuring children's acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending their vocabulary.

Other priorities and our school curriculum (see website) demonstrate that this will be in the context of and continued commitment to an ambitious and broad curriculum.

When the children return, time and resources, including the deployment of staff will be allocated to support their transition, assessment and progress. Our permanent part time teacher will oversee assessments and appropriate support including interventions/tutor groups. She provides proven teaching expertise, continuity and familiarity of staff for the children. A high focus will continue to be upon the children's well-being, attitudes to learning and consolidation of basic skills. As stated this will be in the context of our broad and ambitious curriculum. We must not compromise on the children's rights to this and their need to develop the cultural capital for their future success.

Please also refer to Curriculum information and the Remote Education Policy on the school website and the Remote Education.

Extended Curriculum

We will continue to follow Government guidance on after school clubs and visitors relevant to COVID-19.

Throughout the year we provide a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and sporting opportunities. These include reading, library club, 'Fun with Food', gymnastics, multi-skills, tennis, golf, yoga, art, craft, drama, Spanish, choir, speaking choir emotional health and well-being, Philosophy for Children (P4C), Puzzle Club and gardening. To ensure maximum participation of all children additional support is offered to those children as appropriate to their need following discussion with parents.

Physical Access

The Accessibility Plan for physical accessibility relates to the Access Audit of the school, which remains the responsibility of the Governing Body. The premises report details progress in building accessibility plans and developments. The Accessibility plan is fully incorporated into all relevant sections of the School Development Plan including the Equalities Action Plan and is subject to regular and rigorous review. Reports on progress are given at least termly by appropriate committees and staff to the full governing body and all staff are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring equality of provision.

The Local Authority had commissioned a number of audits from 2002/2003 i.e. Asset Management, Condition of Building, Suitability Survey, Accessibility Survey and the Workforce Remodelling initiative. Schools were requested to bring priorities together within an Asset Management Plan. A strategic programme of works for school was carried out, completed and signed off as a matter of record. Specifically the Accessibility Plan was subject to LCVAP funding and maximum DfC and was supported by LCVAP funds. It was subject to a pilot scheme in conjunction with St. Bede's Junior School and all access issues were addressed. We were designated as accessible schools by the LA.

Physical access to the school premises and environment has been improved through ramps, levelling of thresholds and widening of doorways. On site car parking for staff/visitors includes a disabled bay. The main reception area has a secure lobby and is fitted with a low level hatch. There are 5 disabled toilets (1 adult and 4 child). These are fitted with a handrail and a pull emergency cord. Full regard is taken to Accessibility when any premises work is undertaken including lighting, decoration etc.

The playground and garden area is also fully accessible.

Minor actions as recommended in a HBC Environmental Audit in the Summer of 2017 have been undertaken including distinct visual colour zones on posts and toilet seats.

The environment may look different in response to any COVID-19 requirements but will remain fully accessible.

Evacuation Procedures

The school's fire and evacuation policy lays down basic procedures for the safe evacuation of the school building. Personal Evacuation Plans are produced as appropriate to meet the specific needs of an individual.

The school has internal emergency signage and escape routes are clearly marked.

Evacuation procedures were reviewed in light of COVID-19 and will remain responsive in line with need.

Support Services

Access to or signposting to support services both within school and externally is available to children and families as appropriate

Communication of information

Communication and excellent relationships with families are at the heart of our Induction Programme.

Working together to create and maintain strong and committed relationships is central and paramount. We were determined during COVID-19 to ensure that our transition programme was undertaken as effectively as it always has been but remotely. Communication relating to any need is a high focus. In the term prior to the children starting school, parents discussions with the Early Years lead were undertaken by phone. Other key members of staff including the SENDCO and Designated Lead also contacted parents to discuss any needs the child or other members of the family may need support with. This knowledge supports the smooth transition to school and enables school to provide the necessary support within a reasonable timeframe.

Class e-mails between parents and teachers were also been created over the summer of 2020 and these will continue. Parents have found them to be an invaluable source of reassurance.

The school website and Twitter also provide invaluable and easily accessible forms of communication. We have ensured that parents can access Twitter via the school website and do not have to have an individual account.

School website: www.stbedesininfants.co.uk

School twitter account is @stbedesininfants

Methods of communication include:

Personal contact

Class e-mails

School website/Twitter

Letters/Fliers/Notes e.g. events, workshops, open occasions

Newsletters

Home/School Information Book

Phone

At least termly parents are reminded through a newsletter and the Headteacher's Report that school policies and documents (available to the public) can be made available in a variety of formats and languages, that small print can be enlarged within a reasonable timeframe. Support is available through the school office when completing forms.

School Disability and Equalities Working Party

The School Disability and Equalities Working Party continues to meet at least twice a year. The Working Party has helped us to further develop our policies and practices towards equality. The focus of each of the meetings links with the inclusion of all, through a range of school initiatives. A standing item on the agenda is to ensure access for families/children who have a specific access need.

Our action planning for improved accessibility covers:

- Curriculum and extended curriculum;
- Physical access-Physical environment of the school and building structure;
- Evacuation;
- Support services;
- Communication of information.

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School Accessibility Action Plan 2021-2024 (Annual Review Summer 2022)

Annual Community Consultation	Summer 2021
Agreed by Staff	Summer 2021
Approved by Governors	Summer 2021
Review Date	(Annual Summer 2021)
Signed Chair of Governors	S. Howard

The plan sets out proposals:

- To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in school's curriculum;
- To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services offered by school;
- To improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to those who are not disabled.

Aim

- To increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in school's curriculum

Development Target	Action/Strategies	Responsible Personnel	Time Scale	Cost	Success Criteria	Evaluation
<p>To ensure effective transition from pre-school to Reception for Pupils and Parents</p> <p>To identify individual needs and ensure continuity and progression on entry</p> <p>To enhance and ensure understanding of and commitment to School Policies and procedures</p>	<p>Continue to enhance Induction Programme (Use feedback from Parent questionnaires)</p> <p>Follow programme and timetable as developed and successfully used in previous years.</p>	<p>Miss Coughlan Mrs Paton EYFS Staff SENCO</p>	<p>April-July 2022</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>As timetabled</p>	<p>Relationships with staff, parents and pre-school settings enabling open discussion and efficient gathering of information regarding each child - ensuring all needs are catered for.</p> <p>Parents confident knowledge of and commitment to School Policies and Procedures.</p>	
	<p>Hold transition meetings with pre-school providers</p>		<p>May 2022</p> <p>Annually</p>		<p>Transition meetings clarifying needs of individuals and implications for planning, curriculum delivery and resources.</p>	
	<p>Deliver revised pre-school Literacy and Numeracy Workshops for parents and children</p>	<p>Mrs Towell Miss Boardman</p>	<p>June 2022</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>As timetabled</p>	<p>Play workshops-parents aware of the importance of the Prime areas and their impact upon children being able to access the Specific areas for learning. Parents confidently supporting learning.</p>	

Development Target	Action/Strategies	Responsible Personnel	Time Scale	Cost	Success Criteria	Evaluation
<p>To maintain existing high standards of inclusive practice and procedures to access a creative, broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. (Inclusion Action Plan)</p>	<p>Continue confident implementation of Provision mapping. Timetable interventions as appropriate to need, refining focus across all ability groups and monitor impact. Focus on content of intervention support including entry and exit criteria.</p> <p>On return to school in September the school's intention is that pupils will continue to return to their normal rates of outstanding progress very quickly, supported by early assessment of needs and appropriate provision of support/intervention including Personal Health and Well-being and basic skills in English and Mathematics.</p> <p>Other priorities and our school curriculum (see website) demonstrate that this will be in the context of and continued commitment to an ambitious and broad curriculum.</p>	<p>Miss Coughlan Mrs Bird All staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>See staffing costs</p>	<p>Provision Mapping in place and entry and exit criteria being used effectively. Strategies in place ensuring progress and achievement of potential. SEPPs used where necessary. Recording simplified.</p>	

	<p>When all children return time and resources, including the deployment of staff will be allocated to support their transition, assessment and progress. Our permanent part time will provide proven teaching expertise, continuity and familiarity of staff for the children. A high focus will be upon the children's well-being, attitudes to learning and consolidation of basic skills. As stated this will be in the context of our broad and ambitious curriculum. We must not compromise on the children's rights to this and their need to develop the cultural capital for their future success.</p>					
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Development Target	Action/Strategies	Responsible Personnel	Time Scale	Cost	Success Criteria	Evaluation
<p>Continue to embed Olympic and Paralympic Values across the curriculum with high focus on P.E/Sport. (P.E Action Plan) Promote positive role models</p>	<p>Government COVID-19 related guidance will be strictly adhered to relating to visitors and providers.</p> <p>Staff share and discuss Olympic and Paralympic values and strategies for inclusion across the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, assemblies and Assemblies. Incorporate values into planning and delivery. Monitor impact. Invite visitors as role models speak to and work with the children. (Link to PE/Sports Action Plan and Arts Action Plan)</p>	<p>Mrs Bellard All staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Values understood and practiced supporting good relationships and mutual respect.</p>	

Development Target	Action/Strategies	Responsible Personnel	Time Scale	Cost	Success Criteria	Evaluation
To maintain high standards of effective parental support at home and in school	<p>Continue use of class e-mails, curriculum overviews, Home/School books, Proud Moments slips and parent questionnaires to facilitate communication between parents and teachers, enhancing identification of specific next steps for individual children.</p> <p>Hold Community Arts/Awe & Wonder Days including Equalities consultation (Move from Autumn to Spring and Summer terms in light of COVID-19 to maximise participation)</p>	Mrs Paton EYFS Team	Ongoing 6.10.21 2.7.22		<p>Parents awareness of curriculum offer and actively engaged in their child's learning.</p> <p>Parents/carers are confident with own skills and more confidently support children at home. Teachers are more aware of parents views and closer links aid knowledge of individuals development.</p> <p>Exciting links enthusing parents and children.</p>	
	Update School website Website is fully compliant Integral to Remote Education	All staff led by Miss Parle Mr Murphy	As timetabled Ongoing		<p>Parents/carers confidently supporting children with learning across the curriculum</p> <p>Easy and full access to information for school and wider community</p> <p>Exciting links enthusing parents and children.</p> <p>Supportive of Business continuity.</p>	

	Continue use of class e-mails. Use will vary dependent on need and response to any Lockdown and length of Lockdown	Miss Parle All staff	Ongoing Needs led		Parents feel reassured and supported. Links maintained with children through parents due to the age of our children	
	“Remote Education” to continue to be closely aligned to the school reading curriculum led by Miss Parle (Remote Education Lead) (See school website for Remote Education Policy)	Miss Parle Miss Hesling Mrs Towell	Ongoing		Progress of children supported by remote learning, as appropriate. Remote learning accessible to all reflecting Remote Education Policy and Action Plan.	
To maintain effective links with multi-agencies	Agencies to provide appropriate support including training, resources, identification of auxiliary aids in line with need	Mrs Paton Mrs Bird Miss Boardman Miss Scragg Miss Coughlan	Ongoing	Needs led	Collaboration ensuring staff confidently supporting children	
To ensure Educational Visits/outdoor learning activities are inclusive and safe	Review Educational Visits/outdoor learning activities policy/procedures /Risk Benefit Assessments /Government COVID-19 related guidance will be strictly adhered to including that relating to Educational Visits as appropriate.	Miss Coughlan Mrs Rudge (Gov) Miss Boardman (EVCo)	Ongoing	3 hours Needs led	Policy and Procedures supporting/facilitating inclusive Educational Visits/outdoor learning activities	
To ensure Extra-curricular activities are inclusive	Review extra-curricular activities offered. Maintain register of attendance. Government COVID-19 related guidance will be strictly adhered to including that relating to providers and sport/music as appropriate	Relevant Co-ordinators Miss Coughlan Mrs Faulkner	Ongoing	6 hours/ term	Inclusive activities evident. Analysis attendance to ensure opportunity provided for all..	

<p>To maintain awareness of responsibilities of all staff and governors in meeting the requirements of the General and Specific Duties of the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>Continue to attend relevant training</p> <p>Agenda item at meetings Minutes</p> <p>Review all relevant Policies and procedures</p>	<p>All staff Governors</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Staff Meetings Governing Body Meetings DEWP</p> <p>Annually in line with Policy review timetable</p>		<p>Training supporting effective inclusive practice</p> <p>Evident high focus on the need of the individual and families</p> <p>Fair transparent Policy/Procedures support principles of Equality Act 2010. Staff and Governors are aware of and fulfil their duties and responsibilities.</p>	
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Aim

- To improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services offered by school;

Development Target	Action/Strategies	Responsible Personnel	Time Scale	Cost	Success Criteria	Evaluation
To maintain existing high standards of inclusive physical environment	Government COVID-19 related guidance will continue to be strictly adhered to as appropriate including that relating to physical environment. All accessibility issues incorporated into Building Projects: Focus Rolling programme redecoration Playground (Link to PE/Sport Action Plan) School will continue to take account of individual and school community needs when undertaking future refurbishment or premises projects including: Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes, lighting, fixtures and fittings	Premises and Finance Committees LA Archdiocese Cunliffe's Surveyors Mrs Bellard Miss Coughlan SENDCO SEN service Archdiocese LA	Ongoing	Building rolling programme	Accessibility and additional needs met within a reasonable timeframe in building design maintaining inclusive environment for all.	

	Optimum organisation of classrooms and corridors for disabled pupils. Advice sought from Archdiocese/LA on refurbishment/alterations to meet individual need.	Miss Coughlan SENDCO All staff SEN service Governors	Ongoing	Needs led	Physical accessibility of school maintained.	
To improve access to external support services for pupils, parents and carers.	Signpost parents as appropriate to relevant agency/support Open discussion on impact	Miss Coughlan SENDCO Miss Scragg Miss Boardman	Ongoing	Needs led	Confident use of appropriate multi-agency support effectively supporting needs of all	
To ensure the medical needs of all pupils are met	Government COVID-19 related guidance will be strictly adhered to including that relating to Supporting children with medical needs as appropriate. Review appropriate policies and procedures and staff and governors to familiarise and implement these as appropriate. Meet with parents to discuss individual needs (Remotely if required) Attend appropriate training-see timetable Liaise with and seek support and advice from multi-agencies	Miss Coughlan SENDCO Mrs Bird Miss Boardman	In line with training renewal schedule Annually Summer term As needed Ongoing Needs led		Policies and procedures adhered to and training attended ensuring medical needs met are met	

Aim

- To improve the delivery to disabled pupils and parents of information which is readily accessible to those who are not disabled.

Development Target	Action/Strategies	Responsible Personnel	Time Scale	Cost	Success Criteria	Evaluation
To continue to update the school website Cross reference to Remote Education Policy and Action Plan	Review layout of website and information provided	Miss Parle All staff	Ongoing Plus as timetabled		Website supporting effective communication	
Availability of written material in alternative format	Familiarisation of services available for converting written information into alternative formats.	Miss Coughlan SENDCO LSS SMTSS	Ongoing	Needs led	Written information can be provided when needed in alternative formats on request or as need arises. Delivery of information to disabled pupils improved.	
To enable improved access to written information in line with identified need	Consider font size and page layout Audit school library and reading books Consider displays Continue to audit signage	Mrs Towell All staff Mr Towell	Ongoing	Needs led	Access to written information supporting good progress and effective communication	
Maintain and publicise Disability and Equality Working Party and incorporate views of community	Working party to meet at termly. Children's views invited through SEAL activities and school council and Steering Groups.	DEWP	27.9.21 10.1.22 27.6.22		School takes account of the views of the community and incorporate into action plan	