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Issued	September 2023		
Approved by	Executive Team	Next review	September 2026

## St Marks CofE Academy Accessibility Plan

**Date: 22nd September 2023**

### Vision

Anthem Schools Trust is committed to working collaboratively to create ambitious and successful schools where every child thrives, and with teaching and learning being at the heart of everything we do. We understand that ensuring every child accesses Inclusive High Quality First Teaching is fundamental to good outcomes for our students. One of our mottos within the Anthem Schools Trust is ***“Every Student, Every Lesson, All the time.”***



### Purpose

This Accessibility Plan is designed to ensure that St Mark's CofE Academy complies with equality and disability legislation and best practice. The school is committed to providing an environment which respects and values all students, staff, parents/carers and visitors and endeavours to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper and can fully access the Inclusive High Quality First Teaching in lessons, and all aspects of the school day, including those with disabilities and special educational needs.

## Key Objectives of the Accessibility Plan:

- to increase the extent to which all students, including those with SEND, can participate in the school curriculum
- to improve the physical environment of St Mark's Academy to increase the extent to which students, staff and visitors with a disability can access provision within the school
- to improve communication to students and parents/carers.

## Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements of [schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance for schools and trusts on the Equality Act 2010](#).

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools and academy trusts are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a student with a disability faces in comparison with students without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## Duties on the school

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable students with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to students with disabilities

The Accessibility Plan needs to be reviewed by the school every three years and it must be published in an easily accessible location such as the school's website. It is also available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

## Reasonable adjustment duty

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments to allow students and adults with disabilities to access the educational provision and related services at the school. This is clearly set out in the guidance: The Equality Act (2010) and Schools (Sections 4.20-4.39).

[Equality Act Advice Final.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

We plan, over time, to increase progressively the accessibility of the school to students and staff with disabilities.

## Planning duties

This section outlines the main activities which St Mark's Academy undertakes, and is planning to undertake, to achieve the key objectives which will be stated within our Accessibility Plan.

### 1) Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.

We see this as covering not only teaching and learning but also the wider curriculum such as school clubs, leisure, sport and cultural activities and school visits.

- Year on year planning for a more inclusive curriculum
- Changes to teaching and learning arrangements
- Classroom organisation
- Timetabling
- Deployment of auxiliary aids and personnel
- Information and training for staff.

### 2) Improving the physical environment of the school

We see this as attempting to 'increase the extent to which all students, especially those with SEND, are able to take advantage of education and associated services'.

- Visual improvement
- Signs
- Improvements in the acoustic environment
- Furniture
- Disabled toilets/showers
- Ramps
- Disabled parking spaces
- Steps
- External hard surfaces
- Fire alarm procedures
- Lighting
- Room access

The school will take account of the needs of students and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of site and premises, such as improved lighting, acoustic treatment, colour schemes and more accessible facilities and fittings.

### 3) Provision of Information

The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the Local Authority for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

- ▪ Modified examination papers
- ▪ Modified resource and support material
- ▪ ICT facilities

## Communication with parents and carers

In order to best meet the needs of a student with a disability, our schools aim to work systemically with parents and carers. We acknowledge that the better we know and understand our children, the better we are able to meet their needs and we therefore highly value partnership working with families. We support our parents and carers to work closely with the school to provide full information about any disabilities, special educational need or other relevant information about their child(ren).

## Accessibility Audit

At Appendix 1 is an accessibility audit template relating to the above three planning duty areas which our school completes in order to inform our Accessibility Plan.

## Accessibility Plans

At Appendix 2 is an action plan template relating to the above three planning duty areas which has been created as a result of the audit. Having identified the barriers to access we then identified strategies to eliminate the barriers. For each issue identified in the audit we:

- converted it into a target
- outlined any actions required
- identified whether the actions will be short, medium or long-term priorities
- identified the source of funding

The school is committed to delivering the accessibility plans within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking account of the students' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents/carers.

## Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint regarding any aspect of this plan, please refer to the school's Concerns and Complaints Policy.

## Review

During the period to which this plan relates, the school will keep the plan under review and will make revisions and updates as necessary.

The Director of Education will monitor the school's compliance with the plan on an annual basis. The Trust will review the template plan every three years.

## Links with other policies

This accessibility plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives (Public Sector Equality Duty) Statement for Publication
- Special Education Needs (SEN) Information Report
- SEND Policy
- Administration of Medicines and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

## Appendix 1: Accessibility Audit

Questions to ask	Evidence of current good practice	Issues identified / Barrier to access	What sort of issue / barrier is it? <i>e.g. training need, policy change, documentation, physical environment, communication, resources required</i>	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
<b>1. Quality of Education</b>				
1.1 Is everyone made to feel welcome, including those with Special Educational Needs and / or disabilities?	All students are made to feel welcome at St Mark's Academy. All students are encouraged to thrive and flourish.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
1.2 Are there high expectations of all students and staff?	All teachers are aware that 'every teacher is a teacher of SEN'. High expectations are evidenced in lessons, and through our behaviour and school uniform policy.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
1.3 Do staff, Anthem Community Councils and students share and promote a philosophy of inclusion?	Every action that we take at St Mark's Academy are values driven and	None identified.	N/A	N/A

	underpinned by our values of love, hope and trust. We have several activities throughout the year to reinforce our inclusive values which include: Cultural Day, Black Excellence Celebration Evening, World Refugee Week and Developmental Language Delay day.			
1.4 Are students equally valued?	All students are equally valued at the academy. We believe that all students can experience transformation, flourish and achieve their God given potential.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
1.5 Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	The responsive teaching strategies that we use in our high quality teaching are designed to remove barriers to students learning.	None identified.	N/A	N/A

1.6 Are lessons made accessible to all students?	All lessons are made accessible to students. Some students need a physical copy of the PowerPoint and this is made available. Other students need an electronic copy of the PowerPoint and this is also made available.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
1.7) Are support staff used effectively to positively impact on student outcomes?	Support staff work closely with teachers and Heads of Departments to ensure that students are supported effectively. Teaching Assistants lead group interventions such as phonics, numeracy, literacy, Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy. Some TA's are ELSA trained and provide this therapeutic support.	None identified.	N/A	N/A

Questions to ask	Evidence of current good practice	Issues identified / Barrier to access	What sort of issue / barrier is it? <i>e.g. training need, policy change, documentation, physical environment, communication, resources required</i>	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
<b>2. Staff training</b>				
2.1 Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	Teachers and support staff undertake carefully planned and sequenced weekly CPD, engage with instructional coaching, which is adaptive and responsive to the school context			
2.2 Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support students with a disability?	Teaching Assistants and some support staff have attended training to support our students with disabilities. This includes Sickle Cell training, Oxygen training, diabetes training and we have received Visual Impairment training. This information is then disseminated to the wider school.	None identified.	N/A	N/A



2.3 Are your staff aware of how classrooms should be optimally organised for students with a disability?	Staff are aware of how classrooms should be organised for students with a disability.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
2.4 Have staff received training in ensuring that lessons are responsive to the diverse nature of student needs and abilities?	Staff receive regular CPD on quality first teaching and how we respond to the needs and abilities of students in the classroom.	None identified.	N/A	N/A

Questions to ask	Evidence of current good practice	Issues identified / Barrier to access	What sort of issue / barrier is it? <i>e.g. training need, policy change, documentation, physical environment, communication, resources required</i>	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
<b>3. Provision of written information</b>				
3.1 What provisions are made for making information available to all people who may need access to goods, services and facilities?	We work closely with Merton Sensory Support Service who supports our students who have a visual or hearing impairment.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
3.2 Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students and adults with disabilities?	Yes, one of our students who is registered as SVI has an iPad.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
3.3 Do you provide access to internet resources appropriate for students and adults with disabilities?	We work closely with Merton Sensory Support Service.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
3.4 Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user-friendly for students and adults with visual disabilities e.g. by reading aloud, overhead projections and describing diagrams?	We read aloud, describe diagrams, and provide print outs with a font size that is accessible to the students.	None identified.	N/A	N/A
3.5 Do you have the facilities to produce written information in a variety of font sizes?	Yes, we do.	None identified.	N/A	N/A

3.6 Do you make use of RNIB guidelines formats? (RNIB guidelines may be obtained from <a href="http://www.rnib.org.uk">www.rnib.org.uk</a> )	Yes we do	None identified.	N/A	N/A
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Questions to ask	Evidence of current good practice	Issues identified / Barrier to access	What sort of issue is it? <i>e.g. training, policy, documentation, physical environment, communication</i>	Transfer to the accessibility plan?
<b>4. The physical environment</b> <i>Consider all the areas to which students should have access, including all academic, sporting, play, or social facilities. These would include classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playground and common rooms.</i>				
4.1 Are there any physical structures such as doorways, steps and stairs which may act as barriers for students and adults who use wheelchairs?	School is fully accessible to those in wheelchairs:  There are no steps on the ground floor, providing street level access into and throughout the building.  There are two passenger lifts.  Corridors are wide, allowing sufficient ambulatory capacity.	None	N/A	N/A
4.2 Are toilet facilities and showers accessible to wheelchair users?	A range of toilet and hygiene facilities are available to wheelchair	None	N/A	N/A

	users. These are spaced amply around the site.			
4.3 Are there safe pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements?	<p>The parking areas are segmented from pedestrians and students access to students is fully restricted. There is a one-way system in place and clearly signed 5mph speed limit.</p> <p>Secure pathways exist around the circumference of the building and through the centre of the school via our quad. The surfaces are flat and well-maintained.</p>	None	N/A	N/A
4.4 Is there any decor which may be confusing or disorientating for students and adults with a disability with a visual impairment, for example floors and walls which are the same colour?	<p>Contrasting colours are used to highlight structural features such as doors / door frames and supportive pillars etc.</p> <p>Contrasting coloured, anti-slip, tape is attached to the top and bottom of each flight of stairs.</p> <p>All lighting around the school has been recently upgraded to LEDs which</p>	Glare on flooring in creative arts area	<p>Physical Environment.</p> <p>The flooring in the creative arts area, combined with the brighter lighting, causes some glare. This could be potentially disorienting for those with visual impairments.</p>	Yes

	makes the environment significantly brighter and increases the visibility of features and structures.			
4.5 Are there any signs which may be confusing or inadequate, for example at the wrong height to be seen by wheelchair users or with little contrast between lettering and background, or with font which is too small to be easily visible?	Signs are appropriately placed around the site to be visible to all.	None	N/A	N/A
4.6 Is there accessible storage to enable students and adults with a disability to access aids and equipment?	There are student lockers, at various heights, providing a place for students to store resources and equipment. These are easily accessible throughout the day.	None	N/A	N/A
4.7 Are there arrangements which might prevent the inclusion of people with disabilities that affect their hearing – including rooms with poor acoustics and noisy equipment?	DT rooms sometimes require the use of loud equipment. However, student OPPs and teacher context sheets will outline any relevant strategies needed to support individual students.	None	N/A	N/A
4.8 Are there non-visual guides to assist people to use buildings including changes in	There are variations to flooring types around the building that help to	None	N/A	N/A

surfacing materials, lifts with tactile buttons etc?	<p>identify each zone (Wooden floor in halls, Carpet in admin corridors, tile in communal spaces, laminated in science etc.)</p> <p>Lifts have tactile buttons with braille.</p>			
4.9 Do emergency and evacuation systems include alarms with both visual and auditory components?	<p>There are a number of locations that include visual in addition to the auditory components to the emergency signals.</p> <p>The signals present provide sufficient alert to the needs of those within our academy and the evacuation procedure would ensure that visual cues and direction would ensure the safety of all.</p>	Coverage of visual emergency alarm signals	Physical Environment  In isolated areas, visual alarm signals may not highlight an emergency to those with significant hearing impediments.	Yes

## Appendix 2: Accessibility Plan template

This action plan sets out the aims of our accessibility plan in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aim: Increase access to the curriculum for students with a disability	
Current Good Practice	<p>Our school has a strong culture based on a values based approach to education. At it's foundation lies a commitment to embedding the Christian values of Love, Hope &amp; Trust and ensuring transformation for all of our community.</p> <p>Our school offers a differentiated curriculum providing equity for all students</p> <p>Progress and attainment data show that those with SEND make progress well above the national average and their gaps with their peers are also smaller than the national picture.</p> <p>We use resources tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum.</p> <p>Curriculum resources include examples of people with disabilities.</p> <p>Curriculum progress is tracked for all students, including those with a disability.</p> <p>Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students with additional needs with additional provision and support put in place to ensure access for all. The support and provision is carefully targeted and multi-layered according to the level of need.</p> <p>The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all students.</p> <p>The quality of education, to ensure quality first teaching for all, is regularly monitored.</p> <p>Staff receive information, training and support to plan and deliver effective lessons accessible to all students.</p>
Objectives	To continue to deliver a robust curriculum offer, accessible to all and reflective of our diverse Christian community.
Actions to be taken	Business as usual activities to monitor and quality assure the quality of education and provide staff development and training.
Person responsible	Jennie Khan

Date to complete actions by	Ongoing
Success criteria	Students with SEND make progress in line with rigorous targets. Gaps between students with SEND and their peers are reduced.

Aim: Improve and maintain access to the physical environment	
Current Good Practice	<p>The building is easily accessible, as most rooms are situated on a level, step- and ramp-free site.</p> <p>Ambulatory space is generous enabling adequate room for those with a range of additional needs / disabilities to easily navigate the site.</p> <p>Facilities and resources such as lifts, parking bays, toilets and changing facilities are available and appropriately spaced around the building to allow equity of access and provision for all.</p> <p>The site and grounds are well maintained, and the premises team are responsive to making adaptations necessary. There is excellent communication and collaboration between departments, including the SEND and Inclusion teams to respond to the individual access needs of each student on an individual basis.</p>
Objectives	Further improve the site to cater for those who may have more severe / advanced needs.
Actions to be taken	<p>Short: Assess the position of emergency evacuation signals with visual cues to ensure adequate spacing and coverage</p> <p>Short to Medium: Look to buffer the surface and apply cleaning products / practices that reduce the reflective glare from the flooring in the creative arts corridor.</p> <p>Long: Replace flooring in the creative arts corridor to an alternative that is non-glare and consistent with flooring in other areas of the building.</p>
Person responsible	Emma Hill
Date to complete actions by	<p>Short: From September 2023 – December 2023</p> <p>Short to Medium: From September 2023 – July 2024.</p> <p>Long: July 2025</p>
Success criteria	<p>By December 2023 an assessment of the visual alarms system will have been carried out and improvement works scheduled, if required.</p> <p>By July 2024 the glare from the flooring in the creative arts corridor is significantly reduced.</p>



	By July 2025 the flooring in the creative arts corridor has been replaced and does not create glare.
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Aim: Improve the delivery of information to students with a disability	
Current Good Practice	<p>Our approach to inclusion and SEND is to provide bespoke, tailored solutions to students based on their specific needs and our understanding of each student as an individual.</p> <p>Signage is clear and adapted as required to communicate key messages clearly.</p> <p>Large print resources, digital / printed resources are provided as needed, technology such as laptops and iPad are provided where indicated by an identified need.</p> <p>There are well-embedded mechanisms for sharing key information to ensure there is consistency in the sharing of information based on their identified needs (One Page Profiles / Context Sheets / ClassCharts etc.)</p> <p>We have an evidence-based approach to teaching and learning, which emphasis Cognitive Theory and Memory Metacognition and strategies such as Dual Coding (in which visual representations of key concepts and information are shared alongside verbal / written descriptions.</p>
Objectives	To continue to tailor resources and information to meet the individualised needs of each pupil.
Actions to be taken	Business as usual activities to monitor and quality assure the quality of information delivery to students, in line with their needs.
Person responsible	Allicia Wignal
Date to complete actions by	Ongoing
Success criteria	<p>Students are able to access the information they require and are able to self-report this.</p> <p>Internal documents (One Page Profiles / Context Sheets / Class Charts etc.) who accurate information and impactful strategies.</p> <p>Gaps in progress and attainment between students with SEND and their peers are reducing.</p> <p>Students with SEND outperform similar students nationally.</p>