



**St. Matthew's**  
Roman Catholic High School  
VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



# Accessibility Plan

**Reviewed:**

September 2024

**To be reviewed:**

September 2027



We **Pray**  
We **Care**  
We **Achieve**

# MISSION

# Statement



St. Matthew's  
Roman Catholic High School

All policies and procedures are underpinned by our School Mission Statement:



## WE PRAY

As a community with Christ and with the teachings of the Gospel at our centre, shown in the things we do and in the ways we worship together.



## WE CARE

For everyone in our school community, respecting them as individuals created by God and recognising and celebrating talents and successes. We see caring for others in the world outside of our school as part of our Christian responsibility.



## WE ACHIEVE

The best we can in all aspects of school life by learning in lessons, succeeding in examinations and committing to extra-curricular activities.



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## Introduction

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

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

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

- Not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled students.

This duty requires schools to produce an Accessibility Plan that identifies the action the school intends to take over a three year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas. It is published and evaluated annually.

The three areas include:

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

In addition, the Disability Equality Duty (2006) requires all schools to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA.
- Eliminate harassment of those with a disability.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons.
- Encourage participation by disabled individuals.
- Take steps to take account of disabilities even if this involves treating disabled persons more favourably.

The Disability Equality Duty requires schools to:

- Involve those with a disability in producing a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan.
- Publish the DES/Action Plan.
- Demonstrate they have taken action identified to achieve outcomes.
- Report on progress, review and revise the DES annually

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students", issued by DfES in July 2002.

At all times St. Matthew's will also be equally aware of the needs of disabled staff, parents and visitors.

## Key Objectives of the St Matthew's Accessibility Plan

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for students and prospective students with a disability.
- To provide a caring and friendly environment for all students, staff and visitors.
- To provide resources to cater for the needs of the individual students.
- To promote an understanding of disabilities throughout the school and an awareness of the needs of students with a disability.

## Principles

1. Compliance with the DDA is consistent with St. Matthew's mission statement, the equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEND policy.
2. St. Matthew's recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):
  - not to discriminate against disabled students in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
  - not to treat disabled students less favourably.
  - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.
  - to publish our Accessibility Plan.
3. In performing their duties, the LGB and staff at St Matthew's will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002).
4. St. Matthew's recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.
5. St. Matthew's provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
  - setting suitable learning challenges and responding to students' diverse learning needs
  - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

All staff will be able to meet more fully the needs of disabled students with regards to accessing the curriculum.

St. Matthew's will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

Within the curriculum, St. Matthew's aims to provide a full access to all elements. Specifically, in all areas of Information & Communication Technology, St. Matthew's will have consideration in planning facilities for:-

## Activity

### Education & related activities

St Matthew's will continue to seek and follow the advice of the LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/ advisors, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

Within the curriculum, St Matthew's aims to provide a full access to all elements. Specifically, in all areas of information & Communication Technology. St Matthew's will have consideration in planning facilities for;

- Wheelchair access
- Screen reader software
- Screen magnifier software
- Features such as sticky keys and filter keys to aid disabled users in using a keyboard
- Screen Magnifier Software.
- Use of I-Pad devices

To develop communication skills in students, enabling them to express thoughts and opinions successfully through speech, writing and sign language as appropriate.

To give advice and support in curriculum subjects as appropriate, to enable disabled students to participate successfully in lessons within the mainstream school.

To ensure that the needs of all disabled students and staff are represented within the school. To create positive images of disability within the school so that students grow into adults who have some understanding of the needs of disabled people.

**Physical environment**

St. Matthew's 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 the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

**Provision of information**

St. Matthew's will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

**Action Plan**

The Plan will be monitored through the LGB. The plan is of necessity organic and will need adaptation and additions on a regular basis. Additionally, St. Matthew's will always endeavour to:-

- Improve availability of written material in alternative forms
- Improve working environment for students with visual impairment by incorporating appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing and install blinds on south-facing windows.

**Linked Policies**

This Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies, such as: -

- Equal Opportunities policies
- Curriculum Policies
- Health & Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- School Prospectus and Mission Statement
- Teaching and Learning Policies
- School Accessibility Plan



# St. Matthew's

Roman Catholic High School  
VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

## Contact

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DIocese of  SALFORD

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