

St John's Highbury Vale CE Primary School



'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' Philippians 4:13

Accessibility Policy

Ratified: March 2026

Review Date: March 2029

At the heart of our school vision is a desire for an authentic and life-giving relationship with ourselves, one another, our world, and with God. We believe that it is through Christ who gives us the strength, all can achieve within a learning environment where every child is valued as a unique individual created in the image of God, and where teaching and learning is of consistently high standard.

STJHV Statement of Intent

St John's Highbury Vale in Islington is committed to providing a nurturing and inspiring environment where every child is empowered to reach their full potential. Grounded in our Christian ethos and guided by our values, we strive to create a vibrant and dynamic educational experience that prepares our pupils to lead fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society.

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1. Aims

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

Our school aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

St John's Highbury Vale C of E School is guided by a commitment to equality, inclusion, and accessibility in all aspects of school life. Our core principles and values that relate to equality and inclusion include:

1. Christian Ethos & School Vision:
 - We believe that every child is a unique individual, created in the image of God, deserving of equal opportunities to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.
2. Respect & Diversity:
 - We celebrate diversity by fostering an inclusive environment where all pupils, regardless of disability, background, or needs, feel valued and supported.
 - The curriculum is designed to be representative and diverse, ensuring pupils see themselves reflected in learning materials and experiences.
3. Commitment to Accessibility:
 - We strive to remove barriers to learning by ensuring physical, digital, and curriculum accessibility for all pupils, especially those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).
 - Reasonable adjustments are made to support pupils with disabilities, including adaptive teaching strategies, assistive technologies, and accessible school facilities.
4. Equity in Education:
 - We recognise that equity is different from equality—some pupils require additional support to achieve their full potential.
 - Our data-driven approach ensures that SEND and disadvantaged pupils receive targeted interventions and tailored learning experiences.
5. Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement:
 - Our staff, pupils, parents, and governors actively contribute to making the school a more inclusive environment.
 - The Pupil Accessibility Working Group provides direct input from students on how to improve school accessibility.

6. Staff Training & Development:

- All staff undergo regular training on inclusion, SEND, and equality issues, ensuring that teaching and support practices meet the diverse needs of our pupils.
- We collaborate with external specialists to enhance our inclusive practices.

These principles and values are woven into our policies, daily practices, and long-term school development plans, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to succeed in a supportive and accessible learning environment.

The plan will be made available online on the school website, and paper copies are available upon request.

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The school supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

St John's Highbury Vale C of E School operates within the London Borough of Islington and adheres to the local authority's policies and procedures concerning accessibility and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Our commitments include:

- Collaboration with Islington's SEND Strategy: We actively participate in the borough's SEND Strategy, aiming to provide inclusive education for all children. This involves early identification of needs, delivering the right support at the right time, and ensuring that children with SEND can attend their local mainstream schools.
- Engagement with the SEND Local Offer: We ensure that our school community is informed about the services, advice, and support available through Islington's SEND Local Offer, which provides comprehensive information for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Alignment with the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS): As a Church of England school, we follow the LDBS guidelines to promote inclusivity within a Christian ethos. This includes implementing policies and practices that support accessibility and equal opportunities for all students.

Our school's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in school, the complaints procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.

We have included a range of stakeholders in the development of this accessibility plan, including pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors of the school.

Admissions

St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School will not discriminate against disabled pupils in respect of admissions. The school adheres to the School Admissions Code and ensures that disabled pupils are not treated less favourably and that reasonable adjustments are made where required.

2. 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 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 are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a pupil with disabilities faces in comparison with a pupil without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

Funding and Resourcing

The school will allocate appropriate resources to implement this Accessibility Plan. Funding for accessibility improvements will be considered as part of the school's annual budget setting process and premises development planning. Where necessary, the school will seek advice and support from the Local Authority and Diocese to ensure that planned improvements are both achievable and sustainable.

3. Action plan

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

3.1 Increase Access to the Curriculum for Pupils with Disabilities

Objective	Current Good Practice	Actions	Responsible	Timescale	Success Criteria
Ensure all lessons are fully inclusive	Differentiated instruction and use of scaffolding strategies	Provide CPD for staff on adaptive teaching and inclusive planning	Head of School, Inclusion Lead	Ongoing	Improved engagement & achievement of SEND pupils
Expand assistive technology	Limited use of screen readers and speech-to-text tools	Introduce screen readers, speech-to-text software, and personalised digital tools	IT Coordinator, Inclusion Lead	By Summer 2025	Increased accessibility in classroom learning
Establish a Pupil Accessibility Working Group	Pupil voice is currently gathered informally	Gather pupil feedback to enhance accessibility	SENCO, School Council	Termly	Direct pupil input in school policies

3.2 Improve and Maintain Access to the Physical Environment

Objective	Current Good Practice	Actions	Responsible	Timescale	Success Criteria
Enhance wayfinding and signage	Some signs in place but lacking braille and high contrast	Install high-contrast, braille, and pictorial signage – By July 2027	Premises Manager	By	Improved navigation for visually impaired pupils
Conduct accessibility audits	Ad-hoc reviews conducted by premises staff	Termly inspections to identify and address barriers	Inclusion Lead, Governors	Termly	School remains physically accessible for all
Improve breakout spaces	Existing sensory room available but limited in capacity	Expand sensory rooms and quiet areas	SENCO, Premises Manager	Ongoing	More spaces for emotional regulation & sensory needs

3.3 Improve the Delivery of Information to Pupils with Disabilities

Objective	Current Good Practice	Actions	Responsible	Timescale	Success Criteria
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Ensure all school communications are accessible	Some documents available in large print but not all formats	Provide key documents in braille, audio, and large print formats	Office Staff, Inclusion Lead	Ongoing	Increased engagement from parents & pupils
Provide staff training in inclusive communication	Limited training on Makaton and alternative communication methods	Offer CPD on Makaton, braille, and alternative communication methods	SENCO, External Trainers	Annual	Improved communication for pupils with additional needs

4. Monitoring arrangements

This Accessibility Plan will be reviewed every three years in line with statutory requirements under the Equality Act 2010. The governing body will monitor the implementation of the plan through:

- Termly reports from the Head of School and Inclusion Lead
- Premises and Health & Safety monitoring visits
- Pupil voice and stakeholder feedback
- Review of SEND and attainment data

The plan may be reviewed earlier if required due to changes in legislation, school context, or identified accessibility needs.

The governing body is responsible for approving and monitoring this plan.

5. Links with other policies

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

- Risk assessment policy
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report
- SEND policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy