

Excellence Together, Learning Through Faith.



St Mary's C of E VA Primary School

As a Church School we seek to ensure that the ethos and principles of Christianity underpin the experiences of the children in our care.

“St Mary’s is an inclusive school and respects and values the diversity of the Community”.

Accessibility Policy

Adopted at St Mary’s School:

Autumn 2016

Date for next review by Resources Committee:

Autumn 2018

For the purposes of this policy we will be looking at accessibility with regard to pupils, parents/carers and other visitors with physical special needs. This covers, amongst others, people with mobility problems, some of whom will be wheelchair users and people with sight and hearing problems. There are separate policies which cover pupils whose special needs are of an educational or emotional and behavioural nature.

St Mary's School is determined that all pupils who fit our admissions criteria are welcomed and are enabled to access as many areas of the curriculum and school life as possible. Parents/carers play an integral part in school life and the school realises the importance that every parent/carer is able to access the school and be welcomed into the school community.

Prior to starting at the school - Pupils

Before a child with physical special needs starts at the school we will meet with the parents/carers and any involved relevant professionals to take advice on how we can help that child access all areas of the curriculum and school life. We realise that there may be a resource issue, in which case we are willing to look as sympathetically as possible within budget constraints to funding equipment or building work to help a pupil access the curriculum or the school building and grounds.

Prior to starting at / visiting the school – staff, parents, carers other visitors

As soon as it is known that a member of one of the above groups is attending the school, contact will be made to discuss their needs. As far as possible, within budget constraints, the school will make any reasonable adjustments to facilitate their needs.

The School Building

Most of the building and playground has level access which means that it is possible for wheelchair users and others with mobility problems to access most parts of the school. However, some parts of the building (mostly the older parts), access is more difficult. Although no building can be accessible to every physical special need we are determined to improve access to and within our school where possible. When there is any future building work access will continue to be a priority. There is currently no hearing induction loop fitted, but this could be considered, subject to budget constraints, if a need arises. Recognised Guide and Hearing dogs are welcome.

We can be flexible about which classroom a class uses. We will, within the constraints of class sizes etc. choose the most suitable classroom to meet any child's physical special needs. We are also sensitive to carers/visitors needs when we organise events that they are invited to eg. Meetings, concerts etc.

Delivery of the Curriculum

All classrooms are equipped with interactive white boards. This means work on the board can be adapted to pupils with sight problems eg. The font size can be increased to an appropriate size, background and font colours can be changed to enhance contrast etc. Teachers always consider carefully all the needs of the children when positioning them in the classroom environment. Pupils routinely use laptops in all areas of the curriculum and printers etc can be accessed throughout the school. The school is well positioned to support a child who needs to use computers to access the curriculum.

Toilets

Children with physical special needs often find toileting difficult. We always endeavour to be as flexible and sensitive as possible to any issues arising.

Playtime/mealtimes

We understand that difficulties often arise in the more unstructured times of the school day such as playtime and mealtimes. However these are important times to establish friendships and enable cooperation within the peer group. We look at ways of supporting children at these times and ensure all staff recognise any special needs and deal with them in a sensitive way. eg. Buddy system, Y5-R and Y6-Y1. Also named MSA and social skills group.

Bullying and Acceptance

All forms of bullying are not accepted in the school and are dealt with in an appropriate way. The school has a strong ethos that all children are accepted for who they are regardless of any differences.

Review of Accessibility to the Building and Grounds

From the Accessibility Policy

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Classrooms

We currently have 8 classrooms, and three small group rooms. Access to two group rooms currently involves several changes in level.

Foundation stage unit

This has level access from the outside EYFS area. A wheelchair user would be able to both access and manoeuvre around the classroom. Extra equipment such as a special desk could be accommodated.

Year 1-4 Classroom

These classrooms have level access through the front entrance of the school. The classrooms are fairly spacious which is important when thinking about wheelchair manoeuvrability or installing special equipment.

Year 5 & 6 Classroom

The classrooms have steps leading to them restricting access.

The Hall

The Hall is upstairs, however, there is a wheelchair accessible lift giving access.

Toilets

There are two sets of boys and girls toilets in the school, one set has level access. The others have steps leading to them restricting access, however the disabled toilet is fully accessible.

Headteacher's office, school office, staff room, meeting rooms, store rooms, cleaners store, photocopy room

All have level access. Two of the meeting rooms are quite small, limiting manoeuvrability, as are the store rooms, photocopy room and cleaner's store.

Playground and Sports Field

The main playground surface is a mixture of hard standing and grassed areas. A wheelchair user may find using the grassed area difficult when the weather has been wet, however, there are hard standing paths through much of the grassed area. There is a ramp to move between the top and lower playgrounds. The quiet garden has restricted access. The sports field is used for sporting and physical activities. There is level access by crossing the bridge. Children only use the field with adult supervision.

Equipment

Specialist equipment is provided as necessary for children with physical special needs. Pupils routinely use laptops in all areas of the curriculum and all classrooms have interactive white boards installed. This gives the school flexibility in delivering the curriculum to pupils in the best way to meet their needs.