

St Thomas
of Canterbury
Catholic Primary
School



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
2022-2023

Mission Statement

At St Thomas' we are learning to follow Jesus, showing respect and consideration for ourselves and others. We all have the opportunity to learn and work to the best of our ability in a safe and loving environment.

School Aims

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, we aim to create and sustain a stimulating Christ centred environment, where everybody involved, children, staff and parents, may grow in their faith and their love of God, developing respect for themselves and an awareness of the needs and gifts of others.

We aim to create an environment where children will be happy, independent and will be able to achieve their full potential, spiritually, academically, morally, emotionally, socially and physically.

We aim to provide children with the experiences, knowledge and skills necessary:

- To deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- To read fluently and accurately.
- To write clearly, fluently and accurately for a variety of purposes.
- To communicate clearly and confidently in speech.
- To listen attentively to others.
- To develop mathematical concepts and skills and apply these to real life situations.
- To develop scientific knowledge and skills.
- To develop the ability to plan and organise their own learning using a range of resources and skills.
- To become observant and curious of the world around them and develop a respect for their environment.
- To develop the skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence to express their thoughts and feelings creatively.
- To develop agility and physical co-ordination and to encourage team skills.
- To learn to recognise, respect and value the cultural, racial and sexual differences in our society.
- To learn to work and play harmoniously and tolerantly with others.
- To develop self-discipline, self-reliance and self-esteem.
- To develop an understanding of the need for personal safety.
- Use technology appropriately to support their development.
- To stay safe, be healthy, achieve and enjoy, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

We aim to celebrate and share successes and achievements, both individually and collectively.

The school undertakes to work to complement the home and church environment by setting before the children the ideal of Christian life.

SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The purpose of this document is to improve access to education and educational achievement for disabled pupils at St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School under the Disability Discrimination Act 2001 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

The principle behind the legislation is that wherever possible disabled people should have the same opportunities as non-disabled people in their access to education.

The plan will attempt to:

- Improve access to the curriculum
- Improve access to the physical environment
- Improve access to written information

In order to identify the areas to be addressed the following questions were considered by staff with areas of need being addressed through the Action Plan.

All staff are encouraged to review the questions regularly to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities.

Current strengths and successes at St Thomas':

- Blinds installed in many classes to help visually impaired pupils
- Staff trained in signing techniques, shared with pupils i.e Christmas concert
- On- going staff training in the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act
- Disabled toilets
- Yellow markings in place throughout school for visually impaired students/ staff
- Administration of medication for pupils in need
- Differentiated work across all ages

Current areas for development:

- School is built on different levels – One Year Group (3 classes) only accessible by stairs - we do not have a lift currently
- Year 5/6 block accessed externally by steps – corridor access limited by single doorway
- The field would be in accessible to a wheel chair user except through EYFS Department which would not be easily accessible unless wheelchair user was in EYFS
- Blossom Class (housed in demountable building) For a few pupils who cannot learn the way we teach, we teach the way they learn-these pupils have access to the school's Blossom Class for most or parts of each day to receive more bespoke intervention to further develop basic learning skills as well as self-regulation skills so that these pupils are better able to access the curriculum with their peers. For those pupils who access Blossom Class, their work is planned according to their learning needs- work may be planned using the ABBLS life skills based curriculum but also work is highly adapted following plans produced by the class teachers. The indication from Thurrock SEND Department is that increased numbers of children presenting with high needs particularly on the ASD spectrum will need mainstream provision in the future.

Identifying Barriers to Access: A Checklist

This list should help you identify barriers to access that exist in schools. The list is not exhaustive. It is designed to encourage a flexible approach to the further questioning of the accessibility of your school.

Section 1: How does your school deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes	No
Do you ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?	When required	
Are your classrooms optimally organised for disabled pupils?	Where possible	
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?	Yes	
Are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	Yes	
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	Yes	
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	Yes	
Do staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils, for example using lip reading?	Would do	
Do staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	Yes	
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?	Yes	
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?	Yes	
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	Yes	
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	Yes	
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	Yes	
Are pupils encouraged, on a one to one basis, to strive for greater achievements both physically and intellectually?	Yes	

Section 2: Is your school designed to meet the needs of all pupils?

Question	Yes	No
Does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities – allow access for all pupils?		Field access issues
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school		Not

without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?		easily
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well signed?	Yes	
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability; including alarms with both visual and auditory components?	Yes	
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?	Yes	
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?	Yes but would be looked at if required	
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?	Yes	
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics, noisy equipment?	We consider this when placing children in classrooms however it is not ideal	
Is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	Yes	

Section 3: How does your school deliver materials in other formats?

Question	Yes	No
Do you provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	Would do if required	
Do you ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for people with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	Yes	
Do you have the facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	Yes	
Do you ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	Yes	