



**Maria Fidelis**  
Catholic School FCJ

<b>Accessibility Plan</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Finance, Premises & Staffing
<b>Ratified by Governing Body</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Frequency of Review</b>	2 years
<b>Next review Date</b>	Spring 2027

### **The FCJ Schools' Vision**

Our vision is that FCJ schools are communities of personal and academic excellence.

Strong in companionship, the unique giftedness of every person in these faith communities is recognised, nourished and celebrated.

Our hope and expectation is that, through God's grace working in us all, each young person grows into their best self, with zest for life and the generosity and confidence to use their talents and gifts in the service of others.

# Maria Fidelis Catholic School FCJ

## Accessibility Plan

### 1. Introduction

Maria Fidelis Catholic School FCJ is a diverse and inclusive community that focuses on the wellbeing and progress of every student and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We value diversity and seek to give everyone in the school an equal chance to learn. Our vision is that FCJ schools are communities of personal academic excellence. Strong in companionship, the unique giftedness of every person in these faith communities is recognised, nourished and celebrated. Our guiding principle is to identify and break down possible barriers to learning so that all students 'achieve their very best'.

The school's SEND policy plays a substantial role in guiding the school's developing provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities.

### 2. Context

The Accessibility Plan addresses the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice of September 2014. These acts place a responsibility on the Governing Body to ensure that the school is socially and academically inclusive. In particular, the Equality Act requires the school to develop a plan to show how it will develop services in the following three areas:

- To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum.
- To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure disabled students are able to take advantage of education and other benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.
- To improve the delivery of information to disabled students, so information is as available as it is for students who are not disabled.

### 3. Aim of plan

All students will have access to appropriate qualifications and will develop the skills and resilience to meet the demands of working, family and community life. Students will demonstrate the empathy and confidence to work with others to achieve a better future.

### 4. Objectives

The objectives of this plan are:

- To ensure all disabled students are fully involved in school life and are making good progress.
- To identifying barriers to participation and find practical solutions to overcoming these barriers.
- To work collaboratively with disabled students and their parents/carers to create appropriate provision, including robust EHCPs where appropriate.
- To increase the confidence, sensitivity and expertise of teachers and support staff when

teaching or supporting a wide range of disabled students.

- To meet the requirements of the Equalities Act and the SEND Code of Practice in respect of disabled students.

## 5. Definitions

- Definition of Disability (Equality Act 2010): “A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to perform normal day- to-day activities.”
- Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND Code of Practice September 2014) - A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she: has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of the kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. This will include students with medical needs.

## 6. The accessibility plan

This plan summarises our development priorities in the three areas specified by the Disability Act (see introduction above). The school is also committed to making reasonable adjustments for individual students to ensure all students can be involved in every aspect of school life, in partnership with their families, and that barriers to learning are removed.

- **To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school's curriculum.**

Students with SEND (special educational needs or disability) are given access to the curriculum supported by the school’s specialist SEND provision and in line with the needs of the individual and the wishes of their parents/carers. Every effort is made to educate students with SEND alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENDCO consults the student and parents about proposed flexible arrangements.

The school curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and SEND information report outline the provision the school already has in place to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This includes:

- a. The Governors and Staff of Maria Fidelis are committed to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities into the full life of the school with equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum and the support needed to participate and make progress within the curriculum.
- b. The SENDCO for the school is Miss Clare Dawkins who can be contacted at [cdawkins@mariafidelis.camden.sch.uk](mailto:cdawkins@mariafidelis.camden.sch.uk) and governor with particular responsibility for SEND is Ms Elizabeth Carey.
- c. Meeting pupils’ Special Educational Needs is a whole school responsibility and every member of staff has a part to play in meeting this responsibility.
- d. The School Improvement Plan includes targets for the meeting of SEND, and aims to ensure that ALL pupils are enabled to become independent, resourceful and resilient learners as a result of careful identification, assessment and support.
- e. The school will provide INSET on meeting pupils’ SEND as part of the Continuing Professional Development provision for staff.

- f. All subject departments offer a differentiated curriculum as the first stage provision of meeting Special Educational Needs. If this provision does not meet a pupil's SEND requirements then a referral will be made to the SEND Department.
  - g. The school is committed to developing effective strategies to overcome barriers to learning.
  - h. The school will work in partnership with parents/carers so that pupils with SEND and disabilities are given full access to a broad and balanced curriculum alongside their peers with the support that they need to reach their full potential.
  - i. SEND pupils will be involved in decision-making about how their Special Educational Needs will be met according to their age, maturity and capability. The aim will be, within the parameters of effective and efficient use of resources, to meet their needs in a manner acceptable to the pupil.
  - j. The school will follow best practice when devising interventions to meet pupils' needs.
  - k. Every effort will be made to have SEND information about pupils available to staff before they start at the school. In addition, early effective intervention will be provided to meet identified SEND.
  - l. The school will maintain an Additional Educational Needs List and place pupils' names on the list according to need. Pupils who have high levels of need may be given an education, health and care plan (EHCP).
  - m. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will have responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy.
  - n. The school will work continuously towards making the school buildings and the information systems more accessible for disabled people.
  - o. Evaluating the success of the SEND policy through monitoring the impact of LSAs on learning and progress and ensuring that the school continues to develop partnerships with parents.
- **To improve the physical environment of the school to ensure disabled students are able to take advantage of education and other benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.**

As a new building, the school is fully accessible. The following are in place:

- A lift giving access to all floors is available. All spaces to be accessed by most visitors are located on the Ground Floor and there is level access from the pavement.
- Wide corridors.
- Each floor has disabled toilets - at least one and in most cases two or three.
- We currently have a hoist in the hygiene room in room 1.08.
- There are four evacuation chairs all located on the second floor of each stairwell. Designated refuge points are located for every floor on every stair well (a total of 14) in the event of fire /fire drill.
- We have a sensory room with fidget toys, a bubble lamp, bean bags, a sensory tent and a stars and planets projector.

In addition, teachers are given advice on how to move and arrange furniture, how to manage lighting, noise and visual stimulus, how to create visual timetables etc., so that individual students' needs are met. Similar attention is given to how students' needs can be met on school journeys and visits.

The School has plans to develop a new SEND Hub in 2025, bringing together the sensory room, small group intervention spaces and SEND offices into one identifiable area at the heart of the school. This will provide a single base for students with SEND needs where targeted support can be provided. It would also provide a space where SEND students could go before/ after school and at break times.

In line with this policy an audit will be undertaken as part of our regular Safeguarding and Health and Safety tours of the school.

**To improve the delivery of information to disabled students, so information is as available as it is for students who are not disabled.**

Teachers and LSAs consider the needs of each SEND student and provide accessible learning resources for them. The increasing use of Interactive Whiteboards/Touchscreens and other digital technologies have diversified the ways in which information is presented to all students.

In addition, the school makes the following available as appropriate:

- Differentiated resources with particular attention to reading age, plain English, images and layout.
- Laptops and other digital technologies. Voice activated software for use in lessons and English Language examinations.
- Coloured overlays for text.
- Tactile resources.
- Readers and/or scribes in exams, where appropriate
- British Sign Language Interpreters (BSL) for support at parents' evenings and other meetings and events.

The following opportunities to improve further will be explored:

- Opportunities provided by digital technologies.

## **7. Responsibilities**

- All staff are responsible for identifying and removing barriers to learning for disabled pupils.
- All leaders are responsible for improving accessibility within their area of responsibility.
- The Governing Body is responsible for the approval of this plan.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the resourcing, implementation and updating of this plan.
- The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that all current students' needs are covered by this plan and for monitoring the effectiveness of the plan in meeting disabled students' needs.

## **8. Review**

This Accessibility Plan has the status of a policy of the Governing Body and is reviewed every 2 years.

## **9. Related policies**

- Equality Policy
- Equality Objectives
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and SEND Information report
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy