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|  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Accessibility Policy and Plan</b></p> <p>Updated: 09-25 (action plan updated 01-26)<br/>Prepared by: KED/SHCC/SES/MAK</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Next Review: 06-27<br/>Approved by: Governors</p> |
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**This Policy applies throughout the School from the EYFS to Year 6.**

## **Introduction**

This Policy and the associated Plan are drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and ISI Regulation 17b. The School recognises that barriers to participation may also include social, emotional and mental health challenges, and that supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing is an essential part of accessibility.

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled pupils are not discriminated against. They must make the buildings accessible for their disabled pupils as part of their overall planning duties.

A person is disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' (generally taken to be 12 months) negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

## **Key objective**

To reduce and eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum and to enable full participation in the School community for pupils, prospective pupils and adult users with a disability.

## **Principles**

1. Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is consistent with the School's aims, its Equal Opportunities Policy and its Learning Difficulties & Disabilities/Special Educational Needs Policy.

2. The School recognises its duty under the Equality Act 2010:

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions, exclusions and provision of education and associated services
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- To publish an Accessibility Plan (in the form appended hereto)

3. In performing their duties, Governors and staff will have regard to the Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice (2002).

4. The School recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

5. The School provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles. It endorses the key

principles in the National Curriculum 2000 framework which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual and groups of pupils

### **Premises**

The School buildings include some that are over 150 years old and, as such, are not designed to meet the needs of disabled pupils. The School Nursery site is accessible to staff and pupils with physical impairments as is one of the Reception classrooms. The more recent buildings, notably St Mary's, have been planned to increase disabled access as much as is reasonably possible:

- All ground floor entrances can be accessed without steps
- St Mary's has a lift to all floors
- There is one disabled toilet on the ground floor of St Mary's. A further pupil toilet on the first floor of St. Mary's is fitted with grab rails
- Use of classrooms can be rotated to meet the specific needs of pupils and staff

### **Accessibility planning**

To assist in planning accessibility, records of any expert advice received in connection with individual pupils are kept by the Bursar.

The School has identified the following points for action as part of its School Improvement Plan in order to achieve the key objective of this Policy:

#### **a) Delivery of the curriculum**

School staff receive training in making the curriculum accessible to all pupils and are aware of the importance of accessibility. This training also includes strategies for supporting pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs, promoting resilience, wellbeing and positive engagement in learning. The School will continue to seek and follow the advice of experts in this area, such as education and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

#### **b) Physical environment**

The School will take account of the needs of pupils and other users 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.

In particular:

- A telephone-based tannoy system for the evacuation of the building has been installed
- Mats are available to improve ground floor wheelchair access
- The cost of installing a lift or ramp to upper levels of the older part of the School will be investigated

- Signs in Braille could be provided at the front entrance

**c) Provision of information in other formats**

The School is aware of local services, including those provided through the LEA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

**Linked policies**

- Admissions Policy
- Continuing Professional Development Policy
- Curriculum & Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils
- Equal Opportunities Policy for Staff
- Fire Risk Prevention Policy and Procedures
- Learning Difficulties & Disabilities/Special Educational Needs Policy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Procedures for Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities
- Professional Review Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- School Development Plan

## APPENDIX: ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (June 2025 – June 2027)

|  | Responsibility                | Target  | Timescale | Future Plans   | Outcomes  |
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| <b>Ongoing Actions</b>   |                               |   |           |  |   |
| <b>Improving access to the physical environment: School buildings</b>  |                               |   |           |  |   |
| Hall, gym and dining room are all on ground floor and accessible for e.g., performances  | SLT & school staff            | Partial accessibility for pupils, parents, staff and visitors | Ongoing   | Use mats to improve wheelchair access  | Prospective parent in electric wheelchair successfully navigated ground floor |
| For parents' evenings & parent/teacher meetings, teaching staff will meet disabled parents on the ground floor of buildings which do not have disabled access. Ditto for other staff/visitor meetings. Staff have been made aware of need to do this and are reminded periodically | SLT & school staff            | Parents, visitors   | Ongoing   | Ensure that parents are aware of accessibility arrangements<br><br>Consider access for disabled parents when hosting off site – for example Church service in Dec and access to that event.  |   |
| To accommodate cultural and/or religious practices as and when the need arises   | SLT & school staff            | Pupils, staff   | Ongoing   | A number of suitable rooms have been identified and can be made available if requested in advance  |   |
| To accommodate the needs of any staff returning to school following a period of long-term absence  | SLT & Head of HR & Compliance | Staff   | Ongoing   | This could include a staggered return, reduced hours, additional work spaces being offered, relocating of lessons, assistance with resources, removal of duties, flexibility with PPA time at home etc. A risk assessment may be carried out in this instance to support staff wellbeing |   |
| <b>Improving access to the curriculum</b>  |                               |   |           |  |   |

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| SEN policy is reviewed bi-annually to ensure that the school meets statutory requirements                                  | Neurodiversity team                  | Pupils        | Ongoing | New Government may bring changes to SEND policy                        | Change to name - now referred to as neurodiversity team.  |
| Work with external agencies where appropriate to ensure that pupils receive support they need as mentioned in SEND policy. | Neurodiversity team & teaching staff | Pupils        | Ongoing |  | Facilitating regular meetings and continued communication with these agencies will improve the support in place for pupils, including social, emotional and mental health support.<br><br>The relationship that has been developed with the Camden Safeguarding team ensures that staff knowledge and skills are advanced.  |
| Access arrangements are considered and applied   | Neurodiversity team & teaching staff | Pupils        | Ongoing | Regularly take note of JCQ requirements                                | Access arrangements for all tests including 11+ have been identified and implemented with consideration of pupils' mental health and stress levels.   |
| Provision of teaching materials and resources appropriate to any identified SEN/disability                                 | SLT & teaching staff                 | Pupils        | Ongoing | Take into consideration when updating teaching materials and resources | Use of laptops aids flexibility in presentation of written material   |
| Provision of equipment appropriate to any identified SEN/disability  | SLT                                  | Pupils        | Ongoing | Continue to investigate the types and availability of materials        | Pencil grips and modified pens are used by pupils who have difficulty with grip. Pupils who have difficulty writing are encouraged by SEN staff to learn to touch-type using Nessy Fingers and can use the dictation app on iPads. Equipment such as fidget cushions, fidget toys, ear defenders and oral chews available and in use to support both learning and emotional regulation. |
| To accommodate the needs of any new incoming pupils or staff members   | SLT & school staff                   | Pupils, staff | Ongoing | This could include the purchase of individualised equipment, changing  | Neurodiversity in the workplace policy. Deputy Head Pastoral provides staff briefing to all staff   |

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|   |                      |   |         | <p>access arrangements, additional staff training, revision of policies and procedures. Information for staff is requested as part of the recruitment process, for pupils as part of the admissions process and taster days.</p> <p>Effectiveness measured in follow up. The Deputy Head Pastoral ensures staff are aware of individual pupils' wellbeing needs.</p> | each week on ongoing review of individual girls needs   |
| To screen pupils to ensure early diagnosis of need  | Neurodiversity Team  | Screening for potential dyslexia and dyscalculia pupils identified as showing tendencies. | Ongoing | Early intervention and support provided by Neurodiversity team and through quality first teaching.   | Screening and interventions include social-emotional wellbeing alongside academic needs.  |
| Quiet and calming spaces are provided or identified to support pupils' emotional regulation and mental wellbeing throughout the school.                                     | SLT & school staff   | Pupils  | Ongoing |  |   |
| <b>Improving access to information</b>  |                      |   |         |  |   |
| Provide information e.g., handouts, timetables, events information, handbooks in alternative formats e.g., large print.<br>Use media accessible to pupils with disabilities | SLT & teaching staff | Pupils, parents' staff and visitors   | Ongoing | Ensure that School phones are suitable for older or visually impaired users  | Whiteboards aid flexibility.<br>St Mary's Hall has adaptable audio-visual equipment.<br>A large key phone was purchased for a member of staff |
| Displays  | Senior Deputy Head   | Calming   |         | Used restricted colour palette for background and borders for displays to support emotional  |   |

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|  |   |  |                    | regulation and wellbeing of pupils. |   |
| <b>Short Term Actions: Improving access to the physical site</b>   |   |  |                    |                                     |   |
| Following the success of the installed acoustic panels identify key areas in school that require change  | Head and Bursar                           | To know all areas of the school have been considered                               | 25-26<br>Completed |                                     | Bursar met with pupils across the school to consider all areas that may need additional investment. No further investment needed – class teachers directed to consider movement around the building as pupil movement can sometimes disrupt learning. Head actioned this with all class teachers.     |
| Review new playground design   | Head and Bursar                           | Consider which features might limit accessibility for future and current pupils    | 25-26<br>Completed |                                     | Design discussed and reviewed. The design will include many elements that will be accessible to future pupils however the current design is accessible to all current pupils. Playground design also considers emotional wellbeing, safe zones, low-stimulation areas, and sensory-friendly features. |
| Redecoration of corridors and classrooms in St Marks to improve light and access   | Site Manager                              | Improve accessibility and enhance pupil regulation                                 | 25-26              |                                     | Two thirds of the building has been redecorated. Oct and Dec of 2025. The remaining third will be completed in the first half of 2026.  |
| Survey girls to find out if the current provision is working – access to buildings, signage, lighting, etc.  | Bursar and DH Pastoral                    | To know if girls of all ages have access to all areas of the school                | 25-26<br>Completed |                                     | Feedback from girls was positive with all recommendations actioned in Oct 2025  |
| <b>Short term Actions: Improve access to the curriculum</b>  |   |  |                    |                                     |   |
| Quest data initiative introduced to provided improved value-added measure comparison for SEN and EAL pupils  | Assistant Head Scholarship and Assessment | To measure Value Added progress of SEN and EAL pupils in comparison to their peers | 25-26              |                                     | Spring and Summer assessments will produce our first VA data.   |
| Neurodiversity team to better equip teachers with strategies to support pupils with all needs. Power Up plans to be produced in collaboration with | SENCO                                     | To further enhance class teacher skills  | 25-26              |                                     | Initial change took place in Autumn 2025 with the follow up in Spring Term. Spring Term learning walk will QA this process as well as all Spring  |

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| class teachers with a focus on Quality First Teaching   |   |  |                    |  | term 1:1 Class teacher and Neurodiversity team meetings.   |
| Survey girls to review whether current access arrangements are improving their ability to access the curriculum         | Senior Deputy Head and SENCO              | To ascertain which areas of the curriculum require further development | 25-26              |  |  |
| Review new marking policy introduced in 24-25 to ensure it improves access to the curriculum                            | Assistant Head Scholarship and Assessment | To monitor pupil's understanding                                       | 25-26              |  | Pupil voice in Autumn 2025 provided QA. The initiative has produced unexpected positives such as girls taking more ownership of their own learning as well as growing in Independence. |
| <b>Short Term Action: Improve the delivery of information</b>   |   |  |                    |  |  |
| Identify parents who may need additional support to access information shared by the school                             | Class teachers and data administrator     | Support parents to ensure they have access to all information          | 25-26              |  |  |
| <b>Medium Term Actions: Improve the Physical Environment</b>  |   |  |                    |  |  |
| Installation of acoustic panels in areas identified   | Bursar                                    |  | 25-27<br>Completed |  | All identified areas now have panels.  |
| Investigate the cost involved in acquiring a hearing loop for St Marys if it is required so that it can be budgeted for | Bursar                                    |  | 25-27              |  |  |
| <b>Medium Term Actions: Improve access to the curriculum</b>  |   |  |                    |  |  |
| Further review and update policies and practice in the teaching and learning provision                                  | SLT                                       | To ensure we can financially support the needs of all girls            | 25-27              |  |  |
| Review of funding for pupils with SEND  | Head and Bursar                           |  | 25-27              |  |  |
| Teaching assistants trained to support girls with physical disabilities.  | SENCO                                     |  | 25-27              |  |  |
| <b>Medium Term: Improve the delivery of information</b>   |   |  |                    |  |  |
| Review communication with parents to ensure our information is jargon free and accessible                               | Marketing and Admissions                  |  | 25-27              |  | Review communication with parents to ensure information is clear, accessible, and promotes both  |

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|  |     |   |       |  | academic understanding and emotional wellbeing. |
| <b>Long Term: Improve the Physical Environment</b>   |     |   |       |  |   |
| Plan for a school journey using accessible classrooms and determine which provision might be compromised | SLT | To better understand staff and teacher allocation if all teaching was required to take place on the ground floor of St Mark's and St Luke's | 25-27 |  |   |

The plan is also available in the following formats, on request to the School Office: email, enlarged print version, and other formats by arrangement.