

POLICY



Type of Policy: MAT Policy to adopted in full across all schools
LGB Policy to be reviewed and approved locally

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Approval Date: **SEPTEMBER 2021**

Review Date: **2022/23 – SPRING TERM**

SOUTH EAST LONDON CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST (SELCAT)

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Our Vision, Mission & Values

To create a family of schools that together, through shared support and challenge, strive to provide an authentic Catholic education where all children will be empowered, inspired and flourish.

We will aim for excellence and to become remarkable places of learning and love.

Introduction

Schools within SELCAT are committed to increasing access to their school for students, staff, parents, governors and visitors. This accessibility plan has been written in accordance with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (the “Equality Act”).

This accessibility plan is a plan for:

- a) Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in our schools’ curriculums
- b) Improving the physical environment of SELCAT schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by our schools [but taking into account the permanent limitation due to the age, type and grade listing of the current school buildings]
- c) Improving the delivery to disabled students, within a reasonable time, and in ways which are determined after taking account of their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, of information which is readily accessible to students who are not disabled.

These three areas are addressed in the action plans which are published on the school’s website.

Compliance and review

The Accessibility Plan is reviewed by the school’s leadership team on a regular basis as determined by the Governors.

Key Objectives

The key objectives of the Accessibility Plan are:

- a) That no student or prospective student is treated less favourably due to their special needs or disability. All reasonable adjustments will be made in matters of admission and education.
- b) To make our schools more accessible (where practically possible within the constraints of the type of school building) to disabled students and staff, including those affected on a short-term basis – for example, if the use of crutches or a wheelchair is required for a fixed period as a result of an accident.
- c) To create a positive “can-do” ethos towards the issues faced by disabled students thus enabling them to take full advantage of the educational experiences offered.

Statutory duty of schools within SELCAT

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Equality Act 2010, which places a duty on all schools to plan to increase over time the accessibility of the school for disabled pupils and to implement their plan.

Definition of Disability

Disability is defined as follows by the Equality Act 2010:

“A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

Some children defined as disabled, who for instance have arthritis, may not be defined as having special educational needs (SEN). A child has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them; that is, they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream school. Some children defined as having SEN, who for instance may have a behavioural difficulty, may not be defined as being disabled. The Accessibility Plan addresses the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Duties towards disabled students placed upon the school under the Equality Act 2010

All schools within SELCAT acknowledge their obligations under the Equality Act and as such:

will not discriminate or victimise disabled pupils:

- a) in the arrangements it makes for deciding who is offered admission as a pupil,
- b) as to the terms on which it offers to admit the pupil or
- c) by not admitting the pupil;
- d) in the way it provides education for the pupil;
- e) in the way it affords the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service;
- f) by excluding the pupil from the school; and
- g) by subjecting the pupil to any other detriment.

will make all reasonable adjustments that may be required further to section 20 of the Equality Act.

will publish the school’s Accessibility Plan and ensure it is available in easy-to-read formats

This will include planning to make the written information that is normally provided by the school to its pupils, available to disabled pupils.

Consultation

All schools within SELCAT will ensure that they regularly, both formally and informally, consider that the delivery of the Accessibility Plan is determined after taking account of the pupils’ disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents. It will do this by consulting with its stakeholders and appropriate professional organisations to ensure the Accessibility Plan and its objectives are reflective of what the school is required, both legally and morally, to provide for its students and staff.

Schools will do this through consultative mechanisms (such as formal and informal meetings, questionnaires etc) and discussions with:

- Governors through the LGB
- Parental consultation
- School Council
- SELCAT Executive
- Appropriate charities and disability representation groups
- Voluntary Groups
- Any other group or organisation the school feels it would be beneficial to consult with

Following these discussions and consultations, the school will then review the Accessibility Plan to ensure that it reflects the views (where appropriate) and changes to procedures or policies are made (where appropriate).

Aims of ensuring compliance of the Equality Act 2010

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is consistent with SELCAT schools' aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the SELCAT SEND Policy. The school's Accessibility Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies.

Reviewing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Plan

- a) Adequate resources will be allocated to enable implementation of the plan.
- b) The plan will be informed by feedback from parents, pupils and people with disabilities.
- c) The plan will be kept under review and revised as necessary. The Trust will achieve this through the challenge and support of each School's Local Governing Body.
- d) The plan will be widely published and will be in the application and admissions pack sent to all students and is available on request as well as appearing on the school website
- e) The plan will be subject to monitoring by OFSTED during inspections.

Action Plans

Individual action plan follows, relating to the key aspects of accessibility. It is expected that significant progress will be made over the plans in the coming years, but we acknowledge that there will be a need for ongoing awareness and training for staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination and the need to inform attitudes on this matter. Teaching methods and techniques will also develop over this period, which may create new challenges. Plans will be made in consultation with the student, parents and teaching staff. Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to support particular students with accessibility issues.

Appendix A – School’s Accessibility Plan

(all schools will publish their School Accessibility Plan on their school website, using this template)

Improving Curriculum Access

Target	Action needed	Leadership	Timescale	outcome

Improving the delivery of Written Information

Target	Action needed	Leadership	Timescale	outcome

Improving the physical environment

Target	Action needed	Leadership	Timescale	outcome