



LUX MUNDI

LIGHT OF THE WORLD ~ CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Accessibility Policy **CARDINAL POLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Status Public
2025

APPROVED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY ON: 10th December 2025

CHAIR OF GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE: *David Rhans*

Mission Statement

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of **service** guiding young people on a path to **opportunity, aspiration** and **reward**, founded on Catholic values.

Introduction

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is an inclusive school where all members of the school community are of equal worth and each have the opportunity to be the best that they can be.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their protected characteristics:

- Sex.
- Race.
- Disability.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.

This includes a duty to make anticipatory reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids or services where necessary to avoid substantial disadvantage.

Aims:

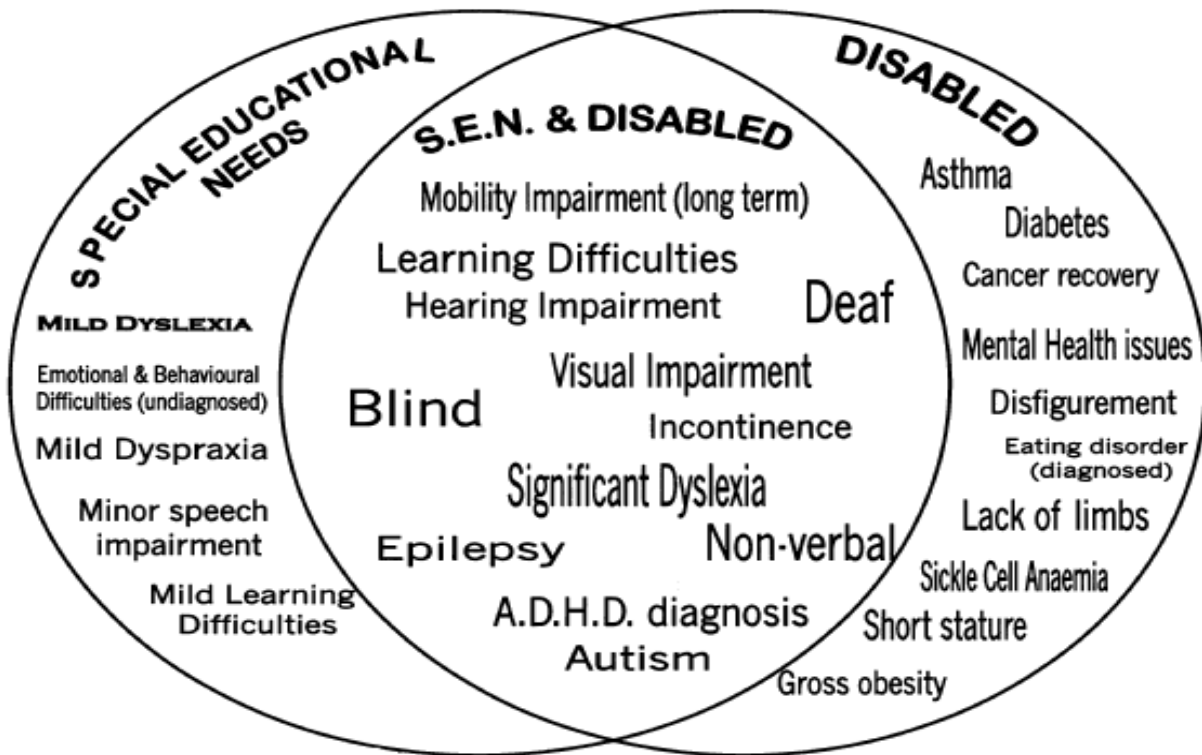
- The school is committed to offer a high-quality education to all children in the community in line as required by the SEN and Disability Act (2001) and the 2005 DDA. We will consult with everyone concerned to identify and remove barriers to inclusion and establish a Disability Equalities Scheme to improve learning and participation for disabled people.
- This school promotes inclusion and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that pupils with a disability or SEN are not discriminated against or treated less favorably than other pupils. The school will work in partnership with everyone concerned to improve access for disabled or SEN pupils to the school environment and curriculum.
- The school will ensure that staff are trained to enable them to be effective in the education of disabled or SEN pupil.
- The school will prioritise resources to support the actions identified in this plan.
- We will prioritise sufficient resources to support the actions identified in this plan.

What do we mean by ‘Disability?’

The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has:

- **‘A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’**
- ‘Long term’ means at least 12 months. ‘Substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial.’
- This definition covers pupils with physical (including sensory), intellectual or mental impairments. The definition is broad and might include children with a learning disability, sensory impairment, severe dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy, incontinent pupils, pupils with AIDS, severe disfigurements or progressive conditions like Muscular Dystrophy. It can also include diagnosed conditions such as ADHD or Tourette’s syndrome.

- This diagram shows the overlap between Special Educational Needs and Disability.



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- It is important that staff are aware that, although a pupil, parent, carer or staff member may be considered to have a disability according to the definition, they may not consider themselves disabled.
- A whole school approach to inclusion is the most effective way of meeting the needs of all pupils.

Specific duties

At Cardinal Pole School we recognise and welcome our responsibility to make everyone feel included. The school exercises its duty of care to make **reasonable adjustments** for pupils with a disability:

- Where a disabled pupil is placed at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable adjustments to try and reduce/remove the disadvantage.
- We will provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.
- We are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of our planning duties.

Where a disabled pupil is placed at a disadvantage compared to other pupils, the school must take reasonable steps to remove or reduce that disadvantage. This includes providing auxiliary aids and services when reasonable. The duty is anticipatory and ongoing.

Accessibility Planning

This document outlines our accessibility planning for pupils with physical disabilities. These are the same duties as previously existed under the Disability Discrimination Act and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010. Our accessibility plan aims to:

1. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can **participate in the curriculum**;
2. Improve the **physical environment** of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
3. Improve the availability of **accessible information** to disabled pupils.

This plan should be considered alongside the Equality and Diversity Policy and the SEND School Information Report. Our Accessibility Plan will be reviewed annually and published online. It will include consultation with pupils, parents, and staff, and align with the Equality Objectives and SEND Information Report.

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is committed to:

1. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum

The curriculum covers teaching and learning and a wider provision embracing after school clubs; leisure, sporting and cultural activities; also, school trips. Planning for improved access to the curriculum includes consideration of school and classroom organisation and support, timetabling, curriculum options, deployment of staff alongside with staff information and training. Curriculum audits support the school to review patterns of achievement and participation by disabled pupils in different areas of the curriculum, e.g. the inclusion of physically disabled children in PE and DT, and then to identify actions to increase participation.

2. Improving the physical environment of schools

This strand of the planning duty covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, heating, ventilation, floor coverings, signs, interior surfaces, room decor and furniture. Improvements to physical access include ramps, handrails, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops, communication aids, well designed (passive) room acoustics and way-finding systems. The provision of 'quiet' areas and improvements to the physical safety of the environment, indoors and outdoors, may also enhance access for children with learning disabilities. Improved access in existing areas can often be achieved by rearranging room space, adjustable tables in each teaching room, removing obstructions from walkways, changing the layout of classrooms, providing designated storage space or reallocating rooms to particular subject specialisms. Physical aids to access education cover ICT equipment, tables, chairs, writing equipment, science, DT and PE e.g. through enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept keyboards, communication aids, switches, photocopying enlargement facilities, specialist desks, chairs and portable aids for children with motor co-ordination and poor hand/eye skills such as specialist pens and pencils.

3. Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

This part of the duty covers planning to make written information normally provided by the school to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to those with a disability (including those with significant low reading acquisition levels). This might include coloured overlays for text, readers or scribes, alternative formats such as large print, the use of ICT and the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or in sign language. We aim to consider how all information normally provided in a written format including work sheets, timetables, school examination papers, newsletters, information about school events, trips and extracurricular provision can be made accessible to all those with a disability.

How accessible is Cardinal Pole Catholic School?

Our school building is fully accessible for disabled students. We are happy to discuss individual access requirements. Facilities we have at present include:

- Lift access to all teaching spaces.
- Lift access to all non-teaching spaces.
- Low level access to school entrance.

Facility	Location	Quantity
Unisex fully accessible toilet and shower	PE	1
Unisex fully accessible toilet	On each floor	6
Lift to gym and changing rooms	First floor - gym	1
Lift to MUGA	MUGA (access with lift)	1

References

The Equality Act 2010: Advice for school leaders, school staff, Governing bodies and local authorities.

Equality Act Guidance downloads from the Equality and Human Rights Commission – includes *Guidance for education providers – what the equality law means for you as an education provider.*

AREA TO BE ADDRESSED: Access to the Curriculum
GOALS & TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to ensure that staff is fully aware of their responsibilities under the DDA.• Continue to develop the skills and confidence of staff to teach and support disabled or SEN pupils.• Improve access to and participation to the national curriculum and the wider curriculum for pupils with a disability or special educational needs.• Use all possible performance indicators, including behaviour, attendance, pupil and parent evaluations and assessment data to monitor the progress of disabled/SEN pupils.

STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION:

- Provide all new staff with training on their responsibilities under DDA. Training to be arranged by SLT/SENCo. Refresher training for all staff to take place annually.
- Develop and carry out audits to review curriculum delivery and barriers to participation. To be completed by Heads of Department by Easter 2026.
- Ensure teachers are trained on curriculum access for disabled pupils with a particular focus on Disability Equality. To be completed by Summer 2026.
- Enhance knowledge and confidence of staff to teach pupils with SEN. Training to be delivered by the Inclusion Team from Hackney Education
- Continue to ensure that all classrooms are optimally organised for disabled pupils
- Ensure school journeys are accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment
- To identify disability/Health needs across the whole school by Spring 2026.
- To develop a provision mapping system including an audit of projected needs for disabled/SEN pupils by Easter 2026.
- To conduct risk assessments for each identified student with a disability and complete accessibility plans.
- Train HoYs in accessing and analysing attendance information. Share relevant information with teachers and support staff.

STAFF RESPONSIBLE: SLT, HoDs and SENCo

RESOURCES:

- SLT to be given time each term to support and co-ordinate curriculum review.
- Hackney Education/other staff to deliver training programmes outlined above.
- Required funds to be allocated for printing of materials, overlays, IT, Re & DT equipment

MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

Progress towards meeting the goals and targets will be monitored by:

- Twice yearly meetings by the support Working Party/the Governing Body's SEN link Governor.
- As part of the school self-evaluation process.
- By feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff.

AREA TO BE ADDRESSED: Accessibility of Information

GOALS & TARGETS:

- Make teaching resources more accessible.
- Increase the availability of written material in alternative formats.
- Work with Hackney Education and neighbouring schools to identify and implement best practice on delivery of information to disabled pupils.
- Consult with pupils, parents/carers and staff on ways to improve access to information.

STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION:

- Audit teaching resources and accessibility to curriculum and ensure all new purchases meet accessibility criteria. Summer 2026; Heads of Department.
- SENCO to liaise with Hackney Education to develop bank of resources in other formats (e.g. Braille, symbols, large print, audio).
- Identify the preferred method of communication for disabled pupils, their parents/carers and staff.

STAFF RESPONSIBLE SLT, HoDs, SENCo, ICT Co-ordinator

RESOURCES:

- Appropriate costs to be allocated to purchase resources.
- One day to be given to HODs and SENCo to coordinate audits.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

- Termly meetings by the Support Working Party/the Governing Body's SEN link Governor.
- Feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff.
- As part of the school self- evaluation process.

AREA TO BE ADDRESSED: PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY
GOALS & TARGETS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the physical barriers to inclusion. • Ensure that recommendations of the accessibility audit done by the Hackney Education specialists are implemented. • Consult with pupils, parents/carers and staff on barriers to access.
STAFF RESPONSIBLE SLT, BUSINESS MANAGER, CARETAKER, SENCo, ICT CO-ORDINATOR
RESOURCES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs for refurbishment and other building work. • The school Business Manager, The Inclusion Manager and the SENCo to work with Learning Trust to identify short-term measures.
MONITORING & EVALUATION:
<p>Progress towards meeting the goals and targets will be monitored by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly meeting of the Support Planning Group /Governing Body's special needs link Governor. • As part of the school self-evaluation process. • Regular meeting with Hackney Education as part of Hackney Education accessibility strategy. • Feedback from disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Responsibilities:

- All staff are responsible for identifying and removing barriers to learning for students with a disability.
- All leaders are responsible for improving accessibility within their area of responsibility.
- The Local Governing Body is responsible for the approval of the policy
- The Executive Headteacher and Director of Resources are responsible for ensuring the resourcing, implementation and updating of policy.
- The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that all current students' needs are covered by the policy and for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy in meeting disabled students' needs.
- The SENCO and Site Manager are responsible for ensuring PEEPs are in place, reviewed annually, and communicated to relevant staff.
- All leaders must ensure compliance with digital accessibility standards (Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018).

Improving the Curriculum Access at Cardinal Pole Catholic School

Accessibility Action Plan (2025–2026)

Area for Development	Action Points	Outcomes	Timeframe	Success Criteria
Adaptive Teaching Training	Deliver fortnightly CPD sessions and one dedicated twilight per term focusing on adaptive strategies, assistive technology, and Universal Design for Learning.	All teachers confidently apply adaptive teaching strategies to meet the needs of disabled pupils.	Ongoing throughout 2025–2026	90% of lesson observations show evidence of adaptive strategies by July 2026. Staff feedback indicates increased confidence ($\geq 80\%$ positive).
Inclusive Out-of-School Activities	Audit all trips and extracurricular activities for compliance with Equality Act and SEND Code; implement accessibility plans and risk assessments for each event.	All out-of-school activities are inclusive and accessible to pupils with disabilities.	By July 2025	100% of trips have documented accessibility plans and risk assessments. Parent and pupil feedback shows $\geq 90\%$ satisfaction.
Classroom Accessibility	Conduct termly learning walks using an accessibility checklist; reconfigure layouts and resources as needed.	Classrooms enable participation and independence for all pupils.	By April 2025	100% of classrooms meet accessibility standards by April 2025. Audit reports confirm compliance.
Training for VI/HI Support	Provide CPD on strategies for visually and hearing-impaired learners; update Inclusion guidance; ensure	Pupils with VI/HI access curriculum independently or with targeted support.	By April 2026	All VI/HI pupils have individual access plans and resources. Staff CPD attendance $\geq 95\%$.

	individual access plans.			
Dyslexia-Friendly Status	Introduce dyslexia-friendly criteria; audit resources; implement house style for written and visual materials; deliver CPD.	Written and visual resources meet dyslexia-friendly standards.	Entry-level status by July 2026	Achieve Dyslexia-Friendly Quality Mark by July 2026. $\geq 90\%$ of resources meet criteria.
Digital Accessibility	Audit school website and digital resources; ensure compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA; train staff on creating accessible digital content.	All digital platforms and resources are accessible to pupils with disabilities.	By July 2026	Website and digital resources pass WCAG 2.1 AA audit. Staff trained ($\geq 90\%$ completion).

Improving the Delivery of Written Information at Cardinal Pole Catholic School

Area for Development	Action Points	Outcomes	Timeframe	Success Criteria
Availability of written material in alternative formats	Develop a formal Accessible Communication Strategy aligned with GOV.UK guidance: anticipate needs, consult disabled users, and plan for simultaneous release of accessible formats. Offer multiple options (large print, Braille, audio, Easy Read, coloured overlays, WCAG-compliant digital versions).	School can provide written information in preferred formats for pupils and parents without delay.	By March 2026	100% of key documents available in at least two alternative formats within 5 working days of request. Annual audit confirms compliance.
Dyslexia-friendly visual identity for written documents	Audit current resources; implement consistent house style using dyslexia-friendly principles: sans-serif fonts (Arial), minimum size 12pt, high contrast, left alignment, 1.5 line spacing, avoid italics/caps. Include	Written information follows a clear, dyslexia-friendly style and is accessible to neurodivergent readers.	By June 2026	$\geq 90\%$ of written resources meet dyslexia-friendly criteria. Staff trained in creating accessible documents.

	coloured backgrounds where needed.			
Dyslexia-friendly visual identity for presentation resources	Apply same principles to digital presentations; ensure WCAG 2.1 AA compliance: proper heading structure, descriptive links, alt text for images, high contrast, and captioning for videos.	Visual presentation resources are accessible to all pupils, including those with dyslexia and visual impairments.	By June 2026	All new presentations meet WCAG 2.1 AA and dyslexia-friendly standards. Random audits show ≥95% compliance.

Key Points of the Accessibility Plan

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools are required by the Equality Act 2010 to provide three-year plans with the aim of increasing the accessibility of the school's curriculum; improving access to information; and, where possible, improving the physical environment of the school to enable pupils, staff, parents, Governors and members of the wider community with special educational needs and/or other disabilities to take advantage of the education and associated services offered by the School.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust considers that a disability is a 'physical' or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term, adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities' (Equality Act 2010)
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan identifies the constraints at each school on accommodating those with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents of prospective pupils will be required to divulge information about their child/children's learning difficulties and/or disabilities and/or medical condition/need and/or SEND. The Trust will use this information to investigate what reasonable adjustments might be made to allow access to those pupils to the school and its services.
Current arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan identifies the current arrangements in place to enable pupils with special educational needs and/or other disabilities to participate in the curriculum; and for pupils, staff, parents, Governors and members of the wider community with special educational needs and/or other disabilities to access the school to take advantage of the education and associated services offered by the school.
Planned improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust will review annually as part of the budget process improvements to enable pupils with special educational needs and/or other disabilities to participate in the curriculum; and for pupils, staff, parents, Governors and members of the wider community with special educational needs and/or other disabilities to access the school to take advantage of the education and associated services offered by the school.
Reasonable adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When considering making a reasonable adjustment for any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as it deems appropriate. Where it is possible to make reasonable adjustments based upon the information given and advice received, to enable a prospective pupil to

	take up a place in the school and to satisfy the admissions criteria outlined above, the school will make such adjustments as it considers reasonable.
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The above Key Points are a synopsis and are not intended to replace the policy. The full policy must be read and followed in the event that it needs to be applied. If the Key Points are found to be in conflict with the wording of the full policy, the policy takes priority.

- **DDA Act Compliance:** Construction of Cardinal Pole RC School was completed in 2012 and was designed and built to be fully compliant with the Equalities Act 2010.
- **Access to the Building:** Access to the front of the building is at ground level. There is a powered disabled access door, which is operated by a push button. There is also access to the Sports Hall from ground level through the back gate by a similar means, but this is not in regular use unless this route is staffed specifically, or with by lift.
- **Access to Different Levels:** The school has two floors. It has lift access to all floors, which are accessed using a staff card. There is also a platform lift to provide access to the Sports Hall and a lift to provide access to the MUGA.
- **Accessible Toilets:** There are specific separate disabled toilets on all floors with their own wash basin and alarm cord.
- **Emergency Evacuation of Disabled Students:** In the event of the fire alarm being activated, the lifts will not be available for use. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) will be created and maintained for all pupils and staff with mobility or sensory impairments to ensure safe evacuation. Where disabled students are on upper or lower floors and do not have direct access to street level there are a number of measures in place. On each landing of the east and west staircases in the building are refuge areas, which are signed and have emergency intercom panels. The staircases are protected with two sets of 90 minute rated self-closing fire doors at all points. Learning Support Assistants who are dedicated to students with disabilities are trained as Fire Marshals and will play a specific role in the evacuation of disabled students.
- **Students with Medical Needs:** The School has students with complex medical needs and it is important that every effort is made for them to be included in mainstream settings and that staff receive training and advice from health professionals as appropriate. The school will store medical information on students on the Student Information Management System (SIMS and Bromcom) and will ensure awareness among relevant staff. There is a Medical Room which has its own disabled toilet access. Selected staff may be asked to carry out certain medical procedures or receive additional training. In all cases the school will work closely with parents or carers to develop appropriate care strategies for students with medical needs.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

SEND provision and accessibility will be monitored in line with Ofsted's 2025 framework, which includes SEND as a standalone category.

RELATED POLICIES

- Equality Policy;
- Equality Objectives;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Local Offer;
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Fire Evacuation Plan

Reviewing the Accessibility Policy: This will be reviewed by the Lead Responsible Person at the start of each Academic year to take into account changes in the student population. It may also be reviewed at any time during the Academic year should the need arise. This whole document will be reviewed as part of the Equalities Policy review every three years.