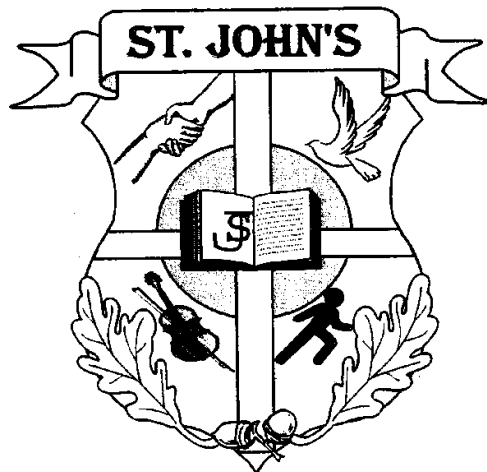


**St. John's Primary School
Bligh's Lane
Derry**

**Accessibility Plan
2026**

"Learning Together Growing Together"



1. Introduction

St. John's Primary School is committed to increasing access to the school for children, staff, parents, governors and visitors. This accessibility plan has been written in accordance with the planning duty under the Special Education Needs Order 2016 (SENDO) and Disability and Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010. This accessibility plan anticipates where possible the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs in the following areas: the curriculum, physical environment, and provision of information.

2. School Profile

St John's Primary school was established in 1971 to serve the growing needs of children and young people of the Moor Electoral Ward. The current building is 24 years old. At present, the school delivers a holistic and innovative educational experience to 488 pupils. The school is situated in the Creggan estate and has high levels of socio and economic deprivation. The school provides outstanding pastoral care and a good standard of academic learning. It is fully committed to providing high standards and access to a quality provision for all children with a range of disabilities and to ensure that visitors can access our premises and avail of information as well.

3. Our Vision and Values

The aim of St John's Primary school is to provide an inclusive, welcoming and rights respecting environment which embraces all children regardless of their ability and aptitude. This is reflected in our school mission statement, respect charter and positive behaviour policy.

4. Mission Statement

At St. John's Catholic Primary School, we provide a happy, nurturing, inclusive, learning environment, which delivers high quality outcomes and life- enriching experiences. We embrace diversity and encourage all to respect the environment and develop the confidence and digital skill set required to contribute to society and the local, global economy. We work collaboratively with parents/carers and community partners to promote the social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual well- being of everyone, thereby enabling our school family to 'Learn together and Grow together'.

5. Definition of Disability

Disability is defined as follows by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995:

"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 SEN. Some children defined as having SEN, who for instance may have a behavioural difficulty, may not be defined as being disabled. The plan addresses the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

It is important to remember that some children with a disability will have a special educational need and conversely, not all children with SEN will have a disability.

6. Legislation

Following the introduction of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005, we endeavour to pro-actively avoid the potential for discrimination on the grounds of disability in our admission arrangements, education and associated services provided or offered and suspension and expulsion arrangements by strategically planning via the Accessibility action plan.

SEND0 does not require us to either alter physical features or provide auxiliary aids or services, this accessibility plan should be viewed alongside our current Special Educational Needs policy for children with a disability who may require additional provision to be made to support their needs in line with the graduated approach as set out by the Code of Practice.

The SEN policy for St John's Primary school outlines the graduated approach in line with the code of practice and shows additional provision we can offer to support children with SEN.

7. Statutory duty of St. John's Primary School

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, as amended by the SEND Order 2016, which places a duty on all schools to plan to increase over time the accessibility of the school for children with additional needs and to implement their plan.

The school will follow the recommendations in the Department of Education's guidance '*Implementing the DDA in Schools and Early Years*' and '*Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils*,' issued by the DfES in July 2002.

Duties placed upon and accepted by the school under the DDA (as amended by SENDO 2016/The Special Educational Needs order 2005/ Disability Act 2016)

- a) Not to discriminate against children with additional needs in its admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- b) Not to treat children with additional needs less favourably.
- c) To take reasonable steps to avoid putting children with additional needs at a substantial disadvantage
- d) To publish the school's Accessibility Plan and ensure it is available in easy to read formats
- e) St. John's School is committed to an inclusive curriculum and increasing access to the school's facilities for all by:-

i. Increasing the extent to which children with additional needs can participate in the school's curriculum.

This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.

ii. Improving access to the physical environment of the school.

This covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.

iii. Improving the delivery of written information to children with additional needs.

This will include planning to make the written information that is normally provided by the school to its children, available to children with additional needs, by using augmented alternative communication devices.(AAC- Augmentative, and alternative communication devices.)

iv: To advocate for the voice of children with additional needs.

This will be evident in our PLPs which include parent, children and teacher views and learning perspectives for educational outcomes.

V: To liaise with parents and external agencies to provide to provide solution focussed approaches to overcome barriers that may occur with physical disability.

Meetings, support, sign posting and building relationships with outside agencies to ensure the best possible educational outcomes prevail.

7. Accessibility Plan

Under Article 18 of SENDO, the aim of the accessibility plan for St John's Primary school is to outline in writing how we will allocate adequate resources to implement, review and revise the plan over a period of three years in the following areas:

- a) Increasing the extent to which children with additional needs can participate in the school's curriculum.

- b) Improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which children with additional needs are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by the school.
- c) Improving the delivery to children with additional needs within a reasonable time, and in ways which are determined after taking account of their needs and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, as a result of information which is provided in writing.

8. Key Objectives

The key objectives of the Accessibility Plan are:

- a) That no child or prospective child is treated less favourably due to their additional needs. All reasonable adjustments will be made in matters of admission and education.
- b) That, where practical, the school will make reasonable adjustments, based on the information and advice received, that will enable a prospective child with additional needs to take up a place at the school if they satisfy the admission criteria.
- c) To make the school more accessible to children 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.
- d) To create a positive “can-do” ethos towards the issues faced by children with additional needs thus enabling them to take full advantage of the educational experiences offered.

9. Consultation

The school will ensure that it regularly, both formally and informally, consults with all 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 children and staff.

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

- Governors
- Parental Consultation
- School Council
- Appropriate charities and disability representation groups
- Voluntary Groups
- Any other group or organisation the school feels it would be beneficial to consult with
- Medical
- Ed Psych
- Local Impact teams
- Child conferencing

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).

10. Aims of ensuring compliance of DDA

Compliance with the DDA (1995) is consistent with the school’s aim and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school’s SEN/Inclusion Policy

The Access Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies and follow guidance from “*Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils,*” issued by the DfES in July 2002.

11. 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, children and people with additional needs.
- c) The plan will be kept under review and revised as necessary. The Governors will achieve this through Local Governing Board.
- d) The plan will be widely published and will be in the application and admissions pack sent to all children and is available on request as well as appearing on the school website
- e) The plan will be subject to monitoring by ETI during inspections.

12. Areas for consideration for accessibility

a) Curriculum

- Consideration of accessibility when planning educational visits.
- Effective procedures for the identification and support of pupils with Special Educational Needs.
- Comprehensive tracking systems and data analysis
- Appropriate transition and on-going information given to relevant staff via our ASTAC (A supportive team around the child) approach.
- Regular home school liaison via prompt meetings, parent meetings and reports
- Differentiated curriculum to enable all children to feel secure, supported and challenged in their learning journey.
- AFL (Assessment for Learning) strategies used to support reflective and feedback driven teaching and learning.
- Effective deployment of Learning Support Assistants to support a range of needs.
- Effective links with outside agencies to support a creative curriculum.
- A range of intervention programmes are available to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities to maximise learning in an appropriate and suitable manner and format
- All children are encouraged to take part in a range of physical activities – provisions are made when some disabilities cause the number of physical activities to be limited.
- All school visits and clubs are available to all children where at all possible
- There are appropriate Staff are trained in the administration of medicines for both chronic and reactive conditions
- There is a full and varied programme to support transition.

b) Physical Environment

- The school has two levels, foundation and KS1 classrooms on ground floor and KS2 classrooms on first floor-accessibility via playground double doors are wide for accessibility.
- Ground level provides larger adult toilets if needed for accessibility and a disability toilet on the first floor which has an accessibility cord.
- The lift is serviced regularly.
- The school has established an ICT suite on the first floor and an ICT suite on the ground floor for accessibility.
- Main entrance to the school office is step free.
- The foundation and P1 outdoor area has a step access and a ramp access to the forest play area.
- The outdoor play is situated on a hill without step access.
- Emergency and evacuation procedures are accessible to all at the present time.
- Alarms are auditory and assembly point is on the playground-or adjustments made to include an assembly point at the front office.
- There are regular fire drills to practise evacuations for children.
- Furniture and equipment are selected appropriate to age/size of children.

- Consideration is given to the classroom lay out to facilitate ease of movement around the room/access to equipment and resources, plus access to equipment and resources.
- Installation of window blinds/shutters in all rooms.
- Fire doors are in all classrooms.
- Adjustable arched desk is available for children who need to adjust for wheelchair height.

C) information

- The school will make good use of skills and expertise of agencies to support children with additional needs.
- Meetings will be arranged to ensure families have access to information to enable them to fully participate in the life of the school.
- Translators will be used to ensure parents have full access to information.
- The Parent APP, social media posts and website updates will be available to all parents.
- Visually clear and easy to read formats will be used for termly newsletters for parents.
- See Saw will be used in foundation to send pictorial or text information to parents.
- Written information will be sent home in children’s school bags.
- The school operates an ‘Open Door’ policy as staff are available in the school playground at 8.55am and end of day if appointments need to be made.
- Prompt meetings provide parents with a wealth of information about their child’s class.
- Transitions meetings will take place for children with additional needs prior to starting their journey at St John’s Primary school.
- Annual reviews and regular target setting, and feedback will happen with our PLPs between child, parent and school
- SEND coordinator will be available to explain assessment processes, to sign post parents or to adjust and amend any information needed, according to medical or special educational need.

Monitoring and Evaluation

St. John’s PS will update this Policy and procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it every two years.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Kathleen McCallion

(Ratified at Board of Governors’ Meeting)

(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

10. 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 child, parents and teaching staff. Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to support particular children with accessibility issues.

a) Improving Curriculum Access

Target	Action Needed	Leadership	Timescale	Outcome
Develop bespoke curriculum activities to meet the specific needs of individual pupils.	Advice from the local SEND Hub and Educational Psychologist in making the curriculum accessible to all children.	Curriculum Co-ordinator Premises, Health & Safety Co-ordinator (PH&SC) SEND Co-ordinator	June 2027	
Develop opportunities to meet the pastoral needs of pupils, particularly those struggling with emotional issues.	Provide training for teachers in understanding self-regulation and implementing strategies to support all children with their wellbeing. Incorporating wellbeing activities into the timetable.	Learning Support class teacher Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Curriculum Co-ordinator Safeguarding and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator.	June 2027	
Ensuring access to the Curriculum for children who need accessibility support	Gaelic/Football coaches/Swimming awareness of child in a wheelchair or with a disability Ensure full breadth of the curriculum is available to all. Ensuring at swimming lessons appropriate harness is in place- parent is able to come and Risk Assessment in place.	PE Co-ordinator SEND Co-ordinator Curriculum Co-ordinator Sports and Swimming coaches.	June 2027	

b) Improving the support for families in order to make the curriculum accessible for all

To ensure clarity in the strategies implemented in school, and support for learning at home the following actions will be implemented:

Target	Action Needed	Leadership	Timescale	Outcome
Help families to feel more supported in parenting, and understanding the strategies used in school to deliver our planned curriculum for children of all abilities.	Parent workshops on themes aimed to support families at home. Family Hub referrals in the local community if needed.	SLT Safeguarding Co-ordinator Family Hub support worker Parenting groups/webinar links	June 2027	
Meet regularly with parents	SEND Co-ordinator to ensure quality of provision is there-engaging with parents on any issues on accessibility around the school.	SEND Co-ordinator SLT Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)	June 2027	

C) Improving the Physical Environment

Target	Action Needed	Leadership	Timescale	Outcome
Implementation of Specialist Units in Mainstream and associated resource rooms	Collaboration with DE/EA on building adjustments Employ experienced staff Complete resource requisition.	SLT BOG	August 2026	
Ensure that the learning environment is appropriate for children with physical needs.	Purchase new resources to ensure that the environment remains safe and accessible for children of all needs.	Senior leaders Class teacher Caretaker	June 2027	
Map out accessibility routes for toilet and fire exits with caretaker	Walk around the school-ensure all wheelchair access points are clearly marked. Ensure a pathway to the toilet from each class is clear and supported.	Class teacher Caretaker Senior Leader LSAs	June 2027	
Make adjustments to the learning environment in response to the sensory and emotional needs of children.	Change displays, classroom organisation and timetabling as required to ensure that children remain regulated and happy. Use Rainforest room for sensory breaks if needed.	Class teachers LSAs PDMU coordinator Safeguarding and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator	June 2027	
Review lay out of the class and have an adjustable desk area for wheelchair access children.	Review lay out of class so that a child who may need a higher desk is not isolated-ensuring grouping and layout of the class is easily accessible for all children.	Class teachers Caretaker SLT LSAs Health and Safety Co-ordinator.	June 2027	