

COGNITA

St Margaret's Preparatory School



Accessibility Plan

September 2023 – August 2026

Our Ethos

The **ethos** of St Margaret's is to provide a high-quality all-round education, in a happy and caring family atmosphere, so that each child is well prepared for the opportunities and challenges that they will face in life.

Our Aim

Our **aim** is for every child to enjoy their learning journey, achieve their very best and to become responsible global citizens who can work together co-operatively and with respect for others.



Page Break

This Policy applies to the whole school and to the Nursery at St Margaret's.

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The document outlines our Accessibility Plan as required by the Equality Act 2010. The Act makes it unlawful for Cognita, which is the responsible body of a school, to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil or staff in relation to:
 - admissions;
 - the way we provide education for pupils;
 - the way we provide pupils access to any benefit, facility or service;
 - by excluding any pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 1.1 The Act outlines some protected characteristics (below) and we pay due regard to these:
 - Sex
 - Race
 - Disability
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy or maternity
- 1.2 This plan fulfils the requirements of the Independent School Standards.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 This Accessibility Plan outlines how we ensure that we are working to remove barriers to learning and access in our school. The plan is reviewed every three years.
- 2.2 The school aims to treat all its pupils, staff and visitors fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind
- 2.3 The school ensure all staff are trained in understanding equality and disability issues in line with the Equality Act 2010

3 Reasonable Adjustments

- 3.1 We aim to ensure that nothing we do as a school places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils. However, where we have to do so, we make sure that we take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- 3.2 When it is reasonable to do so, we provide auxiliary aids or services for a disabled pupil, when such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces compared to other non-disabled pupils.
- 3.3 Where an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN system (i.e. via a Statement/EHC Plan) there should be no assumption that it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Any decision would be taken on the basis of the facts of an individual case, including cost implications.
- 3.4 There is no legal definition of auxiliary aids. We interpret this to mean any or all of the following: helpful; providing support or assistance; and that these can be things or persons which help. We include hearing loops, adaptive keyboards, and special software.

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- 3.5 Our SEN Policy defines what provision we make available including reasonable adjustments in our school. We will consider what is reasonable in the context of our school, given the circumstances of each individual case.
- 3.6 Where the auxiliary aid has a benefit to the rest of the child's life outside of school, it would be unreasonable for our school to make such provision; e.g. hearing aids.
- 3.7 We consider that effective and practicable adjustments for disabled pupils will involve little or no cost or disruption, and will therefore be considered as reasonable. Where substantial adaptations are required which are not contained within our three year accessibility plan, we reserve the right to deem these as unreasonable.
- 3.8 It is our aim to ensure that disabled pupils play as full a part as possible in school life and our accessibility plan and reasonable adjustments help support that aim. Where any adjustment would have a detrimental effect on other pupils, we would not consider it to be *reasonable*. For example, if a geography field trip were planned to involve climbing and a wheelchair user could not take part, we would carefully consider how the disabled pupil could participate viably, but we would not cancel the trip because to do so would be detrimental to other pupils

4 Aspects of the Plan

- 4.1 Our Accessibility Plan focuses on the following areas:
- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
 - Improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
 - Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

5 Responsibility

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that the school has an Accessibility Plan which matches the needs of the school and to ensure that it is available on the school's website.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the Proprietor (via the Director of Operations) to ensure that the plan is reviewed annually and is fit for purpose.

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Actions to increase access to the curriculum and learning

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Curricular access	Ongoing: Academic Year 2023-24: sensory toys for some children as needed, weighted and vibrating toys. Accessible mouse for SB	SENCo Class Teachers	All children to have access to coloured overlays, pencil grips, personalised checklists if required. Sensory breaks for children with ASC Safe space with ELSA
Access for students with additional needs	Academic Year 23-24 PASS for identified children Academic Year	SENCo Class Teachers	Children identified with underlying mental health needs and plans written to support them
Resourcing to support access to curriculum and learning	Year 19-20 Laptop available to help Academic Year 2023-24: Continued use of laptops to record work, also use of dictate function and immersive reader.	SENCo Class Teachers	Higher level of recording of key ideas Use of laptops for writing for pupils who find writing incredibly challenging. Children identified on an individual basis for support with use of laptop
Transportation of students to include home to school, curriculum and sporting fixtures, and school trips	Year 19-20 – no needs identified Academic Year 2023-24: School car to be used for small local trips.		School car only seats a maximum of 8 people onboard. No more than 6 children, 1 driver and 1 chaperone is in attendance.

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Actions to improve the physical environment to enable those with disability to take better advantage of the education and facilities

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Staircase – Upgrades to provide contrasting colour risers vs nosings in Main Building.	Ongoing:	Facilities Manager/ Site Operative / Caretaker	Enables staircases to be clearly visible for unaided use by staff, Pupils, Visitors and Parents with VI.
Corridors – Improve décor to provide colour contrast to Skirting boards, Windowsills, Doors and/or door frames.	Ongoing:	Facilities Manager/ Site Operative/ Caretaker	Provide clear visibility for unaided negotiation of corridors for Staff, Pupils, Visitors and Parents with VI. Common corridors have white wall with contrast skirting & handrails. Classroom doors are also different colours.
Parking bays – Provide 2 permanent disabled parking bays within reasonable distance of the trio of School Buildings.	Ongoing:	Facilities Manager/ Site Operative/ Caretaker	Provision of this facility for use by genuine blue badge holders whether Staff, Visitor or Parent/Guardian. 2 x Temporary parking positions allocated in staff car park. 1 x permanent wall mounted sign and 1 x temporary sign is in position.
Maintain Clear Corridors and Fire Escape routes	Ongoing:	Facilities Manager/ Site Officer/ Caretaker	Enable unobstructed access for Wheelchair users, VI and Temporary Impaired users at all times.
Ramps – improve on and install suitable and sufficient access ramps to all entrance/exit areas where possible.	Ongoing: Academic year	Facilities Manager/ Site Operative/ Ca retaker	Wheelchair users are able to use all entrances/exits unaided. A pair of portable ramps were introduced to make access to Hall main entrance and Reception year classrooms thresholds easier for wheelchair use. New hardstanding platform installed directly to the rear of Hall (facing the field) in summer, which now enables the same ramps to be used here also.
Access – Corridor to Rooms. Remove raised thresholds where possible.	Ongoing:	Facilities Manager/ Site Operative/ Caretaker	Provide greater accessibility and ease of access for physically impaired and VI,

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			eradicating potential trip hazards.
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Actions to improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors

Targets/Strategies	Timing	Responsibility	Success criteria
Internal signage -	Ongoing - signage in Library for children with reading needs	SENCo Head of English Librarian	Higher level of access to reading material Improved signs in library.
Large print resources and use of coloured overlays	Overlays in use for children and some pupils with coloured glasses	SENCo Class Teachers	To ensure easier and more successful access to printed matter in lessons.
Pictorial or symbolic representations	Continue use of visual timetable and staff in EY wear emotion pictures on their lanyards to help emotional understanding of happy, sad, angry and excited.	SENCo Class Teachers Key Workers	To ensure children with additional needs are confident that they are aware of the structure of the day.
Readers/assistants for examinations	Academic Year 2023-24 - continue with exam support arrangements where prompter for GL online assessment for some children working in a smaller classroom.	Deputy Head SENCo Class and Subject Teachers	SENCO and SEND pupils to complete questionnaires in a separate room with assistance
Additional time for examinations	Additional time for children with diagnosed and undiagnosed needs	Deputy Head SENCo Class Teachers	To ensure all pupils perform at the best of their abilities and are measured accordingly.
Review of seating in classrooms and adapting lighting and equipment	Seating arrangements are altered regularly to accommodate children with particular needs following discussions in departmental meetings	SENCo Class Teacher	To ensure all needs of each child are considered.
PEEPS	PEEPS to be written and actioned if a pupil or staff member requires one.	Facilities Mgr	To ensure all are cared for in line with our ethos

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Ownership and consultation	
Document Sponsor	Director of Education Europe
Document Reviewer	Director of Education Europe and Head of H&S Europe
Consultation & Specialist Advice	
Document application and publication	
England	Yes
Wales	Yes
Spain	No
Switzerland	No
Italy	No
Version control	
Current Review Date	September 2023
Next Review Date	September 2026
Related documentation	
Related documentation	Health and safety policy and related documentation Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy Equality Act 2010