



Beaminster  
St. Mary's Academy

We love each other, learn together  
and inspire all to succeed.

# **Beaminster St Mary's Academy**

## **Accessibility Plan**

**01.02.2025 to 01.09.2028**

**Date agreed:** 05.03.25

**Review date:** 05.03.26

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**Approved by:** Beaminster St Mary's Academy - ASEC

## **1. Introduction**

All schools must have an Accessibility Plan. This is required by law - Equality Act 2010.

Accessibility Plans support current and future pupils with a disability.

The Equality Act says that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Accessibility Plans set out how, over time, a school will:

- a) increase access to the curriculum
- b) improve the physical environment of the school
- c) make information more accessible by providing this in a range of different ways

This is our school Accessibility Plan.

## **2. Vision and aims**

Our aim is for everyone at Beaminster St Mary's Academy to feel part of the school community. We are committed to making our school as accessible as possible. We want our pupils with a disability to:

- be fully included in school life
- actively take part in high quality learning
- thrive and enjoy their learning
- develop the skills to go on and lead fulfilled lives as adults
- be empowered, confident and able to function as independently as possible

We want our pupils with a disability to access all elements of school life. This includes school clubs, activities and trips. We recognise that we may have to do things a little differently to make this happen.

### 3. Objectives

At Beaminster St Mary's Academy, all staff and governors will be aware of, and working in line with:

- this Accessibility Plan
- the wider disability provisions set out in the Equality Act
- the United Nations Conventions on the rights of:
  - a) the child
  - b) persons with disabilities

Our SEND Governor will champion the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. They will be involved in developing and reviewing this Accessibility Plan.

Our staff will remove disadvantage faced by pupils with a disability by:

- adopting a 'can do' attitude
- having a flexible approach to teaching
- modifying the curriculum and environment

Person-centred systems will be in place to support the inclusion of pupils with a disability.

### 4. School context

Beaminster St Mary's Academy is a primary school located in the small rural town of Beaminster, Dorset. As an academy, we have the benefits of continuing to work alongside the Beaminster Pyramid of schools, as well as belonging to a family of schools under the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust. This allows us to collaborate with a wide range of schools, sharing skills, expertise, and joining together for various events.

As a Church school, we are proud of our links to St Mary's Church and aim to prepare children for their future by achieving a high level of academic success, underpinned by the Christian values chosen by the children: **trust, kindness, respect, responsibility, and friendship**. Our vision is to "**love each other, learn together and inspire all to succeed**", and this ethos is reflected in everything we do.

With 127 children on roll, our school community is a vibrant and inclusive one. We are proud to serve a diverse population, with 38% of our children eligible for Pupil Premium funding and 19% identified as having Special Educational Needs. Our commitment to supporting all children to reach their full potential is unwavering, and we work closely with families and external agencies to ensure each child's individual needs are met.

Our school building, while not the newest, is well-maintained and equipped to provide a safe and engaging learning environment for our children. The outdoor spaces, including a dedicated Forest School area, offer ample opportunities for exploration, play, and physical activity, all of which are integral to our holistic approach to education. Beaminster St Mary's Academy is a place where children are nurtured, challenged, and empowered to become confident, caring, and successful individuals. We welcome all families to be a part of our community and to join us in our mission to inspire every child to reach their full potential.

A copy of our floorplan is available upon request from the School Office.

## **5. Pupil data**

We ask for information about any disabilities or health conditions in early communications with new parents and carers. We also carefully observe our pupils' progress.

Where our pupils have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, we use the information within this to ensure that we have a good understanding of their disabilities and how to support them.

Current pupil data shows that at the start of the 2024-2025 academic year, 8% percent of our pupils were regarded as disabled under the Equality Act 2010. Our pupils have the following areas of need:

- According to the Equality Act 2010; In the UK, a disability is a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities.

### **Disabilities might include:**

#### *Physical Disabilities*

- Mobility Impairments
- Hearing Impairments
- Visual Impairments

#### *Cognitive and Learning Disabilities*

- Dyslexia and Dysgraphia
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders

#### *Speech and Language Disabilities*

- Speech Delays or Disorders

### *Emotional and Behavioural Disabilities*

- Anxiety and Depression
- Behavioural Disorders

### *Chronic Health Conditions*

- Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy:

### Outcomes for Pupils with Disabilities

- Academic Achievement: Monitoring academic progress and providing tailored support can lead to improved outcomes. Implementing Support Plans helps track and support the specific needs of each student.
- Social Skills Development: Participation in inclusive activities fosters social skills, empathy, and friendships. Social interactions are essential for personal growth and development.
- Confidence and Self-Esteem: Providing an inclusive environment where pupils feel valued and supported can boost their confidence and self-esteem, encouraging them to take on new challenges.

### Participation in School Life

- Clubs and Extracurricular Activities: Ensuring that all school clubs and extracurricular activities are accessible to pupils with disabilities is vital. This might include providing adaptive equipment, modifying activities, or offering additional support.
  - Examples: Sports teams can include adaptive sports, drama clubs can offer roles tailored to different abilities, and music clubs can provide instruments suited to the students' needs.
- School Trips and Outings: Planning accessible school trips ensures that all pupils can participate and enjoy these experiences. This might involve choosing locations with wheelchair access, providing additional staff for support, and ensuring that transportation is accessible.
  - Examples: Visits to museums with accessible exhibits, nature walks with clearly marked paths, and attending performances that offer sensory-friendly accommodations.

### Strategies for Inclusion

- Peer Support Programs: Encouraging peer support and buddy systems can help pupils with disabilities feel more included and supported in school activities.
- Professional Development: Providing training for teachers and staff on how to support pupils with disabilities ensures that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to create an inclusive environment.

- Parent and Community Involvement: Engaging parents and the community in supporting inclusive practices helps create a collaborative and supportive network for pupils with disabilities.

## **6. Audit**

To help us develop our Accessibility Plan, we undertook an environmental audit of Beaminster St Mary's Academy. This told us that:

### **Increasing Access to the Curriculum**

- Implementation of assistive technology, such as screen readers and text-to-speech software, to support students with disabilities in accessing learning materials.
- Ensuring the curriculum is appropriately differentiated to support students with specific medical, behavioural, and learning needs, such as children with hearing impairments or Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).
- Ensuring that children who are absent due to medical needs have full access to the curriculum from home.

### **Physical Environment of the School**

- Installation of ramps and elevators to improve accessibility for students with mobility impairments.
- Creation of sensory-friendly spaces to support students with sensory processing disorders.
- Upgrading of accessible toilets to ensure they meet the needs of all students.
- Ensuring all pathways are free from trip hazards.
- New door entry system to be fitted outside of the lobby area to enable accessibility to all.
- Ensuring all corridors and communal areas are kept free of clutter/trip hazards.

### **Making Information More Accessible**

- Review and update of appropriate signage to ensure clarity and visibility.
- Clear direction for visitors to the school reception entrance from both the car park and pedestrian entrance.
- Fire exit signage clearly marked to ensure safety for all occupants.
- Availability of written material in alternative formats, including different languages and easy read versions.
- Discussion with DSAT/DCC to ensure best practices are adopted and followed in regard to supporting Traveller families.
- Provision of written information in different formats when required for individual purposes, such as the use of symbols, large print, or augmentative communication technology, and contrasting colours.

## 7. Consultation

In developing our Accessibility Plan, we have consulted with:

- our pupils
- parents and carers
- our SENCO and SEND support staff
- other staff at the school, including the leadership team
- our SEND Governor and wider governing body
- DSAT
- relevant specialist services

These consultations told us that:

**Improving communication** is crucial. Parents, carers, and staff emphasized the need for clear, accessible information in multiple formats.

**Training for staff** is essential to ensure they are well-equipped to support students with diverse needs.

**Physical accessibility** needs enhancement, with a focus on pathways, entry systems, and clutter-free communal areas.

**Curriculum access** must be scaffolded to support students with specific medical, behavioural, and learning needs.

**Inclusive school activities** such as clubs and trips should be accessible to all students, regardless of their disabilities.

**Social and emotional support** is vital to help students with disabilities feel included and valued.

*This feedback will guide our efforts to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all pupils.*

## 8. Previous actions

### Access to the curriculum

During the period of our previous Accessibility Plan, we improved access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability through the following means:

- **Implementation of Individualized Support Plans:** Tailored support and accommodations were provided for students with specific needs.

- **Introduction of assistive technology:** Devices such as screen readers, text-to-speech software, and communication aids were introduced to support students with various disabilities.
- **Professional development for staff:** Teachers and support staff received training on inclusive teaching strategies and how to effectively support students with disabilities.
- **Creation of sensory-friendly spaces:** Designated areas were established to support students with sensory processing disorders.
- **Adaptation of curriculum:** The curriculum was adapted to support students with specific medical, behavioural, and learning needs, such as children with hearing impairments or Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).
- **Enhanced accessibility of school materials:** Educational materials were made available in multiple formats, including braille, large print, and digital versions.
- **Support for students with medical needs:** Students who were absent due to medical reasons had access to the curriculum from home, ensuring continuity in their education.

## The physical environment

During the period of our previous Accessibility Plan, we improved the physical environment of the school to increase access for pupils with a disability by:

- **Upgrading accessible toilets:** Ensured that the facilities met the needs of all students, including those with disabilities.
- **Creation of sensory-friendly spaces:** Established areas to support students with sensory processing disorders.
- **Removal of trip hazards:** Ensured that all pathways, corridors, and communal areas were free from trip hazards and clutter.
- **Improved signage:** Ensured that fire exits, and other important areas were clearly marked and easily visible.

## Access to information

During the period of our previous Accessibility Plan, we made information more accessible to pupils with a disability by:

- **Offering information in different languages:** Made school materials accessible in various languages to support students and families from different linguistic backgrounds.
- **Improving the clarity and visibility of signage:** Updated signage throughout the school to ensure it was easily understood by all pupils, including those with disabilities.



## **9. Sources of advice and information**

Our Accessibility Plan has been written following guidance from the Local Authority and considering the Dorset Local Authority Accessibility Strategy. Additionally, the following sources of advice and information have been used:

- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Dorset Local Authority Accessibility Strategy
- Local Offer for Dorset
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)
- Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)
- Autism Education Trust (AET)
- Speech and Language Therapy Services

## **10. Other policies**

Our Accessibility Plan complements and supports our:

- Special educational needs and disability policy and SEN information report
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions policy
- Equality information and equality objectives

It can also be read alongside the following school documents:

- Child protection policy
- Curriculum policy
- Staff development policy
- Health and safety policy (including off-site safety)
- Behaviour policy
- School development plan

## **11. Implementation and monitoring**

Our Accessibility Plan shows how we will continue to improve accessibility at Beaminster St Mary's Academy for pupils with a disability (and for staff and visitors to the school) over the next 3 years. It may be used to inform other school planning documents.

We will work in partnership with DSAT and Dorset LA in implementing the Accessibility Plan. Where necessary, environmental works will be guided by relevant buildings regulations.

Sufficient resources will be allocated to implement this Accessibility Plan.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed regularly (and updated if needed). It will be monitored alongside health and safety by the H&S Governing body during routine monitoring visits.

This Accessibility Plan runs for 3 years and will be updated in 01.09.2028. Once updated, we will advise our parents/ carers of this via our usual communications and on our website.

The Beaminster St Mary's Academy complaints procedure covers the Accessibility Plan.

## 12. Accessibility Action Plan

### Increasing access to the curriculum

Outcome 1			
What outcome do we want to achieve?	Ensure that all students have the opportunity to engage with and succeed in the curriculum, regardless of their individual needs.		
What actions will we take to achieve this?	<p><b>Implement Support Plans:</b> Develop and regularly update support plans for students with specific needs, ensuring they receive tailored support and accommodations.</p> <p><b>Provide Assistive Technology:</b> Supply devices and software such as screen readers, text-to-speech tools, and communication aids to support students with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Adapt Instruction:</b> Train teachers to adapt their teaching strategies and materials to meet the diverse learning needs of all students.</p>		
How can we tell if this is successful?	<p><b>Improved Academic Performance:</b> Measure academic progress through assessments</p> <p><b>Increased Participation:</b> Monitor participation rates in classroom activities, school clubs, and extracurricular programs to ensure all students are actively involved.</p> <p><b>Positive Feedback:</b> Gather feedback from students, parents, and teachers on the effectiveness of support.</p> <p><b>Reduced Absenteeism:</b> Track attendance rates to identify any reductions in absenteeism among students with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Enhanced Teacher Confidence:</b> Assess the confidence and competency of teachers in implementing inclusive practices.</p> <p><b>Successful Support:</b> Evaluate the achievement of goals outlined in Support Plans, ensuring that students are meeting their personalized targets.</p> <p><b>Student Well-Being:</b> Monitor the social and emotional well-being of students with disabilities through surveys and counselling sessions, ensuring they feel supported and included.</p>		
When will this work be done?	<b>Ongoing: 2025 - 2028</b>		
Approximate cost	£5000 – Adaptive technologies £1000 - CPL		
Responsible person(s)	Headteacher	<b>Date complete</b>	Sep 2027

## Improving the physical environment

Outcome 1			
What outcome do we want to achieve?	Enhance accessibility and safety of the school's main entrance and reception area		
What actions will we take to achieve this?	Install a safety railing between the main gate and the newly erected gate into the playground to provide additional protection for pedestrians.		
How can we tell if this is successful?	Successful installation of the safety rail		
When will this work be done?	Completion by September 2026.		
Approximate cost	Prepare and submit a bid for the work		
Responsible person(s)	Office Manager	Date complete	

Outcome 2			
What outcome do we want to achieve?	Maintain clutter-free corridors and communal areas.		
What actions will we take to achieve this?	Ensure all corridors and communal areas are free of clutter and trip hazards.		
How can we tell if this is successful?	Conduct weekly monitoring at the same time as Health & Safety (H&S) monitoring to ensure compliance.		
When will this work be done?	Continuous implementation.		
Approximate cost	No additional cost.		
Responsible person(s)	Caretaker	Date complete	

Outcome 3			
What outcome do we want to achieve?	Improve entrances and corridor access to classrooms within the building.		
What actions will we take to achieve this?	Install ramps to classrooms to maximize accessibility for disabled individuals		
How can we tell if this is successful?	Successful installation of ramps and improved accessibility in line with Health & Safety (H&S) guidelines.		
When will this work be done?	Completion by September 2028		
Approximate cost	Prepare and submit a bid for the work.		
Responsible person(s)	Caretaker	Date complete	

## Making information more accessible

Outcome 1			
What outcome do we want to achieve?	Ensure availability of written materials in alternative formats, including different languages and easy-read versions.		
What actions will we take to achieve this?	Provide written information in different formats as needed, such as symbols, large print, augmentative communication technology, and contrasting colours.		
How can we tell if this is successful?	Successful provision of written materials in required formats, ensuring accessibility for all individuals.		
When will this work be done?	Ongoing provision of written materials and information in other formats as required		
Approximate cost	No additional cost		
Responsible person(s)	Office Manager	Date complete	

Outcome 2			
What outcome do we want to achieve?	Ensure documentation is accessible for children with visual or hearing impairments.		
What actions will we take to achieve this?	Consider each case during the annual provision review and as classes/cohorts progress through the school.		
How can we tell if this is successful?	Successful adaptation of documentation to meet the needs of children with visual or hearing impairments		
When will this work be done?	Continuous implementation.		
Approximate cost	No additional cost.		
Responsible person(s)	SENDCo	Date complete	