

# ST THOMAS BECKET CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

# 2026 - 2027

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| **Approved by:** | Local Academy Committee | **Date:** | **October 2026** |
| **Next review due:** | Local Academy Committee | **Date:** | **September 2027** |

**Plan of Care Policy:**

The aim of this Plan is to meet the needs of physically disabled students, allowing them to access the National Curriculum and establish care systems that do not put carers, staff and other students at risk.

It is written on behalf of the LAC of St Thomas Becket Catholic School as the body responsible for Health and Safety issues at the school. Risk Assessments have been carried out on all buildings at the school this academic year; these are stored in the PA to the Headteacher's office and with the Senior Maintenance Technician and should be consulted when considering the needs of physically disabled students at the school.

It is the duty of all staff at the school to report any issue or situation that they feel may constitute risk to any student.

All staff are responsible for providing care for any disabled students in their lessons. Where appropriate, during unstructured times such as break and lunchtime, care should also be provided by suitably trained support staff. This Plan of Care Policy will be kept in the SENDCo's office and also in the Health and Safety file (HT PA's office).

**In lessons, staff are responsible for:**

- Ensuring safe access
- Arranging suitable convenient seating
- Following safe practice as recommended with regard to mobility and /or behaviour
- Advising disabled students and carers of ANY specific advice needed for that teaching area

For the purpose of this document, the terms

**Hazard** **Slight** **Risk** **Serious** **Major**

are interpreted as outlined in the NCC Health and Safety Management Booklet.

The school works with the Children and Young Peoples Service of the LA to identify and manage those students with special needs e.g. Visually impaired, Aspergers Syndrome and ADHD.

**Buildings and Grounds**:

Access to School for Wheelchair Users and other students with serious disability is to be via the sloped ramp at the main entrance to the school. Once the student has reached the entrance the buzzer should be rung, and the door held open for the student(s). In some cases, assistance will be necessary to aid entry.

The outside play areas are all in good condition and level and are accessible by wheelchair. All

entrances to the school are accessible by wheelchair. Two lifts are provided for access to the upper floor.

**Access/seating in classrooms**:

Wheelchair users should be helped into classrooms where required by carers and other staff. The students should then be seated as close to the door as possible. Where appropriate, the students should leave the lesson before the end in order to avoid congestion.

**Access to the Sports Hall should be via the main corridor.**

**Toilet facilities : Between Changing Room 1 (boys) and changing room 1 (girls)**

Safe facilities are to be found:

1. at the front of the school just inside the waiting room area.
2. in the sixth form block

**Wheelchair assistance:**

Where it is not possible to provide a motorised wheelchair, students should receive assistance in seating themselves correctly in the chair (this is also relevant to motorised Wheelchair users). Bags and other belongings should be on the student's lap or carried by others. This is also required where the disabled students are not able to carry their own belongings.

Where appropriate, student helpers will be able to assist with opening doors. Safe behaviour in the vicinity of the wheelchair/disabled student is essential at all times.

When helping a disabled student to a chair/wheelchair, staff must ensure that the furniture is solid, or in the case of a wheelchair, that the brake is applied. There may be a need for the help of two members of staff if a student is severely disabled.

When assisting disabled students, staff should make sure that they talk the student through what is happening as the movement takes place.

Disabled students should be encouraged to ask for assistance and state clearly their requirements/intentions to the appropriate staff.

**Breaks and Lunchtimes**

Where appropriate, staff should provide supervision for disabled students at these unstructured times. At lunchtime, the students should be allowed access to the dining rooms before the main student population. If necessary, supervision should be provided by support staff to ensure safety of the students. Where possible, friends should be allowed to accompany the students and to provide additional support.

Disabled students should also be accompanied to assemblies by designated support staff/carers.

**P.E**

Where possible, disabled students should be able to participate in P.E. As far as they are able, the P.E. teachers should differentiate according to the individual student's needs.

The adult responsible should evaluate the activity to ensure that it is safe to do, take account of likely movements, height of equipment and other obstacles and the other students.

Crash mats should be used appropriately.

All activities and related procedures should be thoroughly explained to the students before and during participation.

**Science and Technology**

Some adaptation may be necessary for disabled students according to individual need.

Risk assessments for these areas must be consulted carefully and amended where appropriate to cater for individual need.

**Access to the first floor**

For those students who are unable to use a staircase, two lifts are provided. They are

situated in the main corridor, near to the auditorium entrance, and at the bottom of the stairs in the Humanities Department.

**Fire Exits**

In the case of a fire and the student is on the first floor the lift cannot be used. There is an evacuation chair available on the first floor which can only be used by a trained person. Training carried out in November 2023.

Disabled students, particularly those in wheelchairs, should be taken to the nearest assembly point via the paths which circumnavigate the school. The route should be the shortest possible.

**Evacuation of people with hearing impairment**

In the case of the fire alarm sounding, all fire alarm beacons have a flashing signal on the base to alert anyone with a hearing impairment that the fire alarm has sounded and evacuation is in process.

**General advice**

In the case of non-cooperation by a disabled student, all staff should insist on compliance by repeating the instruction. No assistance, particularly where this entails physical movement of the student, should take place without full cooperation. If this is not obtained, help should be sought from another member of staff.