



Blackburn with Darwen L.A.

St. Thomas's Centre

Accessibility Plan

2024

Review Date: September 2025

Statement of Intent

Schools and LAs need to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils. These are the same duties as previously existed under the Disability Discrimination Act and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

This Accessibility Plan and the accompanying action plan forms part of the Disability Equality Scheme and sets out how the Management Committee will improve equality of opportunity for disabled people.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the DDA to cover education, so since 2002 the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils under the equality duty

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for reasons related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage including potential adjustments which may be needed in the future.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.
- The duty to 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.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Management Committee of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the Equality Act 2010:-

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
and
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

It is a requirement that the school's Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is an action plan, showing how the school will address priorities identified in the plan.

This plan incorporates the school's intention to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

In drawing up the Accessibility Plan the school has set the following priorities:

- To provide safe access throughout the school(s) for all school users, irrespective of their disability.
- To ensure that the teaching and learning environment and the resources used are suitable for all staff and pupils, tailoring the requirements to suit individual needs.
- To improve the delivery of information to all school users irrespective of their disability.

School Context

St Thomas's Centre is a pupil referral unit and provides education for pupils who are out of school. This is on two sites our lower school site caters for primary and Key Stage 3 pupils and our upper

school site caters for Key Stage 4 pupils there is also provision at the hospital which caters for both primary and secondary age pupil. St Thomas's Centre has a district provision which caters for pupils who are unable to attend school and are taught in the pupils' home.

All the pupils referred to St Thomas's Centre have additional needs either temporary or permanently which cannot be met within their mainstream / special school. St Thomas's Centre provides high levels of both support and expertise so that barriers to learning are removed and that our children can experience success as learners. Whilst all of our children have difficulties in managing their social, and emotional needs, many have additional special educational needs or disabilities. These range from conditions such as ADHD, Autism, Attachment Difficulties or Speech and Language Difficulties to specific learning difficulties, sensory processing difficulties, issues with fine or gross motor skills. Whatever the need, our staff work with other professionals to make sure that each child has the right level of support for them and that individual programmes are designed to help all pupils make progress.

Throughout their time at St Thomas's Centre, pupils are constantly assessed to make sure that they are making the right level of progress and to identify any additional needs or learning difficulties. If staff have any concerns about a pupil, those concerns will be discussed with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and with parents / carers. Tests such CAT 4, reading and spelling, Exam concessions for our Year 10 and Year 11 students.

Where appropriate our Educational Psychologist may also assess a child or advise staff on a specific issue. Our aim is always to provide targeted and individual support programmes to meet any additional needs our pupils may have.

We believe passionately in working with families and carers to provide an excellent standard of care for all of our pupils. All parents and carers are invited to a home partnership meeting each term to discuss their child's progress and additional needs.

Annual reviews EHC Plan are held with parents or carers and any other professionals involved. At all of these meetings, progress and new targets are discussed and shared.

School Aims

St Thomas's Centre works with pupils who are experiencing difficulties. We believe that all our pupils are entitled to the best education we can give them and to this end we employ highly dedicated, experienced and qualified staff. St Thomas's Centre will aim to meet the needs of all our pupils by providing a range of educational opportunities in a safe, caring and open environment. It is our expectation that all pupils succeed no exceptions, no excuses.