# St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Educate Protect Love Serve

# Accessibility Management Plan

## ***Plymouth Cast Vision***

***"Our mission is to be a community of outstanding schools in which our pupils flourish in safe, happy and stimulating environments and leave us with the knowledge and skills, personal qualities and aspirations, to make the world a better place, inspired by the Gospel."***

## Our School Vision

educate protect love serve

***With the love of Jesus and the inspiration of Mary at our heart, we will be the best we can be.***
***At St. Mary's we provide every member of our school family with the opportunity to achieve academically and thrive spiritually and socially.***

**Introduction**

The safety and wellbeing of all pupils, staff and visitors to our school is of paramount importance to us, we are committed to providing a safe and welcoming school. We will ensure children and adults entering our school environment are treated with sensitivity, respect and assisted in all ways possible, to ensure they have access to, and enjoyment of, the facilities they require.

This access management plan covers the use of the school premises during normal school term times, together with use of the premises by staff and pupils for after school activities. There are occasions when parents and relatives visit the premises to attend meetings with teaching staff or to attend plays or school Mass.

The Plan also provides for the occasional use of school premises by external parties, out of school hours.

**Access routes to the school – Pupils/Pedestrians/Vehicle**

The school is located on a busy residential road, with pedestrian access available via council maintained pavement walkways, and public pathways leading from residential areas. Vehicle access is along the road, with a small dropping off area outside the school with one disabled bay public parking spaces.

**Car Park**

Parking is within the school grounds, in this area there is a further disabled bay space which will allow wheelchair or mobility/sight impaired visitors ease of access into the upper part of the school via a level pathway leading to the reception area. Visitors will also be assisted by school staff if they require assistance.

**External access into the property**

The buildings are split into an upper level and a lower level. Pedestrian access to the school is via public pavements, or via public highway, entering the school grounds via a single metal gateway in the lower part of the school and a metal gateway along with a wooden gateway to access the upper part of the school classrooms. Once in the school grounds, pedestrian access to the main school building is via a long hard surface pathway leading to the main entrance door which has a small covered porch. There is a door entry access control system in place. Visitors must report to the main reception area. School office staff grants admission to visitors. The school office has the benefit of large windows on the external walls, providing the office staff with clear views of visitors approaching the school, enabling them to be ready to offer assistance to visitors on arrival.

**Building Occupancy times**

During term times, Mrs. Alison McDonald, Head Teacher, Teaching and Support staff are in occupation, before and after pupils arrive for daily lessons. School core operating hours are 8.50am-3.15pm.The school office is located at the main entrance into the school building, the office is manned between the hours of 8.00am-4.30pm daily.

The Caretaker is on site from 7am-11am. Specific cover is arranged for out of hours functions as required. Cleaning staff are on site from 3.30pm to 6pm.

Mrs. Alison McDonald, Head Teacher and a number of teaching staff generally remain within the school complex until approximately 6pm. The wrap around club also occupies the school building until 5.30 pm.
An external service provider is engaged to undertake nightly security checks of the property – 7 nights per week, and respond to call outs, alongside nominated members of school staff.

**School office locations**
The Head Teacher's office is located in close proximity to the school office and main reception entrance; staff enter via the main entrance and sign in and out at the entrance desk.

**Internal access routes – Visitors**
Once inside the building visitors have access to Male and Female toilets located off the main reception area, doors lead directly into the corridor or the hall, there is further access into the main school, and the upper school classrooms, the ICT suite and the staff room.
The lower apart of the school can be accessed from the ramp and through the lower school entrance, visitors will be accompanied to this door if they require access to the lower school. From the entrance there is a Disable access toilet available. Once inside the lower school, there will be access to the lower school classrooms and the nursery and library.
Wherever possible before a visit takes place the school will establish any particular access or special requirements our visitor/s may have, we will also provide details in advance of the visit, of the facilities available at the school. We will enquire if the visitor/s requires any assistance during their visit to the school, and provide this where appropriate, ie assistance on arrival or the need for a 'Host' for the duration of their visit.

**Internal access routes – Pupils and Staff**
Pupils and staff have access to the DDA toilet facilities located in the lower part of the school. Access doors to external areas are wide enough to cater for wheelchair user ingress/egress. There are currently no wheelchair users amongst the teaching staff. However, as on previous occasions, if a teacher using a wheelchair joins the school, they will be allocated to the classroom areas at the top of the building, which provide easy access.

Pupils with hearing or visual impairments (dependent on the level of disability) will be 'buddied' by a pupil or member of the teaching staff, when on the school premises. Risk assessments will be undertaken for pupils and staff as required.

**Playground/Recreation areas – Pupils and Staff**
The lower school playgrounds are at ground level, with additional playing areas/field located at the rear of the school. Access from classrooms to playing areas is via steps out onto a paved area. The field can be accessed via an external gate from the main road adjacent to the school. In addition there are also ramps leading down from the lower school classrooms into the play areas. Pupils using these facilities are 'buddied' at all times, however in order not to stifle their independence they are encouraged to negotiate their own progress along the ramp and pathways, where it is safe for them to do so.

**Staff Room**
The staff room is located in the upper part of the school.

**Staff Training/Awareness**
St Mary's Catholic school staff have empathy, understanding of, and will respond accordingly, to the needs of pupils, colleagues and visitors to the school who may have special needs. We have amongst our school family, a number of pupils with special needs, our staff care for and assist these pupils to go about their daily learning and development within the school environment. Our staff continue to develop a better understanding of assisting these pupils and dealing with any issues or anxieties arising during their time at school.

**SUMMARY**

St Mary's Catholic School endeavours to provide a warm, welcoming and caring approach to all our pupils, staff and visitors and will continue to strive to meet their individual needs, by working closely with them, listening and learning, and ensuring that we meet these needs by following and adhering to our Single Equality Scheme policy.

Checks to be undertaken in conjunction with daily/weekly building inspections (Premises Manager/Caretaker or in their absence designated deputy)

**Alarms/Access buttons/Toilet door locks**

 Test all audible alarms when fitted in DDA toilet, including fire alarm audibility from inside the area (weekly)

 Check external door locks to DDA toilet (ensure fully functional to enable helpers to access if assistance has been called for)

 Check main entrance access buttons fully functional

 Check infrequently used external doors for functionality

**Car Park/Pathways**

 Ensure car park clear of debris

 Ensure disabled car parking space available at all times

 Ensure line markings are clear and maintained

 Ensure grassed areas adjacent to paved pathway are kept clear of 'stray' growth

**Classrooms/Corridors**

 Repair/replace any damaged furniture, torn/damaged carpet/floor covering, faulty lighting

 Secure or remove loose cables

**Common Parts**

 Keep clear of obstacles

 Ensure directional/information signage in place

**Doors**

 Check for rough edges, damage. Repair or replace as necessary

 Check and secure any loose handles

**Escape Routes**

 Check and ensure all emergency escape routes and fire exit doors remain clear

 Check all emergency exits doors for ease of use, maintain hinges and door furniture on a regular basis

**Lights**

 Check all lights fully operational

**Steps/Ramps**

 Ensure appropriate steps are highlighted and markings maintained on a regular basis

 Check steps, paving and other external surfaces, repair, make good any damage