

**St Michael's C of E Primary School  
Penberthy Road  
Helston  
Cornwall  
TR13 8AR**

**ACCESS AUDIT**



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## INTRODUCTION

At the request of Shaun Perfect, the head teacher, I visited St Michael's C of E Primary School on 18 July 2016 in order to write their access audit and accessibility plan. (Legislation states that all schools must have these documents and they must be updated every 3 years.) This was my second visit to the school, having visited to write a previous plan in 2013. The school has implemented several of the previous recommendations from their last audit.

St Michael's C of E Primary School takes pupils from the ages of 4 to 11 years and has 402 (May 2016) pupils. It is a vibrant and successful school with a diverse community and a growing reputation for excellence in behaviour, extra-curricular opportunities and improving standards. They have high expectations of those who join them; they expect pupils to work hard and insist on high standards of behaviour. In return they offer the highest standards of support, encouragement and teaching that their staff can provide. The school is a happy, vibrant, inclusive community in which everyone works together to achieve their very best and is valued for their contributions. Their aim is to promote excellence in teaching and enjoyment in learning as the foundation for success in life through a rich broad and balanced curriculum. They believe they are always learning and that they learn most effectively when they learn together and by engaging children in relevant and exciting experiences they develop the joy of life long learning. They place a strong emphasis on trust, honesty, respect and tolerance, built on a secure foundation of positive relationships between children, staff, parents and governors.

Shaun Perfect provides clear and purposeful leadership. St Michael's C of E Primary School has a committed, friendly and well-qualified staff and benefits from a highly supportive and experienced Governing Body. Governors have an important role to play in the life of any school and St Michael's C of E Primary School benefits from the expertise and advice of a range of talented individuals drawn from diverse backgrounds. All of them support the School as volunteers and give freely of their time and knowledge. Each Governor has at least one area of responsibility and all are active members of their School family. The Board of Governors work on a fiduciary basis for the benefit of the school. They are responsible for ensuring that the aims of the school are fulfilled, that it remains true to its values and that it complies with the regulatory legislation which pertains to schools in England.

It is the aim and intention of St Michael's C of E Primary School to fully comply with current legislation and good practice. They wish to make their premises as accessible as possible, in line with local planning policy and the obligations imposed as service providers under the



Equality Act of 2010. The School believes in equal opportunities for all the children, irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, physical disabilities or ability

I have detailed my observations in section 4, The Audits, accompanied by comments and suggestions/recommendations. There is actually no such concept as being “fully DDA compliant” for an existing building. The phrase has entered the language but the legislation reads differently. A new public building will have to show disabled access, accessible toilets etc. but an existing structure will be asked to make “reasonable adjustments”.

The School has to anticipate the needs of its pupils and visitors as it doesn’t know who will be its future pupils/visitors, but it only has to react to the needs of its employees. So, it only needs to make changes in this regard for staff when it appoints someone, or when a current employee decides to disclose a disability. For staff adjustments it can apply for Government money to cover almost all the cost under the “Access to Work” scheme.

My recommendations represent current best practice, but the concepts of “best practice” and “reasonable” will change with time. This is why the Act recommends a school be audited every 3 years. A further audit should be performed in July 2019.

Fire Evacuation and Health & Safety legislation may conflict with DDA legislation. When this happens both will supersede DDA, although H & S and DDA often overlap anyway.

The Equality Act makes it clear to Schools that they must make “reasonable adjustments” to make premises accessible to all users. This has led the school to implement a range of changes in recent years to make their premises and curriculum as accessible as it can be. The school’s Accessibility Plan is available upon request and will be renewed every 3 years.

An accessible school is one in which disabled pupils are able to participate fully in the school curriculum. It is also one where the physical environment does not limit a pupil’s ability to take advantage of the education (and other) opportunities on offer. The school’s key objective is therefore to reduce and eliminate wherever possible any barriers to access to the curriculum and to allow full participation in the school community for all children, and prospective pupils, with a disability. The Equality Act of 2010 places a duty on all schools and LA’s to plan to increase accessibility in schools. St Michael’s recognises its duty in law:



- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions procedures
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- To publish an Accessibility Plan.

The School should all be complimented on the positive attitude it has towards inclusion and its ambitions to breakdown any barriers.

In the meantime, I am available, at any time, should you require clarification or further advice on any topic in my report. With my report is included 24 hour support and advice on any aspect relating to accessibility.

Lesley Mifsud B.A. (Hons) Cert.Ed.

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## 1.1 Audit Process

The audit was undertaken in three stages:

### Stage 1. Information gathering

This is undertaken as a walkthrough audit and inspection of the building using checklist.

### Stage 2. Results and recommendations

The report suggests possible improvement that can be made to the building. These range from small non-structural adjustments to possible major structural alterations. It also gives an indication to priorities and cost.

Checklist Ref:	Description	Applicable	
		Yes	No
1	Approach to School	Yes	
2	Car Park	Yes	
3	Route to Main Entrance	Yes	
4	External Ramps	Yes	
5	External Steps	Yes	
6	Entrance Doors	Yes	
7	Lobby and Reception Area	Yes	
8	Reception Desk	Yes	
9	Corridors, Hallways and Internal Circulation	Yes	
10	Wayfinding and Signage	Yes	
11	Classrooms and Facilities	Yes	
12	Access to the Curriculum	Yes	
13	Internal Stairs and Steps		No
14	Internal Ramps		No
15	Internal Doors	Yes	
16	WC's general provision	Yes	
17	WC's Provision for Disabled users	Yes	
18	Kitchen and Dining Hall, Staff Room	Yes	
19	Means of Escape	Yes	
20	Building Management	Yes	
21	Lifts/Stair Lifts		No
22	Outdoor Spaces	Yes	

## 1.2 PRIORITIES

The priorities are dependent upon various factors including:

- Compliance to AD M (Part M of The Building Regulations)
- Client's policy and objectives
- Current use of the building
- Costs involved and available resources
- Plans for refurbishment
- Maintenance programmes
- Agreement of outside agencies (such as a free holder or local highway authority)

Priority ratings are as follows:

### Priority A:

Where there are potential health and safety risks or where failure to implement changes would be highly likely to attract legal implications. Immediate action is recommended to put changes into effect.

### Priority B:

Where action is recommended within the short term to alleviate an access problem or make improvements that will have a considerable impact.

### Priority C:

Where action is recommended within 12 - 24 months to improve access.

### Priority D:

Where the recommendation involves excessive costs or should be implemented as part of a long-term plan.

## 1.3 KEYS FOR COSTS

Budget costs have been included in the form of bands.

- N - None
- M - Minimal
- OG - Ongoing Maintenance
- ST - Structural Change
- EX - Major Structural Change

Please note cost keys are indicative only and that Ea-Audits cannot be held liable for any misinterpretations.

## 1.4 ABBREVIATIONS

Used throughout the report are the following abbreviations:

- DDA - Disability Discrimination Act
- BS8300 - British Standard BS8300: 2009 - Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the need of disabled people
- AD M - Building Regulations Approved Document M - Access to and Use of Buildings
- FFL - Finished Floor Level
- EQ - Equality Act 2010

## 1.5 SOURCES OF GUIDANCE

Whilst for this project AD M is being used for measuring compliance, associated with the DDA, are a number of guidance notes and standards that illustrate good practice in terms of meeting the needs of disabled people.

Listed below are some documents that have been utilised for the purpose of this report.

Building Regulations Approved Document M - Access to and Use of Buildings (2004)

British Standard BS8300:2009 - Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the need of disabled people.

DDA 1995 Code of Practice 'Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises' 2005.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005, HMSO.

British Standard BS9999:2008 - Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings.

JMU Access Partnership & Sign Design Society - Sign Design Guide- A Guide to Inclusive Signage (2004).

The Access Manual, by Anne Sawyer and Keith Bright, Blackwell, 2003.

Access Audit Price Guide, Building Cost Information Service, 2002.

Please note however the 'DDA' is not prescriptive in its recommendations to improve accessibility. As such, compliance with the Act cannot ultimately be determined or used as a method for assessing accessibility. Only tangible standards set out in guidance documents such as BS8300: 2009 can be referred to for 'compliance'.

## 1.6 IMAGES

Please note external images are used within this report; these are for illustrative purposes only. External images are indicated along with their source.

## 1.7 METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this report is to ensure that the school meets with the requirements of part IV of the Equality Act as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and so does not discriminate against disabled pupils.

However the report will also deal with the obligations under section III of the Equality Act 2010 which relates to the provision of services to members of the public.

In order to achieve this, the report will identify where both the property and teaching processes do not meet current best practice standards and will recommend ways to overcome these issues which may incorporate adjustive works, changes to policies and procedures or a combination of the two.

It is unlikely that you will be able to implement all of our recommendations in the near future and we do recognise this. To this end a priority rating is given to each recommendation, which is designed to guide you in the formulation of the accessibility plan, which then can be incorporated into the school accessibility strategy.

The Equality Act 2010 (Old DDA) will affect the school in a number of different ways and whilst the focus of this audit relates to education this is not the only aspect where the act will apply. Three sections of the Equality Act apply to the school. The obligations under each section are outlined below:

## **Part IV - Education**

The special educational needs and disability act 2001 extends part IV of the Equality Act which now requires that you do not discriminate against disabled people in their access to education by imposing a planning duty. As a result the school is required to prepare an Accessibility Plan to cover the following areas:

Increasing access to the school curriculum for disabled pupils  
Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils  
Improving physical access to the school environment

In turn, the school is obliged to formulate an accessibility strategy to cover all parts of the school which will relate to the accessibility plan. These obligations should compliment and integrate with the school existing special educational needs framework and should integrate with your existing SEN arrangements. This planning duty came into force in September 2002. This required that schools should have had their plans in place by April 2003. Each plan should run for minimum of three years.

There is a duty to implement, review and revise these plans, which will be regulated and then enforced by OFSTED. Independent schools will be policed by the Independent Schools Inspectorate as part of the existing schools inspection program.

## **Part 111. - Service provision**

Any area of the school that is let to, or visited by members of the public will be covered under this section of the Act.

Under this section you are obliged to make reasonable adjustments to these areas to make them accessible to members of the public. These may include physical adjustments or adjustment policies, practices or procedures to overcome barriers to access.

## **Part II - Employment**

As an employer it is illegal for the school to discriminate against disabled people in terms of employment, which may involve making reasonable adjustments to policies, practices or procedures or physical alteration to the premises.

This will cover areas such as recruitment, promotion and dismissal as well as premises.

In terms of premises this presents a reactive duty, as there is no obligation to take anticipatory steps to make a building accessible but rather to make reasonable adjustments for each disabled person.

This being said it will be prudent to incorporate accessibility into any refurbishment of staff areas.

We have outlined above the legislation, which applies to this school, and you will note that you have obligations under Part II of the Act in respect of employment. This area of legislation is very much related to the individual employee or potential employees and as such will generally represent a reactive duty, with alterations being designed to meet the individuals' needs. As a result private areas not open to members of the public, or pupils, such as offices and staff areas will not be covered by this report.

Our general advice in respect of these areas is to have a procedure in place to identify the needs of the employees or potential employees and then make physical alterations, when necessary, to suit the individual.

We further confirm that plant rooms and worktops etc not used for educational purposes are not covered by this report.

As the schools SEN provision should focus on individual pupils needs, including auxiliary aids, specific arrangements and teaching assistance (which may need to be funded by parents), this report does not seek to recommend specific adjustments to individual classrooms relating to items such as furniture or equipment. We feel that such items should very much be designed to meet the individuals requirements and as such widespread alterations may in fact be a waste of resources, as generic solutions may often not deal effectively with an individual pupils needs.

However, we will deal with more strategic issues such as timetabling, educational practices and making the learning and recreational environment more accessible.

Although we have included the code of practice for means of escape for disabled people within our criteria, this report should not be considered as a detailed assessment of the overall means of escape provision, which should be included in the schools emergency evacuation plan.

This audit will now consider each of the barriers that a disabled visitor or pupil will face when attending your school. It will consider what we believe to be reasonable action to be taken to overcome that barrier. It will also give a guide as to the priority for the urgency for incorporating those changes into the school day. We have also provided a cost band giving the likely cost approximation of instigating changes to you premises.

In the audit we have tried to explain why a recommendation has been made, to justify why no action has been recommended where a problem exists, to give the school an insight into the problems disabled people face in accessing education/other services/of the site and also to provide more detail and further guidance as to how the recommendations should be implemented.

## **1.8 USEFUL ORGANISATIONS**

Disability Rights Commissions

DRC helpline

Freepost

MID 020164

Stratford-upon-Avon

CV37 9BR

Telephone (0845) 762 2633

Fax (0845) 777 8878

Text phone (0845) 762 2644

Radar – Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation

12 City Forum

250 City Road

London

EC1V 8AF

Telephone (020) 7250 3222

Fax (020) 7250 0212

Minicom (020) 7250 4119

National Institute for the Blind

RNIB Customer Services

PO Box 133

Peterborough

PE2 6WS

Telephone (0845) 7023153

Minicom (0845) 585691

Royal National Institute for Deaf People

19 - 23 Featherstone Street

London

EC1Y 8SL

Telephone (020) 7296 8000

Text phone (020) 7296 8001

Fax (020) 7296 8199

Disabled Living Foundation

380-384 Harrow Road

London

W9 2HQ

Telephone (0845) 130 9177

Minicom (0870) 603 9176

## **Section 2 - Consultation**

### **2.1 ACCESS GROUPS**

For the purpose of this report, consultation with local Access Groups has not been undertaken. It is advisable to seek advice from various users groups and appropriate employees prior to undertaking specific adaptation works as a result of recommendations within this report.

### **2.2 CONSERVATION AREA / LISTED BUILDING STATUS**

The site or buildings do not have a listed building status. Professional advice must be sort for planning applications.

### **2.3 FIRE OFFICER**

Where recommendations have been suggested that may have an effect on the evacuation strategy, additional consultation with the Fire Officer is advised prior to works being undertaken.

## Section 3 - Site Details

### 3.1 DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Description	Details
Date of Construction:	1958 and the infants in 1963
Constructed of:	Traditional Construction
Number of Buildings	2 Infants and Junior Buildings
Access Via:	Main Front Entrances and various entrances into classrooms and other areas
External Areas:	Trim trails for both blocks. Reflection Space - junior block. Shelters, sand pits etc - Reception and Year 1. Field and playgrounds
No. Passenger/Platform Lifts/Stair lifts	None
Staircases	None


### 3.2 FACILITIES IN PLACE

Facilities	Details
Ramps	Yes
Platform lifts	No
Stair lift	No
Visual indicators for fire alarms	No
Induction loops / Infrared systems	No
Accessible toilets	1 in main building and Further Disabled Toilet planned for Infant Building
Tactile signage	No
On site assistance	On Site
Designated Disabled parking areas	One
Evacuation chairs	No
Fire protected lift(s)	No

### 3.3 Site Location

## **St Michael's C of E Primary School Penberthy Road Helston Cornwall TR13 8AR**



Item No.	Comments	Recommended	Priority	Est. Cost
<b>Summary</b>				
1.1	 <p>St. Michael's Church of England Primary School is situated in Penberthy Road, Helston, Cornwall. Helston is a town and civil parish in Cornwall, England, United Kingdom. It is situated at the northern end of the Lizard Peninsula approximately 12 miles (19 km) east of Penzance and 9 miles (14 km) south-west of Falmouth. Helston is the most southerly town on the island of Great Britain and is around 1.5 miles (2.4 km) farther south than Penzance. The population in 2011 was 11,700. Helston is on the A394 road. To the west, the A394 leads to Penzance; to the north-east it leads to Penryn where it joins the A39, which leads south to Falmouth and north-east to Truro. The B3297 runs north from Helston to Redruth. First South West provides the (34) bus service from Redruth station to Helston as well as other services to nearby towns and the Lizard peninsula.</p>			
1.2	<p>The Equalities Act 2010 requires all schools to prepare and implement an accessibility strategy to improve the physical environment of the school for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs (SEN). This should include consideration of their particular health and safety needs on the school premises and how these can be met. Compliance with the Equality Act is not about avoiding being sued or fined but about caring for staff and pupils and improving your facilities for everyone. Legislation for schools states that schools must make 'reasonable' adjustments to their school buildings to make access available to all. Provisions should not just be restricted to improving wheelchair access, only 5% of those with disabilities are in wheelchairs.</p> <p>There are 600,000 wheelchair users BUT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.5-3 million visually impaired</li> <li>• 1.5-6 million reading difficulties</li> <li>• 8 million deaf or hard of hearing</li> <li>• 15 million mental health difficulties</li> <li>• 1 in 3 people over 55 have Arthritis</li> </ul>			
1.3	<p>Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and schools, including independent schools have duties to make physical improvements to increase access to the school buildings which means they must gradually implement plans to improve access for disabled children. Schools should regularly review their policies, practices and procedures to ensure that disabled children are not at a disadvantage because of their disability.</p>			
1.4	<p>Under the Equality Act of 2010, Schools are expected to take 'reasonable steps' to meet the needs of disabled children who might become pupils. So schools should think about the broad range of needs of pupils with different disabilities. However this does not necessarily include making changes to school buildings to make them accessible or providing specialist equipment or support. Both these areas are dealt with via different routes - the new planning duty for schools and LEAs and the Special Educational Needs Framework respectively.</p>			

- The Disability Equality Duty (DED) for the public sector is a new legal duty that requires all maintained primary and secondary schools and independent schools to take proactive steps to ensure their disabled pupils, staff and governors, parents/carers and other people using the school are treated equally. The new duty is not necessarily about changes to buildings or making adjustments for individuals, it's about weaving equality for disabled children and adults into the culture of schools in practical and demonstrated ways. Disability equality will need to be at the
- 1.5 forefront of policy development, and schools who are not already doing so, will need to start making institutional changes across the board, as well as continuing to take action to meet the needs of individuals. The DED is not about ticking the right boxes quickly. It is about a whole organisational approach to disability equality, achieved over a period of time. Schools offer a place and a reason for interaction and engagement between different children, employment opportunities for adults, and increasingly, services for the whole community. Schools are uniquely placed to help challenge and overcome discrimination in society.
- The provision of education for all regardless of their age, size, ability or disabilities depends on a wide range of factors, including school policies, curriculum planning, teaching strategies, and the school environment. Well-designed schools allow all students to participate fully and independently. This frees their teachers to focus on educational goals. Students with disabilities should be able to get around the school along with their peers. They need to be able to navigate through the school building, use standard classroom equipment, and use their own assistive technologies with ease.
- 1.6
- Ensuring accessibility of any activities or events that involve travelling outside school grounds will help all students to participate fully in school life. This would include educational trips, such as, visits to museums or theatres, visits to other schools, sports events, or work experience. It is also important to review the accessibility of the destination, and the transport to and from the destination, as part of the planning of any such activities.
- 1.7
- Every year group participates in educational visits. These include visits to Pendennis Castle, Maritime Museum, a train journey and beach day at St. Ives, Feadon Farm and the Helston town museum. In addition there are two residential visits to London and an outdoor camp at Porthpean or the Isles of Scilly.
- 1.8
- The guidance in this audit focuses on the needs of students with disabilities. However, students are not the only people to use the school building. Teachers and administration staff, parents, visiting students, and those who use the school outside of core hours all have particular requirements. A 'universal design' approach allows all users to make use of the services available in the school building. A 'universal design' approach to school design will ensure that the school can be accessed, understood and used
- 1.9
- to the greatest possible extent
  - in the most independent and natural manner possible
  - in the widest range of situations, and
  - without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solutions
- This audit is not designed to address all possible barriers for students with disabilities taking part in school life. There may well be issues around curriculum design, staff training, access to personal care, interpretation services, and access to information that go beyond the scope of this audit.

- Students with disabilities will have certain unique requirements that impact how they use school facilities. For example :
- Students with mobility disabilities may have particular difficulties with steps, or heavy doors. They may need additional desk space if they use a wheelchair, or additional storage space for a walking frame or crutches
  - Students with visual difficulties will benefit from improved lighting and clear visual contrasts on doorframes and support columns
  - Some students with emotional, psychological or mental health difficulties will benefit from a calming environment created by appropriate use of light and colour schemes
  - Many students have particular requirements for access to laptop computers or other assistive technology. Availability of power points for recharging will greatly benefit these students
- 1.10
- On 5 April 2011 the Public Sector Equality Duty (The Equality Duty) came into force in England, Scotland and Wales. This Duty replaced the existing Race, Disability and Gender Equality Duties. More and more responsibility has been given to schools in the UK to promote equality and improved access to the building and the curriculum should be at the forefront of all school planning. Schools need to ensure they have taken all 'reasonable measures' to make their building and curriculum as accessible as possible.
- 1.11
- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 (now replaced by The Equality Act 2010) aimed to end the discrimination that faces many pupils with disabilities. The legislation requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. It also allows the government to set minimum standards so that all schools built in the future are completely accessible.
- 1.12
- Improvement in communication technology (internet, email, text messaging, social networking sites and video phone links etc.) has enabled easier links between deaf people, and between deaf people and those with hearing. This has also served to emphasise the importance and value of good literacy skills and encouraged better levels of attainment. The consequence of all the above changes has been the raising of educational expectations for deaf children, particularly in respect of language, achievement and attainment levels. These can be are much closer to hearing norms for many deaf children than was previously considered possible.
- 1.13
- The School's Information Act 2012 required the online publication of a large number of documents and policies. These can easily be found on the school web site.
- 1.14
- Providing information on the accessible features of a building and its grounds on the school website is useful for potential new students and first-time visitors to the school. For visitors, there are contact details for the school. The website is very informative and the school has created the website to keep parents up to date with school news and notices, and to showcase some of the great things their pupils are achieving. Their web site is also a reference point for information. The school is committed to making its web site as accessible as possible to users with disabilities, including users who may be blind or partially sighted. They also make sure that those users who have reading difficulties are able to use the site. The school has designed their site to be accessible for disabled users and visitors using the different technologies (browsers, screens etc.)The school is also aware of the needs of adult users and of its parent body. Information for parents can be provided in large print format on request. If any parents need any other form of adaptation or accommodation the school asks that people get in touch with them so that they can discuss how best to help.
- 1.15

Schools will vary widely in how accessible they are to individual pupils. Every school must have a school accessibility plan, which shows how they intend to improve accessibility for special educational needs pupils, and by when these improvements will be made. In order to prepare the plan a school must firstly commission the completion of an Access Audit which is what St. Michael's Primary has done. Under the Equality Act 2010 schools should have an Accessibility Plan. This plan must be published. It will outline how the school will:

- 1.16
- improve the physical environment
  - make improvements in the provision of information
  - increase access to the curriculum
- The Accessibility Plan is listed as a statutory document of the Department for Education's guidance on statutory policies for schools. The Plan must be reviewed every three years and approved by the Governing Body. The review process can be delegated to a committee of the Governing Body, an individual or the Head.

- 1.17
- Schools can also increase access for individual pupils by making 'reasonable adjustments'. These can be simple changes such as making sure that all lessons take place in ground floor classrooms for a class where one of the pupils uses a wheelchair and the school does not have a lift. Changes to the physical environment that a school could make to increase access might include:
- lighting and paint schemes to help visually impaired children
  - lifts and ramps to help physically impaired children
  - carpeting and acoustic tiling of classrooms to help hearing impaired pupils

- 1.18
- Information that is normally provided in writing (such as handouts, timetables and textbooks) can be made more accessible by providing it:
- in Braille
  - in large print
  - on audio format
  - using a symbol system


- 1.19
- Adjustments that would help children with disabilities have better access to the curriculum might include:
- changes to teaching and learning arrangements
  - classroom organisation
  - timetabling
  - support from other pupils



- 1.20
- Technology suited to pupils' needs can help them learn faster and more easily. This can increase their access to the curriculum. Examples of technology that can help include:
- touch-screen computers, joysticks and trackerballs
  - easy-to-use keyboards
  - interactive whiteboards
  - text-to-speech software
  - Braille-translation software
  - software that connects words with pictures or symbols




The school has done everything it can to comply with The Equality Act 2010 with all areas of the school being accessible by one means or another. Reasonable adjustments have been made for all children with SEND where necessary.

- 1.21 The School has 3 buildings one of which houses the Infants Department another houses the Junior Department and the third building holds a private Nursery. There have been a number of alterations and improvements since the previous audit was undertaken with a lot of money being spent on the Junior Department.  
This Audit relates to the Junior and Infant Departments only.

## Approach to the School

- 2.1  St. Michael's Primary is situated within a residential area in the centre of Helston. The pedestrian routes are good and access is easy with disabled access. The surfaces are in good condition. Tactile paving/dropped kerbs have been used. (Normally used to assist disabled people when the route involves kerbs). Tactile paving (also called truncated domes, detectable warnings, tactile ground surface Indicators, detectable warning surfaces) is a system of textured ground surface indicators found on many footpaths, stairs and train station platforms to assist pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired.)  
There is a crossing and bus stop close to the School entrance, but not right outside.

- 2.2   
 Traffic can be a particular hazard for some people, including people with mobility difficulties, those who have difficulty remembering and concentrating, and for those with sensory disabilities who cannot hear or see the vehicles. In the school grounds, schools should provide separate routes or pavements for pedestrians and pupils to keep them away from vehicles. The most effective way to do this is to separate pedestrian from vehicle activity, by making routes entirely separate. Where possible, pedestrian traffic routes should represent the paths people would naturally follow (often known as 'desire lines'), to encourage people to stay on them.  
In the School grounds Zebra crossings have been installed, where pedestrians need to cross the line of traffic.

- 2.3   
  
 St. Michael's Primary has 3 pedestrian entrances, 2 are at the main car park entrance with a further entrance by the Infant Building. Signage has been provided indicating the different entrances. There are no obstructions from the main pedestrian entrances to the school entrances and the routes are smooth and free from loose stones. The routes are free from hazards and easily accessible and are also well lit. Although I surveyed the buildings in the day time, the routes are free from shadows and would not cause a problem for the partially sighted. External street lighting is provided throughout and is available on approach to the site. Adequate lighting is essential for all visitors and staff not just the disabled. Avoid strong lights or heavy shadows.  
Children enter their School classroom directly from the playgrounds.

- 2.4 To get to and from school, St. Michael's Primary encourages walking for the pupils who live near by. There are lots of benefits: it's healthier than travelling by car, it improves the safety of pedestrians and road-users, and it respects nearby residents and parking regulations. They ask all parents that if they do need to travel by car, to park considerately outside the school gates and not block driveways.

There is no parking for parents in the School grounds.

- 2.5 The school takes safeguarding very seriously – they ensure their children are kept safe in lots of different ways: They only employ qualified and trained staff who have had an enhanced criminal records check. All volunteers and visitors are also checked and given a "Safeguarding" briefing before they have access to the site. They have a safe and secure building and grounds; They carry out daily, weekly or yearly risk assessments for the equipment and areas used by all children, both in the school grounds and whenever they go for trips beyond their boundaries. All staff have regular safeguarding training and they focus on the well-being of every child individually. This means that all parents and visitors to the school may only be given entry to the building after they have registered with the school office staff at the main entrance. There is a manual signing in procedure. The school has Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies which are available to view on the school website.

- 2.6 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Teacher Standards 2012 state that teachers, including head teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. The statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014) is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- 2.7 St. Michael's Church of England Primary School. fully recognises its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure effective arrangements within their school to identify, assess and support children who are suffering from harm. Their policy has been updated to take into account the DfES guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (July 2015). They have clearly defined Roles and Responsibilities: All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within the school, who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.

- 2.8 St. Michael's Church of England Primary School recognises the importance of creating an ethos within school that will help children to feel safe and confident that they will be listened to. They recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school recognises these facts and all the staff are trained in keeping a watchful eye on all their pupils and bringing any worries about safe guarding to the relevant person.

- 2.9 They are very conscious of the need to keep their children safe and it is for this reason that visitors may find it hard to get into the school building. It is also important for security reasons that they know who is in school at all times.

## Car Park



St. Michael's has a staff car park. Parking is available to the right and to the left of the main entrance.

The school is clearly visible from the parking areas. There are safe walkways through the car parking areas for pedestrians who have parked their cars which leads down to the Infant's entrance.

- 3.1 Parking areas are of adequate dimensions and provide for satisfactory circulation and manoeuvring space.



Vehicles are able to enter and leave the car park in a forward direction.

Landscaping has been provided where practicable to shade parked vehicles, help screen them from public view and provide visual variety and interest.



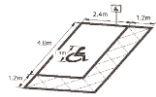
- 3.2 For a number of wheelchair users and mobility impaired people it is very important that designated, well sized, accessible parking bays are provided as close as possible to the entrance points. If there is not sufficient size to allow a person to transfer from the car to a chair it may actually prevent that person from visiting the building at all or could result in them parking improperly causing an obstruction to other users. As a result it is essential that an adequate number of well-designed accessible bays are provided. For a site of this type and use there is no specific guidance to follow but we would suggest that 5% of the overall parking provision should be made available for disabled use.

There is 1 accessible parking space available in the car park at St. Michael's.

(According to AD M- Designated parking bays should be included: workplaces: 1 space per employee known to be a disabled motorist, plus at least one space or 5% of the total capacity. There must be a minimum of one space.) The approach to the school entrance from your accessible space in the staff car park has a flat, smooth transfer available for wheelchair users. The accessible bay has been designed so that drivers and passengers, any of whom may be disabled and need the bay, can get in and out of the car easily and safely. The bay is longer and wider than a standard bay which ensures easy access from both sides and at the rear. This is because people may need to extend their doors fully to get out of/into their vehicle or may need extra room to transfer to or from their wheelchair. Best practice recommends that the actual parking space should be at least 4.8m by 2.4m.



- 3.3 In addition the hatched areas should allow a 1.2m access zone between bays at the side and 1.2m at the rear for easy boot access. Disabled users are likely to be more vulnerable to collision with traffic and a mobility impaired or elderly person is unlikely to be able to move as quickly as a disabled person. Equally a visually impaired person will be less aware of oncoming traffic. As a result a safe route should be provided from accessible parking bays to the nearest exit or entrance.
- 3.4



- 3.5 Correct measurements and markings for a disabled car park space. Any new bays should be designed to meet the requirements of BS8300: 2001. In effect this design insures that the surface is relatively level, have a hard finish and free from stones, gravel etc.



- 3.6 As well as a sign on the ground as provision for disabled drivers or passengers only, there should also be a sign immediately in front of the space, which is good practice. This is needed in case of snow or leaf covering on the ground. For wheelchair users signs should be placed between 1000mm and 1100mm above floor level. The lettering should be in small case and should contrast with the sign board, and the sign should have a matt surface. Symbols can be used to supplement written signs.

Place a sign in front of the accessible bay. Example shown.

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- 3.7 Directions to the disabled car parking should also be placed at the entrance to the site so any disabled visitors know which way to go to access the designated disabled car park space.

Place a sign at the entrance to your car park showing the location of the disabled parking. An example is shown here.

B M

#### Route to Main School Reception from Entrances



- 4.1 The route to the main school entrance is easy to locate for pedestrians as there are clear signs displayed on the approaches. The main school building and entrance are visible on approaching the school. (Lack of external signage could potentially render the entrance difficult to locate, particularly to a first time visitor. Hearing impaired people could also become anxious at having to ask for directions.) There is also clear signage around the site.

- 4.2 Surfaces on routes for visitors, staff and pupils are smooth, slip-resistant, firm, well-drained and free from loose stones. Routes are wide enough and free from most hazards including windows opening outwards.

- 4.3 It is equally important to ensure that pedestrian routes to and from the main disabled entrance are accessible as well as routes for other pedestrians. Routes should be level, free from steps, bollards and steep slopes which present difficulties for many disabled people. Moveable street furniture such as bins, seating and A-boards should be carefully located so as to not obstruct walking routes. Well-designed dropped kerbs with appropriate tactile paving should be provided where necessary.

#### External ramps



- 5.1 There are several ramps around the School campus. There is one to the entrance to the Infant Block, another at the entrance to class RD and to Year 3 and Year 4 workspaces. Over a period of several years the school has actively strived to advance its levels of accessibility towards people with disabilities, in line with the Equality Act. The school has installed additional ramps, slopes and handrails to make split-level accommodation, stairways and external accommodation accessible to all. The ramps are suitable and are wide enough to full length of ramp slope and landings. The top and bottom landings are of adequate size. The surfaces are suitable and the slope surface are visually contrasting with landings. Most of the ramps have been built in line with guidelines in Approved Document M (ADM) of The Building Regulations 2010 and BS8300:2009+A1:2010.

Ensure that the ramps are kept clear of grit and gravel which could present a trip hazard and that the surfaces are kept in good condition.

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5.2

Ramps should have the following dimensions: 1.5m wide with a minimum unobstructed width of 1.5m.

Have a maximum individual flight of 10m and maximum gradients of 1:20 if longer than 5m, 1:15 if longer than 2m or 1:12 if shorter than 2m.

Have 100mm high raised kerbs to any open side of ramp or landings

Have a continuous suitable handrail on each side.

(see Part M Access to buildings other than dwellings)



5.3

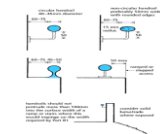
Normally people who have difficulty negotiating changes of level need the support of handrails. For example someone with cerebral palsy would only have strength to one side of the body and so would require a rail to be fitted either side of the ramp for ascent and descent.

Consideration should be given to the provision of a second (lower) handrail set at 600mm on stairs, particularly in schools, for use by children and people of short stature. Handrails should be easy to grip and provide good forearm support for people who are unable to grip. They should be configured with a positive end to reduce the risk of clothing being caught on the ends of rails.

Surfaces such as hardwood or nylon coated steel are recommended in preference to surface materials that are cold to the touch.

The handrails are easily distinguishable from their background, without being highly reflective.

Handrails are fitted where required on the ramps at the School.



5.4

Dimensions for handrails

## External Steps

6.1

Steps and stairs should be carefully detailed for the benefit and safety of everyone. Accompanying handrails are important for people with walking difficulties and impaired balance. There should be handrails either side in a contrasting colour. (Only if there are more than 3 risings.) Blind and visually impaired people benefit particularly from handrails which extend at the top and bottom of flights, especially when descending. On wide flights of steps, handrails should be used to divide the flight into channels. AD M states that on flights of steps wider than 1800mm, handrails should be used to divide the flight into channels between 1000 and 1800mm, (but note anomaly here: taking into account the width of handrails, a flight needs to be at least 2050mm wide to be divided such that each channel is 1000mm wide).

Ensure that the stairs and steps are kept clear of grit and gravel which could present a trip hazard and that the surfaces are kept in good condition.

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6.2

Nosings on steps will alert a sight impaired person to a change in level. Nosings should be 2 inch strips which are painted or attached to the front and top of each step. Usually yellow is used as it is a good contrasting colour. If nosings are not painted then tactile paving should be used. Nosings, (stair edgings) are used to define the edges of steps in line with guidelines in Approved Document M (ADM) of The Building Regulations 2010 and BS8300:2009+A1:2010. Nosings can help to reduce accidents on stairs and steps as well as helping to provide an 'inclusive' environment giving access to all school users.



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Handrails are provided on both sides of the sets of steps, where needed.

Paint nosings on the top and front of each step to highlight changes in levels. Usually yellow paint is used.

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### Main Entrance Door to School

- 7.1 The main school entrance should be easily identifiable from a distance by its design, location, signage and lighting. It should be easy for all students, staff and parents to use. In existing buildings, it is important to ensure that students with disabilities can use the same entrance as other students. Access doors should be so designed as to permit operation by one person in a single motion with little effort. Power-operated doors are the best for people with disabilities. The activator system should be automatic or placed within easy reach. An accessible door should have the following features:  
Secure side – a sign, a door handle, an extra pull handle, glazing and a kick plate.  
Un-secure side – a sign, user-friendly access control reader, glazing and a kick plate.

- 7.2 Some key considerations in relation to entrances include:
- A level threshold, without steps. A ramp can be used to address small changes in level, up to 300mm. Where there is a change in level of 300mm or more at the approach to the entrance, both a ramp and steps should be provided.
  - Doors that are wide enough and easily operated. Automatically operated sliding doors provide a high level of accessibility for all users. The accessibility requirements need to be balanced with cost, maintenance issues, and security issues
  - Manual door closers should be avoided where possible. These can cause difficulties for people with mobility disabilities because of the force needed to open the door. Revolving doors should also be avoided. These can be very difficult for wheelchair users and people with mobility difficulties to use.

- 7.3
- Sufficient circulation space around the entrance can minimise congestion at the start and end of the day
  - A good visual link between the internal office, reception and main entrance area, to the main external approach will help staff to identify any students or visitors in need of assistance
  - A level covered area to provide shelter to students being dropped off or collected is also desirable
  - Any access control system that stops unexpected visitors from getting into the building should be clearly visible. It should be reachable by a wheelchair user or a person of smaller stature and usable by people with hearing, speech or vision loss
- Appropriate signage directs visitors to the entrance or reception area

- 7.4 In new buildings, the accessible entrance(s) should be the main entrance(s) intended for use by the general public. Each accessible entrance should be connected by accessible pathways to accessible indoor or outdoor parking areas. A wider door is helpful to everyone but essential for many wheelchair users. When considering doors, the width of most interest is the clearance width rather than the size of the door leaf. In order that a wheelchair user can pass through a doorset without difficulty a clear width of at least 750 mm but preferably 800mm should be achieved



- 7.5 The main entrance to the school, in the Junior Department offers disabled access through a single door which opens manually. It is suitable for a wheelchair entrance. It is wide enough for a wheelchair to enter. The entrance is easy to locate. It is clearly distinguishable from the building front. It is well lit and free from shadows.  
The main entrance at St. Michael's is clearly signed and has an intercom.



- 7.6 The doors are constructed mainly of glass and aluminium. People either side of the door, seated or standing, are able to see each other or to be seen. The threshold weather mat is of firm texture, flush with the floor, and does not pose a hazard. This entrance is also a fire-exit door. The door does have handles to enable manual operation for opening the door. The colour of the entrance door contrasts with the surrounding surface so as to be distinguishable by people with sight problems.



- 7.7 The entrance to the Infant Department also offers disabled access through a single door, which opens manually.



- 7.8 There are a number of other entrance/exit doors were checked and most give level access to the School.  
There are some entrances that have a small lip and these should be highlighted by painting nosings or can be levelled out.

Paint nosings at door entrances where level access is not provided, to highlight the difference in levels.

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Because manual door closers are fitted to all of the doors make sure these are adjusted to provide the minimum force necessary to open or close the doors. Make sure staff and students are aware of the need to offer assistance by holding open doors or carrying materials for people with disabilities who have difficulties at the entrance.

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#### Reception Area and Desk



- 8.1 There is a seating area available once inside the school building and there is room for a person in a wheelchair to sit alongside a companion. Waiting areas are needed so it is important that there are a variety of seats available that are accessible for both the ambulant disabled and those in wheelchairs. There should also be spaces available for wheelchairs within the seated area so that those who do not wish to transfer from the chair can be seated with their companions. Ensure that those who do transfer to another chair have somewhere close at hand to store their wheelchair without blocking off part of the reception area or horizontal route.

- 8.2 The transitional lighting in the reception area ensures that people can adjust to different lighting levels and the floor surfaces are slip resistant, firm for wheelchair manoeuvre, and there is no echo. (Adequate lighting is essential for all visitors and staff not just the disabled. Avoid strong lights or heavy shadows. A maintained illuminance of 200 lux is recommended.) Lighting levels within the whole of the premises were tested using an ACT light meter and it was generally found to be above the minimum recommended guidance of 100 lux at floor/landing/stair levels. It is essential that lighting levels are maintained within the premises at these levels as the light levels below this, persons with a visual impairment will have significant difficulty in negotiating their way around the premises. We recommend therefore that you continue to ensure that missing light bulbs/tubes etc. are maintained diligently and the lighting levels generally around the premises are maintained at a high level.

Ensure that missing bulbs and fluorescent tubes be replaced as soon as possible as part of your ongoing maintenance program.

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- 8.3 The reception desk/ area is one of the first pieces of furniture that a visitor sees when they enter a building. Good provisions here will give an immediate message to people with disabilities as to whether or not the school will be accessible. Visitors to the school will often need to read and sign documents over the desk so it is important that they have access to the counter top. To aid this, the counter should be offered at two heights; a lower one for those in a wheelchair, younger or shorter visitors, that should be between 800mm and 850mm and one at a higher level so that those with poor mobility do not need to stoop or let go of their canes, etc. at a height of between 950mm and 1100mm.



- 8.4 The school has a main reception area. There is a facility for a person in a wheelchair to sign papers. The main school administration office is located behind the main reception area. The reception area is manned during school hours and help is available. Signs are designated and located for visually impaired and wheelchair using visitors with reduced eye level. The background noise does not stop two people talking and hearing each other comfortably when standing 2m apart. Visitors are asked to sign in.



- 8.5 An induction loop with appropriate signage should be provided to assist hearing-aid users to communicate with the receptionist. There is no induction loop fitted to assist visitors who have impaired hearing in the reception area. Hearing (induction) loops help people with hearing loss to hear sounds more clearly by reducing the effect of background noise. When a staff member speaks into that microphone, sound is transmitted as a magnetic field which can be picked up by hearing aids when set to the 'T' setting or hearing loop program. This applies to different types of hearing aids, including digital. A portable hearing loop provides limited coverage and is designed for one to one conversation for people with hearing aids.

Purchase a portable induction loop for the use of hearing impaired visitors/parents and display the sign.

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### Corridors, Hallways and Internal Circulation

- 9.1 In Primary schools, students spend most of their time during the day in one classroom. However, in secondary schools, students tend to move between different general and specialist classrooms, so ease of movement and minimising travel distances needs to be carefully considered. Where possible, schools should be planned to minimise long travel distances, which can be a barrier for some students with mobility disabilities. St. Michael's Primary is compact with minimum distances to travel.

- 9.2 All circulation routes are wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass one another. A minimum clear width of 2400 mm is preferable, with a recess of 900 mm for lockers or coat stands. There is enough room for one wheelchair to manoeuvre and someone to stand aside. AD M - Corridors and passageways should be wide enough to allow people with wheelchairs, people carrying large items or people on crutches to pass each other.
- 9.3 Throughout the circulation areas, both the natural and artificial light avoids reflection, glare, shadows and silhouette.
- 9.4 The lighting in the school is good and there is contrast between the walls and the floors. Tonal contrast between different features is important for people with vision loss in a number of ways: floors that contrast with walls will indicate the size of a room; handrails that contrast with the wall indicate their location; and doors that contrast with their surrounding indicate their position and help wayfinding.
- 9.5 For people with good vision, differences in colour and colour intensity provide adequate visual contrast. However, this is not the case for everybody with vision loss. The light reflectance value (LRV) of a colour is used by professional designers to identify those colours which adequately contrast against other colours. The combination of colour, tonal and visual contrasts between surfaces and objects placed on them such as switches and litter bins is good in this school and ceilings are finished in light colours.
- 9.6 All the floor surfaces are suitable and easy for a wheelchair to manoeuvre.
- 9.7 The means of escape are clearly visible from both a standing and seated position.

Improving the visual contrast in a school should be considered when carrying out maintenance or refurbishment work – for instance when painting walls and doors, or renewing floor finishes.

C OG

### Wayfinding and Signage



- 10.1 As well as having an entrance that is easy to identify, circulation layouts should be clear and easy to understand. Signage and other means of orientation are invaluable for visitors and new students, particularly people with sensory disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders, speech communication and language needs, or learning disabilities. St. Michael's requires more signage incorporated into the inside of the school building.
- 10.2 Everyone firstly identifies a sign by its shape rather than by recognising each individual letter. This is particularly so for the visually impaired person or someone with learning difficulties. As a result signs which use uppercase text can prove very difficult for the users to read and the words will have no shape. Ornate fonts can make signs very difficult to read for the visually impaired person or indeed someone with learning difficulties such as dyslexia. As a result all signs but particularly signs giving key information should use a simple font such as Arial or Helvetica which should generally be of the sans serif variety. In order that signs can firstly be located and then read it is important that signboards are well contrasted to their background. Arrows can be useful to signs but they can also be very confusing if not applied correctly. In general, signs should be designed so that arrows directing users to the left, up or down are set to the left hand side of the lettering. Arrows directing to the right should be to the right hand side of the lettering. As this is the Standard method, any sign adopting a different approach may prove confusing for the visually impaired person or someone with learning difficulties.

Review internal signage and add more directional signs such as the one shown here.

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Signs in uppercase are a No. Constantly review your signage to ensure the criteria are being met. "signs should form part of an integrated communication scheme that gives clear directions, information and instructions for use of a building" – BS 8300:2001. Tactile signage makes visual information accessible to blind and partially sighted people.

- 10.3 Accessible maps and signs ensure blind and partially sighted people can find their way around your school. This is a legal requirement to make sure your signage doesn't exclude people from accessing your school. Any new signs should be designed to meet the requirements of the Sign Design Guide. This is published by the JMU & Sign Design Society.



- 10.4 All of the classroom doors have been signed but with different formats. A uniform system of signage is recommended.

Incorporate a system of signage which is uniform. Below are some examples of signage from other schools which show the incorporation of tactile signs.

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- 10.5



Incorporate tactile signage in all your future signs.

B M

## The School Site, Classrooms and Facilities



- 11.1

The School is situated in the centre of Helston, next to the town cricket club and rugby club. The School can trace its roots back to 1828, when the Helston National School (now the Andrew Hall) opened next to the Church in Church Street. The School is set within spacious grounds and has a separate infant and junior building, as well as a private Nursery. Children at St. Michael's come from Helston and the surrounding community. Approximately 30% of children are Service families from nearby RNAS Culdrose. Doors open at 8.40am and children register in class by 8.50am. All children have a 15 minutes break in the morning whilst infants have a 10 minute break in the afternoon. Children have an hour for lunch at 11.55am. The School days ends at 3.20pm. The School offer a range of after-school activities all year round, including cross country, tag-rugby, library Friday and supasoccer. Free after-school enrichment clubs take place in the spring and summer terms.

- 11.2 The classroom is the most common type of room in a school building. An appropriate classroom environment is important for successful teaching and learning and for ensuring that all students can participate equally in classroom activities. It is important that all students can circulate freely around the classroom, and can access storage areas, equipment, sinks, sockets, and so on. The provision of ample space and level access is important for those using assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, crutches or canes. Worktops and sinks should have knee space underneath to allow a wheelchair user to use them comfortably.
- 11.3 Students with emotional, psychological or mental health issues may need more space around them, or they may need access to quiet rooms to allow them to refocus. In some cases, they may need spaces that allow for engagement with a number of adults at one time. Appropriate use of lighting and colour can help to create a calming environment. Students who have intellectual or learning disabilities will benefit from a design approach that reduces visual and auditory distractions. Distractions can arise from other students passing through nearby corridors, or from noisy sports or music activities, or from external distractions, such as buses or grass cutting.
- 11.4 Students who have difficulties with remembering and concentrating will also benefit from reduced distractions. They may need access to assistive technology (such as a laptop computer with specialist software) to help them to manage their learning processes. Students who have speech disabilities may need alternative ways to communicate with their teachers and their peers. Classrooms designed to facilitate the use of computers with assistive technology can be very helpful in meeting and supporting these needs. Requirements include appropriate desk space, power points, and network connectivity (fixed or wireless). A suitable acoustic environment that avoids or reduces noise distractions will also be helpful.
- 11.5 The acoustics in classrooms are important, as children have proven that poor acoustics will make it more difficult for all pupils to understand the teachers voice and may actually shorten attention span. For deaf or hard of hearing pupils, this will be particularly the case, with room acoustics having a significant effect on that pupils ability to hear and understand the teacher. Whilst the SEN framework may provide auxiliary aids to help deaf or hard of hearing pupils to communicate with the teacher, good room acoustics will greatly assist this and may even prevent the need for such aids in the first place. In practical terms, using soft furnishings, carpets, or sound-absorbing notice boards may help to reduce the reverberation time in a classroom. Where sound-absorbing floor and wall finishes and fittings may not be appropriate for maintenance and durability reasons, providing a sound-absorbing ceiling may be more appropriate.
- 11.6 In a school with a good acoustic environment, people will experience:
- good sound quality – enabling people to hear clearly, understand and concentrate on whatever activity they are involved in;
  - minimal disturbance from unwanted noise (such as from activities in adjacent areas, teaching equipment such as data projectors, ventilation fans or road traffic).
- In classrooms, class bases and other areas used for teaching, this will allow teachers to communicate without straining their voices. In some types of spaces, such as music rooms, recording studios, open-plan areas and rooms where pupils with hearing impairment are taught, there are additional requirements that may require higher acoustic standards than those for normal class bases.

In complying with the School Premises Regulation on acoustics, regard should be had to Acoustic design of schools ( revised in 2012). This replaces Section 1 of BB93 and sets out performance standards in terms of:

- 11.7
1. adequate sound insulation of internal walls and floors to minimise disturbance from sound generated in adjacent areas;
  2. appropriate reverberation times (RT) to suit the teaching and other activities planned to take place in each space. Reverberation time measures how 'echoey' a particular room is. A relatively short RT is needed in most teaching and learning spaces not only to ensure that speech, including teachers' voices, is clearly heard and understood, but also to control the build-up of occupancy speech noise. Some spaces, for example some types of music room, require a longer RT;

- 11.8
3. suitable indoor ambient noise levels to enable clear communication. Suitable indoor ambient noise levels will vary depending on the activity taking place. Some noise sensitive activities, such as listening to music or learning a language, are less tolerant of background noise, as are rooms used for teaching pupils with hearing impairment and some other special educational needs; and
  4. adequate speech intelligibility in open plan areas to avoid disturbance from adjacent activities and to ensure that the wanted speech can be understood. Soundfield systems may offer some benefit to students with mild hearing loss who don't use hearing aids. The classroom will be fitted with speakers in the ceiling or walls to ensure that the teacher's voice is heard clearly throughout the classroom. Soundfield systems differ from traditional public address systems by making the sound clearer, not louder. Portable soundfield systems are available that can be moved between classrooms as required.

- 11.9
- In existing schools, management solutions can help to reduce problematic background noise and improve acoustics. Solutions include keeping windows closed; using window blinds; putting rubber caps on chair legs; and using soft materials on walls, ceilings and other hard surfaces to reduce echo. Tablecloths, mobiles hanging from the ceiling, and wall displays using soft materials can all help to reduce echo. If these management solutions are not sufficient, expert advice should be sought in relation to the installation of suitable sound insulation.

- 11.10
- UK guidance points out that a student with learning aids and a special needs assistant may need the same space as two non-disabled students. A student using a wheelchair and/or mobility aids may need the space used by three non-disabled students. Additional storage space may be required for large objects such as crutches, walking frames, and standing frames, which may be required at certain times of the day. It is important that space is managed to keep adequate circulation space available over time .Pupils with special needs may need to be taught in spaces with lower noise levels and shorter reverberation times than in mainstream classrooms and class bases. Special schools and SEN units in mainstream schools therefore require designing to a higher acoustic standard. Where pupils with these special needs are taught in mainstream schools, the acoustics of the spaces where they are taught may need to be enhanced to the same standards as those in special units. Provision will usually be required to teach these pupils in smaller groups so that ambient noise from other pupils is lower and distance between teacher and pupil is minimised.



11.11



Furniture layouts in the classrooms have been carefully planned to ensure space at the entrance and access to key facilities such as the whiteboard, storage areas, and practical zones. An 1800mm turning space at these areas has been maintained and a preferred circulation width of 1200mm for movement between them. A minimum of 900mm circulation width is available on all routes. This space is based on the requirements of wheelchair users, but will also benefit a range of other users.



11.12



In the school, the classrooms are well maintained with bright cheerful displays which celebrate children's work as well as working walls, in some of the classrooms, supporting children's independence and encouraging and stimulating learning. There are visual timetables supporting learning for all in the classes and these are specifically designed to support those with additional needs. There is provision of resources to enhance independent learning including high frequency word lists, easy grip writing tools and multi-sensory resources and supportive computer programmes, as well as additional computers and/or iPads and software/apps targeted at SEND children. Additional facilities would be provided should specific need arise (hydraulic changing mat) and the school would make all reasonable adaptations to support the needs of a child. All classrooms have carpets.



11.13



Children with mobility difficulties can sometimes have difficulties using lockers or cloakrooms. Problems can arise with:

- the height of coat hooks
- the type of lock used on the locker
- the capacity of the locker to store mobility aids or assistive technology
- the space available around the locker

The coat hooks in the school are all set at correct heights for the age groups and are accessible by all.



- Lighting has a significant impact on the ability of students to concentrate and learn in comfort. Controllable lighting systems, which can increase or decrease light levels in particular parts of the classroom, are very helpful for students with disabilities. It is important that lighting levels are reasonably consistent, so students do not experience wide variations in light levels when moving their vision from their own desk to the teacher. Lighting should take into account the different needs of all students. Students with vision loss need good lighting levels to enhance their sight, and may require additional lighting for certain tasks. Deaf and hard-of-hearing students need clear visibility for lip-reading. Some students may be particularly sensitive to glare. Therefore, it is important to be able to control the sunlight entering a space by installing suitable blinds. Blinds and curtains in classrooms have been installed to reduce glare. (Important for lip-reading) Individual adaptations are made at St. Michael's C E for specific pupils e.g. chair supports and individual work stations where necessary. High frequency lighting has been installed.
- 11.14

- The Internet is an essential element for education, business and social interaction. Internet use is a part of the statutory curriculum and a necessary tool for staff and pupils, and so the school has a duty to provide pupils with quality Internet access as part of their learning experience:
- 11.15



- School Internet access has been designed expressly for pupils' use including appropriate content filtering.
- Pupils are given clear objectives for Internet use and taught what use is acceptable and what is not. Pupils are educated in the effective use of the Internet in research, including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation, relevant to their age group.
- 11.16



- St. Michael's Church of England Primary School provide opportunities to explore ICT. The School has a suite of 30 desktop PCs, along with an ICT trolley for movement around different classrooms. They have Learn Pads x 32.
- 11.17



- Additionally all classrooms have internet access. Technology is used as a resource and learning tool. It prepares children for life in the environment beyond school. The school is fortunate in being able to provide a wide range of ICT opportunities. All their classrooms have interactive whiteboards. The use of an Interactive Whiteboard supports the teaching of I.C.T. skills and is an invaluable resource for the support of all curriculum subjects. The children thoroughly enjoy using the interactive whiteboard to enhance their learning. These allow teachers access to an enormous range of resources to enliven and support their teaching. Specialist software makes it possible to create flipcharts, whilst internet links enable photographs and video clips to be included. The boards can also be used for subject based software, giving the children opportunities to support their learning in a fun and interactive way.
- 11.18

- Internet access makes researching topics easy for both children and adults. Internet access is always under supervision and sites used are closely monitored. County server software filters sites and blocks inappropriate use. The children are taught the need for safe and sensible use of internet resources. ICT provision is continually being considered and improved to enable St. Michael's Primary to keep up to date with fast changing technological developments. All of their teachers and learning support assistants have received training to ensure that the children receive the highest possible quality teaching and learning in ICT. It is important to them for their pupils to feel comfortable and confident in the use of computers by the time they leave them.

11.19



11.20

The school has a 2 Halls, 1 each in the Infant and Junior buildings.  
Lunch for the whole School is taken in the Hall in the Junior building.



The school believes that physical education, experienced in a safe and supportive environment, is vital and unique in its contribution to a pupil's physical and emotional development and health. The broad and balanced P.E curriculum is intended to provide for pupils increasing self-confidence through an ability to manage themselves successfully in a variety of situations. A balance of individual, team, co-operative and competitive activities aims to cater for individual pupil's needs and abilities.

11.21

Extra-curricular P.E. opportunities are on offer to pupils of all ages - some provided by staff, volunteers and some by outside agencies/companies. During the spring and summer term all teaching staff offer a club through 'enrichment'. The children are given the opportunity to take part in a range of different sports such as football, multi-skills, cricket, athletics, circuits and gymnastics. Older pupils compete in inter-school tournaments, leagues and competitions such as football, swimming, rugby and cross country. Intra-school competition includes our annual sports days, where pupils compete against each other in their school teams and regular house matches. Sailing lessons are offered to children in Y4



- 11.22 They welcomed the Government's announcement in June 2013 to provide additional funding, which will further enhance their provision and provide additional opportunities for increased participation. St. Michael's are using the funding supplied to Embed Real PE across the school to ensure high quality P.E. teaching in all year groups and introducing PE Observations and peer coaching. They are providing Extra curricular football coaching for children in Y3-Y6. They are also expanding their P.E. resources in order to provide a wider range of sports.
- The School will also continue to provide free enrichment clubs targeting non-participants in sports. They engage in inter-school competitions. Money is allocated to subsidize the sailing club in the summer. The School also aim to increase pupil participation in structured games at lunchtime by providing support and cover for staff to attend training sessions if required, as well as purchasing new equipment to be used during playtimes and lunch-times.



- 11.23 The Equality Act 2010 states that as well as there being access to the school building and to the curriculum, all children should have access to the written word. Pupils need to develop appropriate learning strategies and become independent and lifelong learners. School libraries are the cornerstone to this process. Libraries empower pupils, not only by supporting the teaching and learning in the school, but by giving them the freedom to make their own choices about reading and learning experiences. St Michael's has a well stocked and accessible library where pupils are encouraged to develop a love of books and of reading.

- 11.24 There has been a programme of continuous growth and improvement and updating of classrooms and facilities in the school and this is ongoing. The school has put much thought into accessibility. The original building, which predates the Disability Discrimination Act, now the Equality Act, the Junior building was built in 1958, alongside the Infant building which was added in 1963. Both buildings have gone through a number of refurbishments and more latterly the Junior building. They have made all required 'reasonable adjustments'. St. Michael's C of E have made many improvements to access to their site for pupils with mobility difficulties or wheel chair users and access to their curriculum for those children with special needs.

This school could easily accommodate a child in a wheelchair, or a sight/hearing impaired child or a child with most other disabilities.

## Curriculum

- 12.1 St. Michael's C of E School Mission Statement is:  
 "To provide a Christian environment in which children are encouraged to grow as individuals whilst learning to live in and contribute to society in a positive way". Their core values are the realising of potential, showing respect for others, taking responsibility for own actions, honesty and co-operation. The School teach children how to live and learn together. They believe that children learn best when they feel secure, respected and valued. St. Michael's aim to provide the best teaching and learning in a happy and stimulating environment which allows children to fully develop and realise their potential. They also aim to help every child discover and maintain a love of learning.

- 12.2 St. Michael's follow the Edison Learning Primary Connected Curriculum which provides a perfect starting point for exciting, engaging and motivating learning that schools can continue to develop innovatively to suit their own context. The Connected Curriculum provides a strong framework through which the connections between subjects are clearly mapped, whilst providing adaptability and flexibility so that the lives and heritage of learners and their communities can be distinctively embedded. With distinctiveness and relevance designed in from the start, the opportunity exists to create a unique curriculum that fulfils national curriculum requirements and the needs of individual learners. Importantly, the Connected Curriculum recognises the value of schools providing a balance of thematic and discrete teaching with an emphasis on both knowledge and skills. The Connected Curriculum is a structured framework of Learning Units along with supporting documentation and CPD materials. Core Subject Science and the foundation subjects History, Geography, D&T, Art and Music are connected by theme and mapped to The National Curriculum requirements at KS1 and KS2.

- 12.3 Each Learning Unit has one or two focus subjects. The focus subject of a Learning Unit provides the opportunity to 'get under the skin' of the skills and deepen understanding of that subject area. As a Church of England School, St. Michael's practice Collective Worship which offers opportunities to worship God and underpins the values and ethos of the School. Each school day provides for a single act of worship for all pupils or for separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups. All acts of worship are in accordance with the school's Trust Deed and reflect the Anglican status of the school. In addition to daily school worship, special celebrations take place in Church. St. Michael's seek to be an inclusive community, but they respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. The School also has a rich musical tradition and many children learn a musical instrument, including drums and guitar. All children in Y4 receive free ukulele lessons.

- 12.4 In line with the DfE rationale that have stated that there is a need "to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.", the School provides children with the opportunity to have their voices heard through PSHE lessons, school council and the annual pupil questions. Pupils are taught the values and reasons behind laws and that they govern and protect them along with the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Children are also actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment and are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms. The children are shown how to respect others and children have been part of discussions and assemblies related to what this means and how it is shown. The vision statements displayed around the school promote respect for others and is reiterated through the School's classroom roles. Themes within the Edison curriculum includes awareness of what it is to be British and what makes the UK distinctive whilst enhancing children's understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society with a tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

St. Michael's Church of England Primary School has an established S.E.N.D Policy.  
St. Michaels C of E Primary School currently provides for pupils with difficulties with their Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Sensory and Physical; and Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

- 12.5 St Michael's identifies a child with Special Education Needs (SEN) as being a child of compulsory school age or a young person who has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers.



The Edison Curriculum is linked to the National Curriculum to ensure coverage for all pupils. Well differentiated lessons are usually appropriate for the majority of pupils. The School adapts the curriculum/learning environment for SEN pupils by arranging for, in some cases, pupils to work in small groups or individually with staff, if it is felt that that would meet their needs better, on that occasion. Where physiotherapy is recommended, teaching assistants are trained by physiotherapists to carry out the exercises with the children. When children require specific equipment the school will either try to provide it or will work closely with the appropriate agencies. Advisory teachers from the sensory or physical support teams regularly review pupils and their advice is followed where possible e.g. classroom layout, ICT provision, hearing aid maintenance, lighting considerations.

- 12.6 The school uses multisensory teaching strategies with all pupils, e.g. visual, auditory, kinaesthetic (doing things). Active learning is encouraged, as is an interactive learning environment with pupils being able to access resources, working walls, pupil-led curriculum where possible. Teachers produce differentiated planning that shows the deployment of staff and additional/different provision where required. Provision can take the form of alternative resources, intervention groups, additional support in class.



At St. Michael's the class teachers and leadership team aim to work closely with parents, previous settings/schools and other professionals to identify additional needs as soon as possible so that

The School evaluates the effectiveness of provision for SEN pupils with activities that form of the school's ongoing cycle of monitoring including data collection of pupils' attainment and progress in speaking & listening, reading, writing, maths and science at least termly; Pupil Progress Meetings, IEP reviews, monitoring of interventions, provision mapping, teaching observations, monitoring of marking and planning (including differentiation), termly reviews of pupils receiving speech and language interventions. Pupils in Y1-6 are assessed at least half termly and their levels recorded..

- 12.7 In addition to that, frequent marking of work and observations incorporate verbal feedback, two stars and a wish, response marking, photographic evidence etc., which all form part of the ongoing assessment and planning of appropriately differentiated work

The needs of all pupils are considered and the school aims to be able to provide additional support in the form of alternative resources, advice, additional adult support, modified curriculum, intervention groups, access to other professionals or termly IEP reviews, depending on what is most appropriate for individual children.

- 12.8 The school has a team of people involved with supporting any pupil's emotional, mental and social development. They currently run a nurture group and have a learning mentor. The SENCO is also likely to be involved where any pupils are also on the Record of Need. The school is able to refer to the Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, advisors and paediatricians, Family Support workers, and other counsellors/therapists if appropriate.
- The school has staff trained or experienced in the areas of speech and language support, Funfit, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, epilepsy, anaphylaxis, autistic spectrum disorders, specific software, touch typing, hearing impairment, vision impairment, Team Teach behavioural strategies, social skills, nurture groups etc. Staff training can be arranged according to the needs of staff, individual pupils they support, or to develop the capacity of the school in general if indicated in the school development plan. Training could be in-house, by attending courses or by individual support from specialists visiting the school.
- The SENCo at the School is Mrs Karen Hurr. The Governor responsible for SEN is Justine Hornsbury.

- 12.9 It is the philosophy, policy and practice of the school to include all pupils in the National Curriculum. Therefore, regardless of their ability, they will have access to all areas of the curriculum and adjustments made where necessary to enable them to be included. In order to meet children's individual needs within the framework of the National Curriculum, collaborative planning between all those working with the child is essential and where pupils are withdrawn for additional support, they will still follow the National Curriculum framework. They present positive images of disability. They try to integrate disability images into all aspects of work including classroom displays and where there is an absence in published materials they will comment and discuss. They ensure the images in text books, wall displays, books in the library, reading books, videos and films used in the school do not reinforce the negative stereotypes of disabled people. They challenge the questions of negative stereotypes as they arise. They are aware of the language they use and they will challenge language, which is offensive, derogatory or upsetting in any way. The School want to ensure that discussions and programmes of work involving aspects of disability and equality become an integral part of the curriculum.

- 12.10 All of their SEND children have access to before school, lunchtime and after school clubs at various stages, which develop engagement with the wider curriculum. Where it is necessary, the school will use the resources available to it to provide additional adult support to enable the safe participation of the pupil in the activity. They are proud of all their children, whatever their level of need or their attainment. They look at the progress of each child, not just in the academic subjects but in their confidence and ability to interact with others. They take note of the way they mature and how they communicate their feelings and needs. They want their children to leave them as articulate, well-mannered and sociable young people who can live in harmony and show tolerance in the wider world. They want them to know what will help them become successful learners so they can reach their potential, whatever that maybe and above all we want them to feel happy about what they can achieve and strive to do their best.

#### Internal Stairs and Steps

- 13.1 There are no internal stairs at St. Michael's C of E School.

#### Internal Ramps

- 14.1 There are no internal ramps at St. Michael's C of E School.

#### Internal doors

- 15.1 Classroom doors in the school are wide enough and all desks and chairs are moveable allowing a wheelchair user to be fully inclusive.

- 15.2 No unnecessary doors were identified during the survey and doors are suitably contrasted against their surroundings. According to BS 8300 - Colour and luminance contrast should be used to distinguish the boundaries of floors, walls, doors and ceilings, e.g. if the architrave is the same colour as the door but a different colour from the surrounding wall, it may outline the opening for some visually impaired users when the door is open.
- 15.3 All of the doors have been fitted with vision panels so people can see each other either side of the doors.
- 15.4 They are all distinguishable from their surroundings. Internal doors require a strip or sign at 900mm to 1500mm if they are glazed.
- 15.5 The glass doors were clearly visible when closed.
- 15.6 A door opening of 750mm minimum is required to all internal doors and the openings of the doors are sufficient width for wheelchair users in the school.

- 15.7 There is adequate space alongside the leading edge of the doors for a wheelchair user to pass through. A space of 300 mm should be provided alongside the leading edge of the door to enable wheelchair users to reach the handle. The Department of the Environment Part M Technical Guidance Document notes the importance of a 'leading edge' at every door. This is "an unobstructed space of at least 300mm between the leading edge of a single leaf door (when it opens towards you) and a return wall, unless the door is opened by remote automatic control. This enables a person in a wheelchair to reach and grip the door handle, then open the door without releasing hold on the handle and without the footrest colliding with the return wall".



- 15.8 Door controls are at a suitable height. All door furniture and fittings are 1000mm above floor level. Switches are the large touch plate type. Most of the door handles are of the D-shape variety. All door furniture and fittings are in contrast to their background. Some old style handles are still being used on some doors such as the ones shown here.

As part of your School maintenance plan ensure that when doors are replaced a D-shape handle is fixed to the door.

**B**

**M**

- 15.9 All the door closers are BS compliant.

- 15.10 Doors present some of the most common accessibility issues. They may be too "heavy" and require too much force to open. Heavy doors are especially difficult for people with disabilities and seniors with limited upper body strength and/or skills in using their hands. They may close too quickly for some people to pass through easily. People who move slowly or use mobility devices like wheelchairs or walkers may not be able to pass through fast enough. Luckily, these common problems can often be resolved by simply adjusting door closers. Some of the door closures were noisy and require regular maintenance.

Make frequent checks on all doors in the school and adjust when necessary.  
Ensure noise levels are kept low with regular maintenance.

**A**

**N**

- 16.1 Suitable toilet and washing facilities have been provided for the sole use of pupils, having regard to their age, number, sex and any special requirements they may have. Where the facilities are for disabled pupils, they may also be used by staff and visitors who are disabled. The Education (School Premises) Regulations stipulate that there should be at least one toilet for every 10 pupils under five years and one for every 20 pupils over that age. In special schools, the minimum provision is one toilet for every 10 pupils, irrespective of age. Staff toilets must be separate from those for pupils. Whilst the number of toilets for staff must be "adequate", the regulations do not specify a minimum provision.

- 16.2 Schools must have separate toilet facilities for male and female pupils aged 8 or over. Exceptions may be made for facilities for disabled users and for unisex toilets - those which are designed to be used by one person at a time and have doors that can be secured from the inside. If toilets are poor in schools, children are reluctant to use them, with many trying to hold on all day until they get home.

- 16.3 Controls in toilet facilities should be easy to understand and use. Door handles, cubicle latches, taps, and flushing mechanisms should be operable with a closed fist. The operation of these items should be uncomplicated. For the visually impaired person it is very important that fittings and items of equipment are well contrasted against their background so that they can be readily identified. When fittings such as basins, hand dryers etc. are poorly contrasted this can make it very difficult for the visually impaired person to use the toilet.

- 16.4 St. Michael's meets the required criteria for provision of toilets. All the toilets have slip resistant floors throughout.



- 16.5 Not all taps conform to BS standards. Turn taps as used in this bathroom are not best practice. Push button taps or lever taps are more suitable in wash rooms. The best taps on wash basins are non-concussive taps, which are self-closing taps. The main difference between self-closing taps and other taps is the fact that they turn themselves off after a set period of time. It also reduces the risk of people leaving the tap on and flooding the area. For the visually impaired person it is very important that fittings and items of equipment are well contrasted against their background so that they can be readily identified. When fittings such as basins, hand dryers etc. are poorly contrasted this can make it very difficult for the visually impaired person to use the toilet.

As part of the School maintenance program when refitting bathroom facilities ensure that taps are either push button or level taps.

B

M

- 16.6 The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 cover the supply of toilets and washing facilities for staff. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has a code of practice based on the law that explains the full requirements. Employers should arrange for separate facilities for men and women. If this isn't possible, toilets and washing facilities must have locks. These ensure privacy and security. The locks and handles must be simple to use. The locks in the staff toilets are correct.

- 16.7 Most disabled toilet users, and certain mobility impaired users will require additional space and equipment in order to be able to transfer onto and off a WC pan. Without the extra space and equipment it will prove completely impossible for disabled person to use the toilet. Therefore it is clearly discriminatory to provide standard toilets without providing an accessible alternative.

Ideally an accessible toilet should be provided wherever standard toilets are fitted but this is not always practical or feasible.

The toilet for disabled pupils/visitors should contain one toilet and one washbasin, and possibly a shower or other wash down fitting, and have a door opening directly onto a circulation space (other than a staircase) which can be secured from the inside. Where possible, the number and location of accessible toilets should be sufficient to ensure a reasonable travel distance for users, avoiding changing floor levels. As a guide, a maximum travel distance of 20-25 metres is recommended for schools. (The Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Secretary of State to prescribe standards for the premises of all maintained schools in England and Wales. The previous standards were set out in the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (SPRs) and they applied to all existing and new schools maintained by a local authority.)

St. Michael's Church of England Primary School has 1 accessible toilet.



17.1

There is a sign on the door of the accessible toilet. The approach to the toilet is free from obstructions.



17.2

A pull cord or a switch with large push pad is usually recommended and it needs to be signed 'pull in case of emergency'. You should appreciate that whoever responds to the alarm maybe faced with a rather sensitive situation and may also be required to lift a relatively heavy person back onto the WC pan or chair. Therefore you should firstly have a procedure set down for responding to the alarm. Whoever is charged with responding to the alarm should receive disability awareness and etiquette training and some form of basic manual handling training. The accessible toilet in the Main Foyer area does not have an emergency alarm fitted.

17.3

Arrange disability awareness and etiquette training and some form of basic manual handling training for appointed members of staff.

A

M

The minimum accessible toilet provision usually includes providing larger-than-standard-sized cubicles with grab rails in separate sex washrooms for ambulant people with disabilities. It also includes providing separate unisex wheelchair-accessible toilets. Unisex accessible toilets are designed with extra space and fittings to allow for independent use by wheelchair users. These are also commonly used by people with other mobility disabilities and vision loss. Providing a unisex cubicle with separate access allows for assistance to be provided by an assistant of either gender.

17.4

Controls in accessible toilet facilities should be easy to understand and use. Door handles, cubicle latches, taps, and flushing mechanisms should be operable with a closed fist. The operation of these items should be uncomplicated.

17.5

The taps in the accessible toilet near to the Year 6 area need to be changed, as they are not suitable for use by a disabled person.

The hand washing and drying facilities should all be within easy reach of someone seated on the WCs. A person should be able to wash their hands before transferring back on the wheelchair from the WC. The basin fittings should all be suitable for people who cannot grip. There needs to be coated grab rails and hand rails and a rail on the back of the doors. Disabled toilets should not be used for storage as this will prevent manoeuvring of wheelchairs into position for frontal, lateral, angled and backward transfer both unassisted and assisted.

17.6

- 17.7 The location of the disabled toilets should be clearly signed. As a result of their condition or injuries a number of disabled people will have incontinence issues. As a result it is very important that accessible toilets can be quickly and easily located. Most of your pupils should be able to familiarise themselves with toilet positions but this will not be the case for visitors so it is recommended that the position of accessible toilets is well signed.

Provide signage showing the location of the accessible toilets.



A M

- 17.8 The accessible toilet should have a coat hook provided and a mirror fitted. This is a minor item but we do recommend that coat hooks at 1400mm and 1050mm above floor level are made available to wheelchair users and an ambulant disabled person. There is a mirror fitted but not coat hooks

Install coat hooks at suitable height for a wheelchair user in the accessible toilet.

A M

- 17.9 There is no law stating you can't use an accessible toilet if you are not disabled. Accessible toilets are plumbed for disabled use, not plumbed for exclusive use like a disabled car park. Cars stay in the one place for a long time. Hopefully when someone does their business in an accessible toilet it's a short trip in and out.

#### Kitchen and Dining Area, Staffroom

- Where dining, eating or food preparation facilities are provided; care should be taken to ensure that all students and staff members can safely and independently use the facility. Dining environments should not be viewed as purely functional but should be structured to facilitate social interaction and inclusion with peers.
- Tables should be accessible to wheelchair users
  - Aisles should be wide enough to allow students carrying trays to safely pass
  - Self-service shelves and dispensers for cutlery and condiments should be within reach of wheelchair users and people of small stature.
  - Tray slides allow trays to be rested while moving along a counter. These should be continuous to reduce the chances of dropping trays, and have knee space underneath to accommodate wheelchair users.

- 18.2 The government have issued new food-based standards that have been introduced both at lunchtimes and at break times for schools and the new standards have made much clearer what schools can and cannot provide for their children in school. St. Michaels promotes a Healthy eating and lifestyle and is committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet and lifestyle. They provide a hot meal service, which is cooked on site. Menus, recipes and products have been developed to meet the School Food Plan food based standards that came into effect from September 2014. They use ingredients when they are at their best providing good flavours and optimum nutrient contents. Alternatively, children may bring in a pack lunch which the School ask is a healthy meal with no crisps or chocolate. Lunch is served in the Junior block for the whole school.





18.3

At its most basic, every School is required by law to provide essential amenities such as toilets, wash stations and clean drinking water for staff. Most employees also hope to find additional facilities such as a cloakroom and somewhere clean to eat and drink during breaks. St. Michael's C E provides two well equipped staff rooms, one in each building of the School. There are washing facilities for staff and a means of heating food or water for hot drinks.

In the Infant Staffroom suitable seating has been provided. However, in the Junior Staffroom only seats without arms are provided.

It is recommended that seating with arms is provided so that people who have difficulty rising from a chair have the ability to use their arms to help push themselves up.

Different options for seating should be provided in the Junior Staffroom. Provide at least one seat with arms.

A

M

## Means of escape

19.1

Schools must comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Services) Order 2005 to ensure that they have adequate fire precautions in place to allow the safe escape of all occupants in case of fire. Staff and students with disabilities should be able to evacuate a building promptly in the case of an emergency. Ensuring safe evacuation in an emergency is a complex issue, requiring consideration of a broad range of factors that it is not possible to cover in detail in this audit.

19.2

Some areas for consideration include:

- the use of both visual and audible alarm systems
- escape doors with opening devices and opening forces designed to meet the needs of both students and staff
- balancing personal dignity and independence with safety and speed of evacuation
- the risk of using lifts or evacuation chairs to evacuate people with mobility difficulties down or up to ground level
- ensuring that evacuation chairs are suitable for the intended users
- ensuring that emergency contact facilities inside lifts (phones or intercom systems) are monitored at all times that the school may be used
- the needs of students who require personal care – for example, someone could be toileting with a carer when the alarm is raised or other respiratory conditions in particular the possible impact of smoke on everybody, particularly students with asthma

19.3

- the use of zones and compartmentation to support phased evacuation of the building
- the use of vibrating alarms or other assistive technologies to raise the alarm for staff or students who are deaf or hard of hearing
- the location of assembly points to be reachable by all students
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for staff and students who may need assistance during evacuation
- making students aware of evacuation procedures, which should be practiced regularly throughout the school year.
- need assistance during evacuation

19.4

The school building is fitted with an audible alarm system but no visual means of warning. This is a potential barrier to hearing impaired users but in terms of a pupil, this is a matter that can simply be managed as teachers will be responsible for sweeping all areas and ensuring all pupils are evacuated.

19.5	People with disabilities can evacuate the building, and reach places of safety or refuge. Refuge systems must be provided where upper floors are made accessible. Each disabled pupil must have a personal emergency egress plan drawn up which would deal with any issues such as assistance in the event of fire. For further guidance as to such plans you should refer to personal emergency egress plans ( PEEPS) published by the northern access officers group.	Safe places of refuge need to be well sign posted and easy to access. The fire risk assessment should determine if this is the case.	B	M
19.6	Exit routes are regularly checked for obstacles and there were no obstacles on the day of the audit. Alarm systems are regularly checked by a qualified engineer. Fire doors regularly are checked by a qualified engineer. All fire doors are regularly maintained. The escape routes are clearly signed.	An individual should be delegated to ensure all escape routes are free from obstructions. This needs to be done daily	A	N
19.7	Staff members are trained in helping mobility impaired people evacuate.	Continue to train staff to assist in evacuation procedures especially in helping the mobility impaired. Awareness training maybe required.	A	N
19.8	The places of refuge are large enough for the projected number of people likely to need them.	Train staff to assist in evacuation procedures. Awareness training maybe required	A	N
19.9	A fire risk assessment been carried out.			
19.10	In the event of an emergency people with mobility impairments often get left behind and have to wait for the emergency services due to inadequate evacuation methods. In an emergency you may be faced with a high number of students and staff members looking to evacuate the school building quickly.			

#### Building Management

20.1	<p>School premises, that is a school's buildings and grounds, should be maintained to a sufficient standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of the pupils using them is ensured. In complying with this regulation, regard should be had to the provisions of all premises-related legislation including, but not limited to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974</li> <li>• The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999</li> <li>• The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992</li> <li>• The Control of Asbestos Regulations</li> <li>• The Building Regulations</li> </ul> <p>Accessibility should be a key consideration when routine maintenance is being carried out, as it often presents an opportunity to improve the accessibility of a building. For example, when handrails are being painted, the colour selected should ensure good visual contrast between the handrail and the wall.</p>			
20.2	The school annually reviews its site to ensure overall safety and accessibility of all aspects of the school buildings and site and makes an action plan for items which need to be updated – e.g.. lopping trees around the school			

- Good practice in maintenance routines include
- regularly cleaning paths to remove debris, such as leaves, ice and snow, and ensuring that they are clear of obstructions such as bicycles and motor cycles
  - ensuring circulation routes are kept clear of obstructions
- 20.3
- maintaining door closers to keep opening forces to a minimum
  - ensuring accessible toilets are not used for storing cleaning equipment or other materials
  - using clear and legible signage
  - updating signage when the way the building is used changes
- 20.4 The external routes (including steps and ramps) are kept clear, unobstructed and free from surface water, ice and snow.
- 20.5 Windows, blinds and lamps were clean and in working order.
- 20.6 St. Michael's C E has a written policy on compliance with relevant health and safety laws which is effectively implemented. The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided are maintained to a standard such that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 20.7 The governors and staff have demonstrated tremendous determination and commitment to make further improvements to the school site.

#### Lifts and Stair lifts

- 21.1 There are no lifts at St. Michael's Church of England Primary School.

#### Outdoor Spaces



- 22.1 It is important that all students can access and use the external spaces in a school, so that they can participate in social and recreational activities. Outdoor space in schools normally comprises a mix of hard surfaced and grassed areas. While grass may be a difficult surface for wheelchair users, access to grassed pitches can be provided using pathways or matting products. As well as areas for activities such as games and sports, quieter social spaces with seating should also be provided for students to use. Where playgrounds are provided, equipment should be carefully selected to ensure accessibility for all students, including wheelchair users, students who use crutches and walking frames, and those with hearing loss or vision loss.



- 22.2 At St. Michael's Church of England Primary School they have a good range of outside facilities, including playgrounds and a field, a trim trails for both Infant and Junior blocks. They have a reflection space.
- The Junior block has shelters and sandpits, whilst Reception and Year 1 have playgrounds and a field.
- The School has its own small woodland which all the children use. Reception children have a 'welly Wednesday' where they spend the morning in the Woods.





22.3

Seating is provided in the grounds and it is advisable to include some seating also suitable for a child in a wheelchair so they could feel more inclusive. Benches are available from certain suppliers which incorporate room for a person in a wheelchair to sit alongside their more able bodied peers as shown in the lower picture.

**The head teacher is keen to carry forward the recommendations in this report.**

Purchase a suitable outdoor picnic table for wheelchair users.



**B**

**M**



## **Terms of this Equality Act 2010 Audit**

The audit addresses and recognises the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and 2005). The report includes recommendations for required remedial actions and ongoing monitoring and control measures. Guidance is also referred to such as BS8300: 2009 - Design of Buildings and Their Approach to Meet the Needs of Disabled People - Code of Practice; along with other applicable sources where appropriate.

The content of this report is based on the information and access provided to the consultant at the time of this audit. Any recommendations or advice in this report is based upon evidence seen. Whilst every care is taken to interpret current Acts, Regulations and Approved Codes of Practices, these can only be authoritatively interpreted by Courts of Law. Undergoing of the recommendations in the report could assist in meeting the requirements of the Equality act 2010/ Disability Discrimination Act but does not guarantee it. Nor does compliance with this report remove any liability on the part of the client or give protection against legal proceedings.

## **PURPOSE OF AUDIT**

The purpose of the access audit is to assess how well a site performs in terms of access and ease of use by a wide range of potential users, including people with disabilities. The audit provides a certain "snapshot" of a building at one point in its life. As the starting point of an ongoing access action plan, it can be used to highlight areas for improvement as well as a general risk assessment.

The most obvious part of a building, which determines its accessibility, is the shell. Decisions made by the architect can fundamentally affect the accessibility for a long time.

When the building is fitted out, fixtures and fittings can be critical. Most do not survive as long as the building itself, and if deficiencies are identified, these can be included in the next potential refurbishment.

A building is next furnished and equipped, and at this stage many mistakes can occur. Furnishings are generally short-lived so opportunities for improvement tend to occur more regularly.

Finally, as the building is occupied, the way it is used and managed becomes crucial. Accessibility is affected when bad housekeeping exists causing tripping hazards or over-zealous polishing leads to slippery floors. Continual monitoring by management therefore has a considerable role to play.

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