

Date due for ratification
at Full Governors'
Meeting
12 March 2026



Review
Teaching, Learning
& Standards
Committee
Autumn 2026

Equalities policy (exams)

2025-2026

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

Part of St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Company No: 7913261
Registered Office: Surrey Street, Norwich NR1 3PB

THE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full
(John 10:10)

We are a joyous and inclusive Catholic school, inspired by the love of God and the teachings of Jesus, specifically faith, hope, forgiveness and peace.

Our community is committed to a rounded education that develops knowledgeable, morally informed and compassionate young leaders.



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact the Company Secretary on 01603 611431 and we will do our best to help.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Faye Bunn
SENCo line manager Deputy Head (exams)	Dr Shirley Stevenson, Deputy Headteacher Mr Julian McKay
Head of centre	Mr Tom Pinnington, Headteacher
Assessor(s)	Imogen Burns
Exams Manager	Anna Brett

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1.Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide equalities and/or accessibility policy/plan which details how the centre will:

- recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010* particularly Section 20(7) This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and to make reasonable adjustments to the services the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid

*or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect

JCQ publication [General regulations for approved centres](#)]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

This policy details how the centre facilitates access to exams and assessments for disabled candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, by outlining staff roles and responsibilities in relation to

- ▶ identifying the need for appropriate arrangements, reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- ▶ requesting access arrangements
- ▶ implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams
- ▶ good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010

2.The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided in the JCQ document *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-26](#)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

3.Identifying the need for access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre

- ▶ Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ documents including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- ▶ Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- ▶ Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place

- ▶ Ensures a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments is produced

Senior leader - line-manager of SEN

- ▶ Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ documents including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- ▶ Supports the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- ▶ Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document [AA](#)

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- ▶ Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document [AA](#)
- ▶ Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- ▶ Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates are clearly defined and documented
- ▶ Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- ▶ Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- ▶ Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access Arrangements Policy*)
- ▶ If not the appropriately qualified assessor, works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- ▶ Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- ▶ Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- ▶ Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- ▶ Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- ▶ Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the Exams Manager to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams/assessments
- ▶ Provides information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- ▶ Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- ▶ Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- ▶ Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body
- ▶ Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

Senior Leader Exams/Exams Manager

- ▶ Produces and annually reviews and updates a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments

Teaching staff

- ▶ Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate

Support staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants, and Pastoral Support Workers)

- ▶ (Where appropriate) provide comments/observations to support the SENCo in *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for a candidate

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

(An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor)

- ▶ Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication [AA](#)

4. Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- ▶ Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre-delegated
- ▶ Follows guidance in [AA](#) Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 5 of [AA](#)
- ▶ Applies for approval where this is required, through *Access Arrangements Online* (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- ▶ Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including the completion of JCQ Form 8 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*), where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- ▶ Ensures where Form 8 is required to be completed, the original form is signed by hand and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the original form is provided for processing and inspection purposes
- ▶ Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 2 of [AA](#), are entered into [AAO](#) to confirm their status including any professionals working outside the centre
- ▶ Makes an *awarding body referral* through [AAO](#) where the initial application for approval may not be approved by [AAO](#), where it is deemed by the centre that the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- ▶ Maintains a file for each candidate that will include:
 - ▶ completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms
 - ▶ appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement where required
 - ▶ appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre

- ▶ in addition, for those qualifications listed on page 5 of [AA](#) (where approval is required), a print out of the [AAO](#) approval
- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates.
- ▶ Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)
- ▶ Confirms by ticking the 'Confirmation' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the '*malpractice consequence statement*' has been read and accepted
- ▶ Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector
- ▶ As may be applicable in relation to the use of coloured paper, explores alternative ways of working such as the use of a coloured overlay or the candidate wearing coloured glasses / the provision of a single colour, such as buff or grey

Exams Manager

- ▶ Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication [GR](#) and is aware of information contained in [AA](#) where this may be relevant to the EO role
- ▶ Liaises with the SENCo to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or to open question paper packets in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the exam where the centre is permitted to modify a timetabled written component exam paper (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)
- ▶ Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)

5.Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

Roles and responsibilities

External assessments

These are assessments which are normally set and marked/examined by an awarding body which must be conducted according to awarding body instructions and/or the JCQ publication [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE).

Head of Centre

- ▶ Supports the SENCo, the Exams Manager and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

- ▶ Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act (unless a temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam)
- ▶ Ensures a candidate is involved in any decisions about arrangements, adjustments and/or adaptations that may be put in place for him/her and ensures the candidate understands what will happen at exam time
- ▶ Ensures that prior to any arrangements being put in place checks are made that arrangements do not impact on any assessment criteria/competence standards being tested
- ▶ Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates
- ▶ Lliaises with the Exams Manager regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- ▶ Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Professional)
- ▶ Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures a record of the training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- ▶ Ensures where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not normally the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant. Where the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant has to be used, a separate invigilator is always present
- ▶ Ensures where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not a relative, friend, peer or private tutor of the candidate
- ▶ Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- ▶ Lliaises with the Exams Manager to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- ▶ Lliaises with the Exams Manager where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams
- ▶ Has a process in place to deal with emergency (temporary) access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams in terms of rooming and invigilation
- ▶ Is familiar with the *Checklist for Heads of Centre and Examination Officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations* provided in the current [ICE](#)
- ▶ Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval through [AAO](#) or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of [AAO](#)

Exams Manager

- ▶ Is familiar with and follows the *Checklist for Heads of Centre and Examination Officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations* provided in the current [ICE](#)

- ▶ Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- ▶ Lliaises with other relevant centre staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- ▶ Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- ▶ Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- ▶ Lliaises with the SENCo and other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- ▶ Lliaises with the SENCo to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidates' documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- ▶ Lliaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Lliaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Ensures appropriate seating arrangements are in place where different arrangements may need to be made for a candidate to facilitate access to his/her exams
- ▶ Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- ▶ Checks in advance of dated exams/assessments that modified paper orders have arrived (and if not will contact the awarding body to ensure that papers are available when required)
- ▶ Makes modifications that are permitted by the centre (a question paper copied onto coloured paper, an A4 to A3 enlarged paper or a paper printed on single sheets or where a question paper may need to be scanned into PDF format where a candidate is approved the use of a computer reader) that may be required and either accesses a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or opens the exam question paper packet in the secure room no earlier than 90 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam
- ▶ Understands that where permitted/approved, a secure question packet may need to be opened early in the secure room to facilitate the following:
 - A language modifier may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
 - The sign language professional may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
 - A live speaker may have access to the transcript of the listening exam 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
- ▶ Provides cover sheets prior to the start of an exam where required for particular access arrangements and ensures that these have been fully completed before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners/markers
 - prints pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where this is required
- ▶ Lliaises with the SENCo where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams
- ▶ Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval through AAO or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

Other relevant centre staff

- ▶ Support the SENCo and the Exams Manager to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- ▶ Staff responsible for **IT or other specialist equipment** that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate to support the Exams Manager and the SENCO
- ▶ Site staff responsible for **rooms and non-specialist equipment** (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate to support the Exams Manager and the SENCO
- ▶ Senior staff responsible for the centre's **emergency evacuation procedures** and the arrangements that may need to be in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance when an exam room is evacuated need to support the Exams Manager and the SENCO in this context

6.Internal assessments

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally verified by the centre and moderated by the awarding body.

However, 'NEA' is not limited to internal assessment as externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are also classified as 'NEA'.

Roles and Responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments. Letters also set home to parents.
- ▶ Liaises with the teacher where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of their formal supervised assessment
- ▶ Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking their first formal supervised assessment
- ▶ Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)

Exams Manager

- ▶ Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- ▶ Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking their first formal supervised assessment
- ▶ Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)

Teaching staff

- ▶ Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Provide the SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

- ▶ Liaise with the SENCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Internal exams/assessments

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; normally a pre-cursor to external assessments.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Provides exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Exams Manager

- ▶ Provides the SENCo with internal exam timetables to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

Teaching staff

- ▶ Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

7. Facilitating access - examples

The following information confirms the centre's good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the conduct of examinations.

On a candidate by candidate basis, consideration is given to

- ▶ adapting assessment arrangements
- ▶ adapting assessment materials
- ▶ the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment
- ▶ adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes

The table provides example arrangements, adjustments and adaptations that are considered to meet the need(s) of a candidate and the actions considered/taken by the centre for the purposes of facilitating access.

Example of candidate need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks	<i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home and for SRB</i> <i>Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i> <i>Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i> <i>Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i> <i>EM provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i> <i>Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood</i> <i>EM allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i> <i>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log</i> <i>Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam</i> <i>Invigilator briefs EM after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i> <i>EM discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)</i> <i>EM processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence</i> <i>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate	<i>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i> <i>Papers checked for those testing reading</i> <i>Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in</i>

	invigilation within the centre	<p><i>papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded</i></p> <p><i>Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using AAO</i></p> <p><i>AAO application for approval processed</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence and AAO approval, kept on file</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Supervised Rest Breaks (SRB)	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using AAO</i></p> <p><i>AAO application for approval processed</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (e.g direct candidates' attention to a prompt saying 'FOCUS' so that his attention can be turned back to the paper)</i></p> <p><i>Confirms requirement for alternative room)</i></p>
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<p><i>Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using AAO</i></p> <p><i>Applies for practical assistant to help candidate set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; approval automatically fails so awarding body referral lists the tasks that will be performed</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file</i></p> <p><i>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room</i></p> <p><i>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i></p> <p><i>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access</i></p> <p><i>Seats candidate near exam room door</i></p> <p><i>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</i></p> <p><i>Practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i></p>