

St Oswald's RC Primary School



Disability Equality Policy

The Governing Body of St Oswald's RC Primary School adopted this Policy

15/6/17 and it will be reviewed on annually.

Signed M. V. Gibbs (Chair)

Mission Statement

St Oswald's R C Primary School, in partnership with the parish and parents, will provide quality Catholic Education. Through the love of God, we will foster individual pupil uniqueness spiritually, academically, emotionally, socially and culturally and by encouraging each child to strive for personal achievement and awareness, that their contribution is necessary for the good of the community.

The Duty to Promote Disability Equality

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 made it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of his/her disability. It also required organisations to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that a disabled person could take a job, continue to work for an organisation or access services.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) amended the 1995 legislation. It introduced the duty to promote disability equality. This duty contains two parts: a general duty for all public bodies and a specific duty, which applies to a more limited number of public authorities, including maintained schools.

The Code of Practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) states that the 'overarching goal of duty is to promote equality of opportunity'. In many cases the disadvantage and discrimination that disabled people experience arises from attitudinal and environmental barriers. It is our duty to promote disability equality to overcome these barriers.

This scheme builds on the accessibility plan and develops our work further to include:

- A definition of both disability and inclusion that is wider than special educational need (the legislation includes the definition of SEN as any pupil who has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of peers or a disability preventing or hindering access to educational facilities) and applies to all vulnerable groups.
- Taking a pro-active approach in making 'reasonable adjustments'.
- Working with pupils, staff and parents/carers.
- Involving the views of disabled pupils, their carers and staff where appropriate, in identifying priority actions within the school improvement plan.

General Duty

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported annually. Part 5 of the DDA requires schools to publish a Disability Equality Scheme, which sets out how the school will:

- Eliminate harassment related to a disability
- Eliminate discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities even where that involves treating people more favourably than other people.

The Specific Duty

The specific duty requires a designated public authority (which includes schools) to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), setting how it will fulfil its general and specific duties to promote disability equality. Disabled people must be involved in the development of the Scheme.

The Disability Discrimination Act's definition of disability

The school follows the Disability Discrimination Act's definition of disability; 'A pupil has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments and also hidden impairments. In the DDA 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. 'Long term' means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months.

The definition is broad and includes a wide range of impairments, including learning disabilities, dyslexia, diabetes or epilepsy where the effect of the impairment on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is adverse, substantial and long term.

The definition can include a wide range of impairments including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Impairment does not in itself mean that a person is disabled. It is the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered.

Discrimination occurs when a disabled person is treated less favourably for a reason relating to his/her disability where the reason does not or would not apply to others and this treatment cannot be justified.

The Disability Equality Scheme builds on what we have already done to promote equality for disabled people.

'Reasonable Adjustments'

The school endeavours to make reasonable adjustments in order that all its pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed in all areas of the curriculum. The school details the teaching approaches and resources which underpin our curriculum and through which the adjustments are delivered. The effectiveness of the adjustments is monitored by outside agencies eg. OFSTED as well as through the school's self-evaluation process.

Adjustments to school visits and residential trips are discussed on an individual basis with the involvement of the parent/carer and the child to ensure that all our pupils can participate and benefit from the experience.

Every opportunity is taken to provide clubs which meet specific, as well as general, needs.

The school will adopt:

An Accessibility Plan, which aims to;

- Take steps for all disabled pupils and staff to participate fully in all aspects of the school community
- Improve the physical environment in St Oswald's R C Primary School to increase opportunities for disabled pupils.
- Ensure that disabled pupils are provided with information in formats that are accessible to them.

The Equality Plan which aims to;

- Respect and value all pupils as individuals, meeting their needs so that they reach their full potential and taking appropriate action where there are differences in progress and attainment.
- Challenge and prevent all forms of discrimination, including racism, and prepare pupils for living in a multi-ethnic society.

Monitoring and Review

The Disability Equality Scheme is a working document and therefore one which will be subject to review and alteration in response to views expressed by the school community, impact assessments of current policies and review of monitoring procedures.

- It will be used to drive forward the promotion of disability equality.
- It will be key to the review and development of all school policies and practices in order to achieve the school's vision of a welcoming and diverse community.
- To ensure action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Scheme, St Oswald's R C Primary School will draw up an action plan. This will be shaped in response to issues raised through feedback, impact assessments and review of monitoring processes.
- The initial plan prepared by the school will be circulated to interested parties for their comments. The Disability Equality Scheme will be a component of the School Improvement Plan.

Reporting

There will be an annual audit to the Governing body on the scheme demonstrating:

- Progress made
- Outcomes achieved
- Work in progress
- Amendments to scheme

The School's Governing Body, School Council and disabled members of the school community will review this scheme on an ongoing basis. The school governing body will present significant findings to all members of the school community and make them available in alternative forms of communication, which are appropriate to the needs of its disabled members.

To be reviewed June 2017