

Disability Equality Policy

for

Canon Popham CofE Primary Academy (Part of Diocese of Sheffield Academies Trust)



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Vision Statement

Our vision is to work together as a Christian community to nurture our children within a happy, stimulating and caring school.

A place where:

- Christian values are at our heart: endurance, compassion, thankfulness, forgiveness, justice and hope
- Everyone is unique and welcome
- We respect and care for everyone and everything around us
- High standards are expected and achievements celebrated so that everyone is able to reach their full potential
- Self-esteem and confidence are nurtured on a journey of self- discovery

Everyone Matters!

Equality Statement

All pupils and members of staff at Canon Popham CofE Primary Academy are provided with opportunities to fulfil their potential whatever their sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief.

Purpose of Policy

At Canon Popham CofE Primary Academy we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of disabled pupils and students will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school environment is as accessible as possible.

At Canon Popham CofE Primary Academy, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Definition of Disability

The definition of disability under the law is a wide one.

A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has an adverse, substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The definition includes people with a Hearing or Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome and Hydrocephalus are included.

Medical conditions such as Cystic Fibrosis, severe Asthma, Diabetes, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Sickle Cell Anaemia and HIV are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe Dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included.

If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, cancer recoverers, those who have recovered from cancer and people with a history of mental illness) they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

Equality Act 2010 and the School Setting

On the 1st October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

The Act introduced requires all schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

Public Sector Equality Duty requires us a school to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The two “specific duties” require us to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Gathering and Using Information

We will gather information on disability equality as part of our collection of evidence for the School Development Plan and during the self-evaluation process. This will be obtained through tracking of pupils identified as vulnerable. This information will be used to set and review our disability equality objectives.

Involvement and Consultation

It is a requirement that disabled pupils, staff and those using school services should be involved in the production of the Disability Equality Scheme.

Canon Popham Church of England (VA) Primary and Nursery School consulted with disabled pupils, staff and service users in the development of our initial Disability Equality Scheme and this has since been reviewed by members of the Senior Leadership Team on an ongoing, yearly review process along with:

- consultations with disabled pupils / staff / parents as appropriate to determine their priorities for the school with regards to disability equality, via the school newsletter and the school website. Where specific concerns are identified or brought to the attention of Senior Leaders in school every effort is made to respond to them appropriately or take advice from specialists as necessary.
- consultations of disabled pupils and their parents/carers are ongoing and particular emphasis is placed in entry and exit interviews in order that we can continually improve our service. We also involve disabled pupils through the school council and through consultations with special schools in the area.

Employment

As an employer we will ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote disability equality within our workforce. We will ensure equality of opportunity throughout all our employment practices, including, recruitment, retention and training.

Bullying and harassment of staff will be monitored and appropriate action taken to address and eliminate it.

NOTE: The Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice lists key employment issues that are usually the most common ones to be considered, these include:

- flexible working arrangements
- appraisal and performance-related pay systems
- sickness absence
- redundancy selection criteria
- emergency evacuation procedures
- procurement of equipment, IT systems, software and websites
- information provision
- employee training and development
- employee assistance schemes offering financial or emotional support.

The school have made five commitments:

1. a guaranteed job interview for those who meet the essential requirements for a job
2. to consult disabled employees regularly
3. to make reasonable adaptations for employees if they become disabled
4. to improve the knowledge of employees about disability and
5. to check progress each year, plan ahead and let employees know about progress and future plans

The school will, taking medical or specialist advice where appropriate, ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to allow new and existing staff with disabilities to work effectively within the school.

Participation

The school will consider whether;

- there are some areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils have limited or no access,
- disabled issues are reflected in the curriculum,
- disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities,
- there are parts of school to which disabled pupils have limited or no access at the moment or whether physical features of the school environment hamper access to the whole life of the school,
- different forms of communication are made available to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others,
- access to information is planned ahead,
- other issues affect the participation of disabled pupils such as; bullying, peer relationships, policies on the administration of medicines, the provision of personal care, the presence or lack of role models or images of disabled people, in effect, all the school's policies and procedures, written and unwritten.

If disabled pupils are in the school and are participating in every aspect of school life we will monitor how well they are achieving through a detailed analysis of outcome data including;

- end of Key Stage assessments,
- comparative progress measured by in year assessment,
- other, more informal, teacher assessments,
- assessment for learning strategies,
- achievements in extra-curricular activities,
- broader outcomes for individual children including personal social and emotional development.

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

Disability Equality Action Plan

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty, Canon Popham CofE (VA) Primary and Nursery School has drawn up an action plan to make things happen, which outlines how the requirements of the DDA 2005 will be met. This action plan has been shaped in consultation with disabled people as outlined in the previous section.

Accessibility Action Plan

Also our accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to improve:

- curriculum access
- provision of information to disabled pupils
- physical access

Assessing the Impact of Our Policies

We recognise that all our school's policies may have an impact on the participation and outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers, staff and members of the local community. We will review existing and proposed policies at least as part of the school review cycle. The programme to review the impact of policies is contained in our action plan.

Disability Equality Action Plan

The following action plan outlines what will be achieved in over the next three year with regards to meeting the Disability Equality Duty. We will review this each year.

Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date / Completion date
Actions identified within this action plan are achieved within a three year time frame.	Plan is monitored termly for progress at Leadership Team meetings	Assessment of available qualitative and quantitative data.	Termly.	Leadership Team	Ongoing termly assessment
Develop involvement of disabled pupils, parents and staff.	Develop actions within the scheme.	Through the scheme, through observation and consultation.	Annually.	Headteacher	Ongoing as part of the review cycle.
Eliminate discrimination and harassment.	Interrogation of existing information and follow up of any allegations rigorously undertaken.	Link outcomes to continued development of the scheme.	Whenever an incident or concern is raised follow up actions will be considered and changes made in light of outcomes.	Headteacher	Ongoing
Promote positive attitudes.	Positive representation and modelling of behaviour.	Observations and interviews.	This will be ongoing as part of the whole school culture and ethos.	Headteacher	Ongoing

Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date / Completion date
All new staff receive training in disability equality	Details to be included in staff induction handbook.	Interviews with new staff.	Upon completion of induction period for staff member.	Headteacher	As new staff are inducted
Staff development opportunity for disability awareness training.	Staff meeting slot dedicated to disability awareness / care concerns for individuals.	Through the action plans of individual staff members.	Annually.	Headteacher	Ongoing
Disabled visitors are supported at all times.	Proactive stance to disabled visitors and their views taken on board.	Informal interviews with disabled visitors.	Upon completion of visit.	Headteacher	Ongoing
Disability equality embedded within teaching and learning.	100% of lessons observed demonstrate differentiation for disabled learners.	Lesson observation, work trawls and planning trawls.	Termly.	Headteacher and/or Line Manager.	Ongoing monitoring
Disability equality is included within curriculum review and evaluation.	Co-ordinators will include disability equality within their policy reviews.	Through individual policy reviews	Annually	Subject leads	Part of the review cycle
Best practice in relation to disabled learners is cascaded to staff.	Best practice from outside agencies / literature / research is adapted to the context of the individual learner.	SENCO to monitor use of best practice ideas.	Ongoing- SENCO available for consultation with staff to adapt curriculum.	Headteacher / SENCO	Ongoing

Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date / Completion date
All policies, procedures, plans and practices ('Ps') considered for their impact on disabled people/pupils and actions taken to address the issues raised.	When policies are written or reviewed as part of the cycle for this, accessibility issues to be considered.	Users to consider disability when using 'Ps' and report responses to line manager.	Upon use of the 'P'. As part of review cycle for P's	Manager of the 'P'.	Ongoing
Access to building addressed within funding limitations.	See Access Plan	See Access Plan	At least annually.	Headteacher / School Office Manager / Site Manager	Ongoing
There are no reported incidents of bullying or harassment of disabled people.	Strategies to eliminate bullying and harassment take note of this duty.	Through the reporting of incidents / following procedures.	Monthly	Headteacher	Ongoing
Encourage participation in public life.	Staff, pupils and parents to be encouraged and supported into aspects of life where others have succeeded.	Consultation with those involved.	After the event	"Event" Manager	Ongoing

APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE

Check List for School Staff and Governors

- ❑ Is information collected on disability with regards to both pupils and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- ❑ Is pupil achievement monitored by disability? Are there are trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
- ❑ Are disabled pupils encouraged to participate in school life? How is this shown through representation in school events such as class assemblies and the school council?
- ❑ Is bullying and harassment of disabled pupils and staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- ❑ Is disability portrayed positively in school books, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- ❑ Does the school take part in annual events such as Deaf Awareness week to raise awareness of disability?
- ❑ Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school?
- ❑ Are open evenings and other events, which parents or carers attend, held in an accessible part of the school?
- ❑ Is information available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in formats, which are accessible if required? Is everyone aware of this?
- ❑ Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?

Appendix B: The Duty to Promote Disability Equality In Schools. Summary of Main Points.

The Disability Discrimination Amendment Act (2005) introduces a new positive duty on the public sector to promote disability equality. This new legal duty means that, alongside their existing duties, schools will have to take proactive steps to promote disability equality for pupils, employees, and service users. The duty is central to improving the experiences and outcomes of disabled people in the education system. The prime responsibility for making sure the duty is met lies with schools governing bodies.

Further Information

- The Code of Practice is available from http://www.drc.org.uk/employers_and_service_provider/education/schools.aspx
- The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) has produced guidance for schools which are available on the above website.
- Disability Equality in Education Course Book – Making it Happen by Richard Rieser www.diseed.org.uk

The General Duty

Schools must have due regard to the following six areas in the operation of their organisation:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- take steps to take account of a disabled person's impairments, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other people.

The duties apply to disabled pupils, staff, parents and members of the public who may use the school's facilities. Schools will need to identify pupils, parents and staff likely to be considered disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act.

The Specific Duty

Schools are required to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme demonstrating how it intends to fulfil its general and specific duties. It should include the following:

- the school's approach to promoting, equal opportunities for disabled children and a positive image of disabled people;
- a statement of how disabled pupils, staff, parents and disabled members of the community who may use school facilities have been involved in developing the scheme;
- a three year action plan, which identifies targets and areas where improvements are needed to meet the Duty;
- arrangements for gathering information about the performance of the school on disability equality e.g. pupil achievement or employment and retention of disabled staff;
- arrangements for assessing the impact of policies, procedures and practices of the school on disability equality and improving these when necessary;
- details of how the school is going to use the information gathered, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and preparing subsequent schemes;

- the scheme must be reviewed and publicly commented upon each year and revised every three years.

Areas to be covered in a School Scheme are:

- achievement of pupils;
- disability in the curriculum;
- teaching and learning;
- developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents;
- removing barriers – curriculum, physical and communication;
- lettings and use by the community;
- eliminating harassment and bullying;
- employing, promoting and training disabled staff;
- monitoring;
- assessment;
- governance and relations with parents;
- breaks, lunchtime, after school activities and trips;
- how the school involved disabled people.

Implementing this Duty to Promote Disability Equality can draw on existing good practice in making reasonable adjustments and school accessibility plans.

Disability Equality Schemes and Accessibility Plans

“Schools are already required to plan to improve the accessibility of their schools for their disabled pupils under the planning duties contained in Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act. A Disability Equality Scheme will build on this work. However, there are a number of significant differences between the planning duties and the specific duties that schools will need to take into account. For example, the specific duties cover disabled employees and other disabled users of school premises and services (such as parents and carers) as well as pupils. There is also a statutory requirement to involve disabled people in the production of a disability equality scheme.

Schools may wish to publish a single document that contains both their accessibility plan and disability equality scheme, or a separate plan and scheme according to what will work best for them on an individual basis. However a school chooses to present this information, the disability equality scheme and the main elements of the disability equality duty need to be distinct, easily identifiable and in one place.”

(DRC guidance for schools 2006 – page 16 onwards)

Measuring Outcomes

Schools must demonstrate that they have taken the actions they have committed themselves to, and achieved appropriate outcomes. As a minimum the Disability Equality Scheme must monitor:

- admissions, exclusions and educational attainment of disabled pupils in the school;
- accessibility and suitability of education and associated services; and
- recruitment, retention and career development of disabled staff.

Enforcement

- General Duty: any person, including the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) could apply to the High Court for a judicial review of a public body that they felt was failing to comply
- Specific Duty: the DRC issues a compliance notice; if not satisfied apply to County/Sheriff Court for compliance order

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) will have a significant role in measuring disability equality as part of the inspection process and in its own organisation.

Election of Parent Governors

The election of parent governors will now be covered by the DDA 2005, and the school will need to ensure that the procedures for candidates to stand for election and for parents to vote for candidates are accessible to disabled people.

However, the result of the election is not covered and disabled candidates will not be able to claim that they were not elected simply because they were disabled. Once a disabled parent governor is elected, the school governing body functions in relation to that parent are covered and the school must ensure that they can participate fully in school life.