



## **The Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust**

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,

A VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

**Policy review date- November 2016**

**Person Responsible- Alison Ashworth and Helen Tomlinson**

**Ratified by Governors- November 2016**

**Review date- November 2019**

## Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Academy Council has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils

This plan sets out the proposals of the Academy Council of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled

In the implementation of this policy, the school will act in accordance with its principles and goals, which themselves reflect the distinctive Catholic nature of the school, ensuring that all actions take full account of its Christian ethos and values.

It is a requirement that the school's Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

## 1. School Ethos, Vision and Values

St. Mary's Primary School is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, students and any others involved in the school community, with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

The school will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment and will also consider students who are carers of disabled parents.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Curriculum
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Admissions Policy
- School Development Plan
- Educational Visits
- Inclusion Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Bullying Policy

### 1.1 What do we understand by 'disability'?

'Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities.'  
(DDA 1995 Part 1 para 1.1) This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act:-

- People with cancer or surviving cancer are now included, as are people with HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis
- For a mental impairment the need for it to be clinically recognised has been removed

The Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all students with SEN and those with long-term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all students with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

St. Mary's Primary School, uses the 'Social Model of Disability' as the basis for its work to improve the equality and tackle any discrimination against disabled people. This model says that it is the world and society that creates barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled. (Refer to Appendix 1 – The Social Model of Disability)

We understand that the definition of disability under the Act is different from the eligibility for special educational needs provision. This means that disabled students may or may not have special educational needs. The school recognises that social, educational and behavioural difficulties are part of this definition.

## **The School's Strategic Priorities**

The whole school priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan will incorporate the needs of all members of the school.

### **1. Strengths and Weaknesses**

All aspects of school life actively promote an environment of equality and inclusion for all members of its community.

Any shortfall in the school's physical environment are clearly identified and prioritised in the Accessibility Action Plan.

### **2. The General Duty**

We will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons – this means not representing people in a demeaning way, and it also means not pretending they don't exist and not representing them anywhere at all
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life – it is also important to respect the wishes of disabled students in a disabled setting so that they do not feel pushed into activities they do not wish to take part in
- Take steps to consider disabled persons' disabilities, even when that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

(DDA 2005 S.49A)

### **3. How will we meet the General Duty and Specific Duty**

The production of this disability equality scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability into all aspects of school life and it demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty.

These actions are clearly identified in the 'Action Plan' and, following widespread consultation with appropriate stakeholders, further strategies to enhance our provision may be included.

#### **3.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme**

It is the intention to consult with all stakeholders (students, parents/carers, regular visitors to the school) with disabilities to aid in the development of this scheme by taking account of their views when making appropriate adjustments. This consultation process will be on-going.

The 'Action Plan' will be available to all stakeholders and the progress made will be reported annually.

### 3.2 Developing a Voice for Disabled Pupils, Staff and Parents/Carers

Monitoring, review and evaluation will be an integral part of the scheme. Stakeholders specifically involved in the various aspects will be asked to contribute at the planning/implementation/review stages.

### 3.3 The Academy Council

Meetings of the Academy Council are accessible to all. The body includes the correct quota of parent representatives and their contact details are published in all school documentation. When vacancies arise the position is open to all eligible parties and a fair election is held.

### 3.4 Removing Barriers

Physical/curriculum/communication barriers to making the school more accessible are detailed in the 'Action Plan'.

### 3.5 Disability in the Curriculum Including Teaching and Learning

Schemes of work/individual lesson plans will clearly highlight if special considerations need to be made to allow full access to all aspects of the lesson for all students. Any necessary additional equipment/resources will be provided by the school or outside agencies.

The aim of the school is to, whenever possible, to make provision allowing full access to the curriculum in mainstream lessons. A small number of support groups operate within the curriculum.

All students are encouraged to participate in PE and Extra Curricular activities, subject to Health and Safety restrictions. Appropriate examination considerations will be provided for all students who qualify.

### 3.6 Eliminating Harassment and Bullying

Please refer to the school's Bullying Policy.

### 3.7 Reasonable Adjustments

A rigorous system of assessing the needs of individuals or groups, based on expert/medical advice, will be used to consider what reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure maximum support can be offered within the limitations faced by the school.

The School Councils are also asked to feed back their views.

### 3.8 School Facility Lettings

Some areas of the school are not accessible for all. However, we will endeavour to make the school's facilities available to the local community where ever possible. The disabled parking spaces are located as close as is practicable to the entrances, to allow easier access. The number of spaces can be increased if required.

### 3.9 Contract and Procurement

Where possible, any outside contractor being employed by the school will support the school's disability awareness procedures.

### 3.10 Information, Performance and Evidence

#### a) STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Appropriate data for all students is analysed on a termly basis.

#### b) LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

In the case of on-site facilities not being suitable for any student, alternative arrangements will be sought (specific reference to PE). The school's Connexions Advisor will be consulted when necessary.

#### c) ADMISSIONS, TRANSITIONS, EXCLUSIONS

Entry to the school, at any level, will be based purely on the school's Admissions Policy. Likewise all students facing potential exclusion will be treated fairly following the school's Exclusion Policy.

#### d) SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

All students new to the school, irrespective of year group, will follow the relevant induction process. If it is deemed appropriate, tutor/teaching groups will be briefed as to how they can/should respond positively to a newcomer with a disability. This will always be carried out sensitively following consultation and approval from the incoming student. Work in PHSCE, Active Tutorial Work and Assemblies deliver information to help all students in their understanding of the needs of everyone in our school community.

#### e) EMPLOYING, PROMOTING and TRAINING DISABLED STAFF

There will be no discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, marital status or disability in the recruitment and selection process. The aims of the recruitment and selection process will be to ensure that equality of opportunity is considered as an integral part of recruitment practise, thus encouraging diversity by reducing unnecessary barriers. Adjustments to enable disabled candidates to meet the requirements of the post will be considered.

### 3.11 Reviewing/Monitoring

The 'Action Plan' will be reviewed annually and monitored through the Resources Committee.

SIGNED(Chair of Academy Council) Paul Jackson

DATE November 2016

SIGNED(Head of School Helen Tomlinson

DATE November 2016

REVIEW DATE November 2019