

Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

Disability Equality Scheme

Disability Equality Scheme



FOREWORD

Bishop Vaughan School is committed to the provision of a Christian education for all its pupils in accordance with the principles and teachings of the Catholic faith. Learning experiences will embrace the various aspects of a broad education: academic, emotional, aesthetic, physical, social, moral and spiritual.

The school is not the only area but is a very important one in each young person's life where growth and development in his or her journey of faith take place. This religious growth and development, while being the basic aim of religious education, is not confined merely to RE lessons. Rather, it is to be part of the whole school experience to which every single teacher and every activity (pedagogical, social, pastoral or liturgical) contributes. In the words of Cardinal Hume (1988): "Unlike a county school which is necessarily pluralistic, the Catholic school has a single Christian vision, an integrated concept of what makes a fully authentic and mature human being". This unity of purpose will both support and inform all our endeavours.

Teachers at Bishop Vaughan School will see their work here as part of their vocation as members of Christ's Church to help build the Kingdom of Christ on earth and it is the responsibility of every member of the school community to contribute to the Christian aims of the school. The distinctive nature of our Catholic School is, indeed, its sole inspiration and justification.

The underlying and overriding principle of our faith is Jesus Christ binds us together in love, understanding and mutual enrichment.

The governing body of Bishop Vaughan is therefore pleased to publish its first Disability Equality Scheme. In developing the scheme, we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving disability equality and tackling discrimination and come to a better understanding of the challenges still to be tackled. We will ensure that this Disability Equality Scheme is effectively implemented and scrutinised so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Disability Discrimination Act. We intend to use it to make real and tangible changes to how we conduct our business that will make a positive difference to the lives of disabled people.

Promoting disability equality in Bishop Vaughan will be a continuous process. It will be undertaken in partnership with the wider community and of course with disabled people themselves. We would like to thank those who have been involved in developing the scheme and we hope that we can continue to work together with disabled people to achieve disability equality in Bishop Vaughan.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The duty to promote disability equality

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was a landmark in equality legislation, making it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of his or 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 amended the 1995 legislation. It introduced the duty to promote disability equality, which partly parallels the duty to promote race equality introduced under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The duty to promote disability equality contains two elements – a general duty for all public bodies and a specific duty, which applies to a more limited number of specified public authorities, including maintained schools. The Code of Practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) states that the “overarching goal of the duty is to promote equality of opportunity”. In many cases the disadvantage and discrimination that disabled people experience arise from attitudinal and environmental barriers. The duty to promote disability equality aims to overcome these barriers.

This Scheme sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life in the wider community and in the non-educational services they might provide.

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

- A definition of both disability and inclusion that is wider than special educational needs* and applies to all vulnerable groups
- Taking a proactive approach in making reasonable adjustments
- Work 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.

1.2 The general duty

The general duty to promote disability equality places a duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life

* the legislation includes in the definition of SEN any pupil who has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of peers or a disability preventing or hindering access to educational facilities

- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

1.3 The Specific Duty

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

2. BISHOP VAUGHAN'S VALUES

2.1 Who do we mean by "disabled people"?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition of a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes 'hidden' impairments, such as mental illness, dyslexia, autism, speech & language, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes, or epilepsy. Substantial means "more than minor or trivial" and long-term means lasting or expected to last 12 months or more.

Disability is said to an adverse effect if it affects one or more of the following

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech
- Hearing
- Eyesight (unless brought to functionally useful level by spectacles or lenses)
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk or physical danger.

In considering what might constitute a substantial disadvantage, the school has taken account of a number of factors, eg

- The time and effort that might need to be expended by a disabled child
- The inconvenience, indignity or discomfort a disabled child might suffer
- The loss of opportunity or the diminished progress that a disabled child may make in comparison with his or her peers who are not disabled.

Another way of considering whether particular special educational needs are disabling is illustrated in the table below:

	Physical, hearing, vision	Speech, comprehension	Learning	Perception of risk or danger
Autistic spectrum		✓	Some	✓
Behaviour		Some	Some	✓
Dyslexic-type needs			✓	
Other learning needs		Some	✓	Some
Physical sensory	✓	Some	Some	Some

The school governing body and senior managers collect information regarding staff and pupil headcount by gender, disability, age and ethnicity, including data and other information on staff recruitment and progression. The school seeks to collect this information sensitively and confidentially, while encouraging disclosure.

2.3 Discrimination Disabled People Face

Disabled people are discriminated against in a number of different ways. These include

- Discriminatory attitudes
- A lack of accessible information
- Inaccessible environments
- Services that have not been designed to take account of the needs of disabled people.

2.4 Action To Date

Our Disability Equality Scheme will take a fundamental step in removing these discriminatory barriers for disabled people in Bishop Vaughan. The Scheme builds on what we have done already to promote equality for disabled people.

For example we have adopted:

- An Accessibility Plan (see Annex A) which aims to
 - Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
 - Improve the physical environment in Bishop Vaughan to increase opportunities for disabled pupils
 - Ensure that disabled children are provided with information in formats that are accessible for them
- An Equal Opportunities Policy which aims to tackle racial discrimination and actively promote race equality and good race relations in all areas of school life.
- A Gender Equality Policy which aims to eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination, eliminate sexual harassment and promote gender equality.

3. INVOLVEMENT

3.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme

- Wherever possible involving people with disabilities in monitoring the schools progress in disability equality
- To ensure the school maintains full records of ALN pupils and of pupils with disabilities, always accepting some pupils may wish to keep their condition private
- Regularly reflect upon the needs of staff, pupils and visitors with disabilities in school
- Ensure the Action Plan is implemented and reasonable actions are taken as the needs arise

3.2 Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers

Bishop Vaughan School will consider good practice to ensure inclusion of pupils and parents/carers in review meetings, transition planning, etc. Wherever possible Open Evenings will be on the ground floor so they are accessible to all, or on the second floor of the main teaching block which is accessible via a lift. School Assemblies already are used to raise awareness of issues of equality. PSE also provides opportunities to discuss and raise awareness of disability and equality issues, allowing pupils to discuss their feelings and gain confidence in these areas.

3.3 The Governing Body

The Governors should understand the definition of disability. The Governing Body will consider recruiting a person with disabilities.

- Look at the current information gathering mechanisms to see where improvements can be made
- Decide which policies and practices have the biggest impact on disability equality
- Use the information to write your action plan
- Write an Annual Report
- Review and revise Policy every three years

3.6 Eliminating harassment and bullying

- to ensure that pupils are aware that bullying, name calling and teasing relating to a disability or health condition is not acceptable
- to remember that employees with disabilities, parents, carers and other people using the School may also experience disability related harassment and bullying
- To refer to Bishop Vaughan School Anti-bullying Policy

3.7 Reasonable Adjustments

a) Site Maintenance

- to ensure that walkways are left clear for access
- to ensure that all walkways within the School buildings are left clear
- to keep main school entrance clear of unauthorised parked vehicles

- to ensure access from the road shall be kept clear for emergency vehicles
- to provide parking signage
- to provide disabled toilet access and signage
- to ensure that buildings have reasonable ramp access
- to ensure that visitors, pupils and staff have access to wheelchair friendly toilet facilities

b) Pastoral

- to brief teaching and ancillary staff (where appropriate) on the particular disability of the child and the possible day to day issues
- to provide a risk assessment based on the individual child's day to day care and special needs (this should include children who are boarders) and for school trips
- to ensure that Bishop Vaughan School and the local health provider will work together to ensure that medical treatment provided for pupils in school does not disrupt education. The School and the health provider both have duties under the legislation; by working together they ensure that the service they provide promotes disability equality for the disabled student.

c) Site/Personnel Management (via Bursar)

- to actively encourage people with disabilities to come forward and apply for job vacancies, unless the post would preclude this
- to ensure when taking external booking that care is made to ask if there are likely to be people with disabilities attending, so that the most appropriate venue can be booked
- to ensure that there is sufficient marked and dedicated parking on site for people with disabilities
- to ensure that access is given over the school site to people with special needs
- to ensure that all recruitment packs give applicants the opportunity to declare a disability, race or gender
- to produce a questionnaire to all parents/carers on any special needs that they may have and to collate this information onto a spread sheet to ensure that the needs of these parents/carers when visiting the school can be met
- to provide if necessary documents or information in large print/Braille or audio tape
- to make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure that they stay in employment

d) Teaching Staff

- to ensure that priority will be given to any students with disabilities and they will be allowed an early pass into lunch and allowed to take a friend in with them
- to offer home visits for parents with disabilities or students with disabilities. This can apply to either prospective students and parents, or current students and parents instead of parents" evenings etc.
- to consider special needs of staff on an individual basis

3.8 School Facility Lettings

- to ensure that the community changing rooms publicity materials make mention of access for wheelchair users and visitors with disabilities

3.9 Information, Performance and Evidence

Bishop Vaughan School will collect information to establish whether the students with disabilities are being disadvantaged in the following areas:

- Positions or responsibility
- Enjoyment across the School
- Aspirations and ambition
- Transition to higher and further education
- School trips
- After School clubs
- Work placements
- Careers advice

a) Pupil Achievement

- Bishop Vaughan School will devise a questionnaire and run comparison on students with disabilities results with sample of other students. Information collected on pupils based on additional educational needs categories will not necessarily capture all those pupils who are disabled.

b) Learning Opportunities

- The school will consider alternative learning media to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- The school will consider how pupils with a disability can participate fully in the School Curriculum.

c) Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions (including Behaviour cases)

- The school will mention our stance on disability in the recruitment and selection policy for students in the school prospectus.

d) Social Relationships

- Promote positive attitudes to disability in its PSE lessons.
- Raise awareness through internal training and external speakers.
- Consider one tutorial per annum and or house assemblies.

e) Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

- Ensure that recruitment policy includes interviewing all applicants with disabilities who meet the shortlisting criteria.

4. MONITORING

- The school will review the effectiveness of this policy every year
- The school will review the Action Plan on a three year cycle when any necessary adjustments needed will be added to the Action Plan
- When, as a result of these reviews, any adjustments are needed within the school they will be implemented if deemed to be reasonable
- Whenever possible people with disabilities will be involved in these consultation processes

5. MAKING IT HAPPEN

5. 1 Implementation

This Disability Equality Scheme represents the school's vision backed up by key actions which will be carried out within the next three years. There will be:

- Clear allocation of lead responsibility
- Clear allocation of resources
- Indication of expected outcomes
- Clear timescales
- Specified time-scale for process and review:

The school governing body will present findings annually, to all members of the school community, and available in alternative forms of communication which are appropriate to the needs of its disabled members.

5.2 Evaluation

There will be internal evaluation of this scheme as above.

5. 3 Publication

This document is published in conjunction with the school's Access Plan and forms part of the school's improvement plan and Equal Opportunities Policy.

5. 4 Reporting

There will be an annual report on this scheme demonstrating:

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

This report will be published as follows:

- On the school's website

- Be available to all school members in hard copy, and in the form of alternative communication where necessary.

5. 5 Links with other school plans and policies:

This Scheme is to be read in conjunction with the School Accessibility Plan. Together, they are intrinsic to:

1. The School Improvement Plan
2. The Equal Opportunities Policy
3. Anti-Bullying Policy
4. Protection of Employees and associated documents

Copies of this policy are available on our website, in policy folders on the school network and can be made available on request.

Date: November 2015

Reviewed: June 2019

Reviewed: June 2023

Policy Next Review Date: June 2025

ANNEX A

Disability Equality Scheme Accessibility Plan

	TARGETS	STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	GOALS ACHIEVED
SHORT TERM	Availability of written material in alternative formats/sizes	Provide written material in larger format/ different coloured paper	Greater accessibility to written documentation	Implement immediately	Delivery of information to those with disability improved
SHORT TERM	Review current policies in order to ensure that they allow for accessibility, i.e. -Curriculum -Inclusion -S.E.N. -Equal Opportunities -Race Equality	Amend and update these key policies as appropriate with a view to improving their content	Clear understanding by all of the role of policy making in improving accessibility	Policies are reviewed on an annual basis	Improved access to the curriculum and wider opportunity for all
MEDIUM TERM	Install induction loop in reception, year bases and hall.	Seek advice from LA sensory support service and RNID.	Greater accessibility for hearing impaired children.	Rolling programme as budgets allow.	The quality of access to information and school life improved.
MEDIUM TERM	Training/advice for teachers and associate staff on differentiating the curriculum	Audit and review current procedures and draw up an appropriate training plan	Teachers are more able to more fully meet the requirements of pupils needs in accessing the curriculum		Increase in access to the National Curriculum

<p>MEDIUM TERM</p>	<p>Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing to benefit pupils with visual impairments. Continue the process of upgrading blinds in classrooms.</p>	<p>Seek appropriate advice on appropriate colour schemes</p>	<p>Classrooms more accessible to visually impaired children/adults</p>	<p>Rolling Programme</p>	<p>Physical accessibility of school increased</p>
<p>LONG TERM</p>	<p>Improve access to the building and facilities, to include installation of doors to the foyer outside the reception area with closer mechanism. Permanent ramps to be constructed with handrails.</p>	<p>Review current position and availability of resources in delegated budget and, as necessary, discuss with the LA funding under the school's capital programme</p>	<p>Improved access to school and associated facilities</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Physical accessibility of school increased</p>