

Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

Disability Equality Scheme

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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 updated Disability Equality Policy. In developing the policy, we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving equality and tackling discrimination and come to a better understanding of the challenges still to be tackled. We will ensure that this Disability Equality Policy is effectively implemented and scrutinised so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Equality Act 2010. 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 and all individuals protected under the Act.

Promoting 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 and other protected groups themselves. We would like to thank those who have been involved in developing the policy and we hope that we can continue to work together with all stakeholders to achieve equality in Bishop Vaughan.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The duty to promote equality

The Equality Act 2010 was a landmark in equality legislation, consolidating previous anti-discrimination laws, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005. It makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their disability and requires organizations to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that a disabled person can take a job, continue to work for an organization, or access services.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the duty to promote equality, which parallels the duty to promote race equality introduced under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The duty to promote 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 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 equality aims to overcome these barriers.

This Policy 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 Policy 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.
- 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.

1.2 The general duty

The general duty to promote 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 Equality Act 2010.
- 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.
- 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 an Equality Policy, setting out how it will fulfil its general and specific duties to promote equality. Disabled people must be involved in the development of the Policy.

2. BISHOP VAUGHAN'S VALUES

2.1 Who do we mean by "disabled people"?

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disabled person is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that 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 have 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, e.g.:

- 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 Equality Policy will take a fundamental step in removing these discriminatory barriers for disabled people in Bishop Vaughan. The Policy 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 Policy

- Wherever possible, involve people with disabilities in monitoring the school's progress in equality.
- Ensure the school maintains full records of ALN pupils and pupils with disabilities, always respecting their privacy.
- Regularly reflect upon the needs of staff, pupils, and visitors with disabilities.
- Ensure the Action Plan is implemented and reasonable actions are taken as 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 or in accessible areas. School Assemblies and PSE

lessons will be used to raise awareness of equality issues, allowing pupils to discuss their feelings and gain confidence.

3.3 The Governing Body

The Governors should understand the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. The Governing Body will consider recruiting a person with disabilities.

- Review current information gathering mechanisms for improvements.
- Identify policies and practices with the biggest impact on equality.
- Use the information to write an action plan.
- Write an Annual Report.
- Review and revise the Policy every three years.

3.6 Eliminating Harassment and Bullying

- Ensure pupils are aware that bullying, name-calling, and teasing related to a disability or health condition are unacceptable.
- Remember that employees with disabilities, parents, carers, and other people using the School may also experience disability-related harassment and bullying.
- Refer to Bishop Vaughan School Anti-bullying Policy.

3.7 Reasonable Adjustments

a) Site Maintenance

- Ensure walkways are clear for access.
- Keep main school entrance clear of unauthorized parked vehicles.
- Provide parking signage and disabled toilet access and signage.
- Ensure buildings have reasonable ramp access and wheelchair-friendly toilet facilities.

b) Pastoral

- Brief teaching and ancillary staff on the particular disability of the child and possible day-to-day issues.
- Provide a risk assessment based on the individual child's needs.
- Ensure medical treatment provided for pupils in school does not disrupt education.

c) Site/Personnel Management (via Business Manager)

- Encourage people with disabilities to apply for job vacancies.
- Ensure external bookings consider the needs of people with disabilities.
- Provide sufficient marked and dedicated parking on site.
- Ensure recruitment packs allow applicants to declare a disability, race, or gender.
- Provide documents or information in large print/Braille or audio tape if necessary.
- Make every effort to retain employees who become disabled.

d) Teaching Staff

- Give priority to students with disabilities for early lunch passes.
- Offer home visits for parents or students with disabilities.
- Consider special needs of staff on an individual basis.

3.8 School Facility Lettings

- Ensure publicity materials mention access for wheelchair users and visitors with disabilities.

3.9 Information, Performance, and Evidence

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

- Positions of 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

- Devise a questionnaire and compare results of students with disabilities with other students.

b) Learning Opportunities

- Consider alternative learning media to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- Ensure pupils with disabilities can participate fully in the School Curriculum.

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

- Mention the school's stance on disability in the recruitment and selection policy for students in the school prospectus.

d) Social Relationships

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

e) Employing, Promoting, and Training Disabled Staff

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

4. MONITORING

- The school will review the effectiveness of this policy annually.
- The school will review the Action Plan on a three-year cycle, incorporating necessary adjustments as needed.
- Any adjustments identified through these reviews will be implemented if deemed reasonable.
- Whenever possible, people with disabilities and other protected groups will be involved in these consultation processes.

5. MAKING IT HAPPEN

5.1 Implementation

This Equality Policy 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 make them available in alternative forms of communication appropriate to the needs of its disabled members and other protected groups.

5.2 Evaluation

There will be internal evaluation of this policy as described 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 policy demonstrating:

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

This report will be published as follows:

- On the school's website.
- Available to all school members in hard copy, and in alternative communication formats where necessary.

5.5 Links with Other School Plans and Policies

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

- The School Improvement Plan.
- The Equal Opportunities Policy.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Protection of Employees and associated document

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

Reviewed: June 2025

Policy Next Review Date: June 2028

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 - ALN - 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 Curriculum for Wales

	TARGETS	STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	GOALS ACHIEVED
MEDIUM TERM	Incorporation of appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing to benefit pupils with visual impairments. Continue the process of upgrading blinds in classrooms.	Seek appropriate advice on appropriate colour schemes	Classrooms more accessible to visually impaired children/adults	Rolling Programme	Physical accessibility of school increased
LONG TERM	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.	Review current position and availability of resources in delegated budget and, as necessary, discuss with the LA funding under the school's capital programme	Improved access to school and associated facilities	Ongoing	Physical accessibility of school increased