

St Martins C of E Primary School **Disability Equality Scheme**

‘Through partnerships with local communities, St Martins C of E Primary School will strive to create a happy, safe, inclusive and challenging learning environment that develops independent, healthy and confident learners. We will ensure that all our learners, including those with a disability, aspire to the highest of standards, are economically aware, and make a positive contribution to the wider world.’

In order to enjoy and access a balanced, rigorous and inclusive curriculum through which children learn effectively the staff and governors aim to work with the wider school community partners to:

- Promote equal opportunities for all as an inclusive school regardless of age, sexual orientation, disability, race, gender, culture or religion and make reasonable adjustments to the curriculum where required to cater for the needs of all pupils.
- Set high standards and targets for all pupils including those with a disability.
- Strive to achieve high standards in all areas of the curriculum.
- Nurture an awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment for all pupils.
- Provide opportunities for everyone to make a positive contribution to the community and wider world.
- Foster lively, enquiring, self-challenging minds through challenging and diverse learning methods.
- Develop pupil collaboration and independent learning opportunities.
- Make sure that all pupils are happy and fulfilled having a positive self-esteem.
- Ensure that pupils understand social responsibilities within the wider community know their boundaries and are mutually respectful.
- Celebrate achievement as well as attainment of all pupils.
- Equip all of our pupils with the necessary life-skills and become literate and numerate in order to gain a lifelong means of communication.
- Promote positive attitudes in pupils to enable them to develop socially, morally and spiritually so that they can make the right choices to stay safe.

St Martins C of E Primary School does not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment. At St Martins C of E Primary School positive attitudes to disability, race, culture and ability are always encouraged. Staff model respectful attitudes to all pupils, parents and members of the community.

What do we understand by 'disability'?

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body 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.

The Disability Discrimination Act defines a disabled person as someone who has: *'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'* (DDA 1995 Part 1 para 1.1)

The Equality Act 2010 includes disability as a protected characteristic.

Definition of the terms:

- 'physical impairment' includes sensory impairments
- 'mental impairment' includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness
- 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial' and
- 'long-term' is defined as 12 months or more.

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger.

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils 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 pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

The Disability Equality Duty was introduced into the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) in 2005 and sets out:

- A general duty to promote disability equality, which applies to all public authorities; and
- A specific duty, which includes a requirement to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme showing how a public authority is meeting its general duty

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 disabilities
- 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 children in an educational setting so that they do not feel pushed into activities they do not wish to take part in
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons (DDA 2005 S.49A)

How will we meet the General Duty and Specific Duty?

The production of the Disability Equality Scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty, i.e. to produce a Disability Equality Scheme for our school.

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

It is the school's intention, wherever possible, to engage disabled people in the reviewing, planning and development of provision for disabled people. This is most important as it provides insight into the barriers faced by disabled pupils, staff and parents. It provides expertise in identifying ways to overcome the barriers and improves working relationships between disabled pupils, staff and parents.

Disabled pupils, staff and parents should be involved in all stages of the development of this scheme; in identifying priorities, how these priorities should be met within the action plans and how the school should assess its progress.

In the production of this scheme the school will continually consult with pupils, parents, school staff and members of our local community in order to ascertain the strengths of its current provision and identify priorities for development.

More involvement of disabled pupils, parents, carers and members of the community is anticipated over the three years of the scheme. More suggestions and opinions will be sought via newsletters, questionnaires and informal interviews. This information will be utilised in the continued development of this scheme. Outlined within the action plan is the establishment of a working party including a member of staff, a governor and disabled representatives in order to monitor the implementation of the DES on an annual basis.

The Governing Body

St Martins C of E Primary School fully encourages disabled parents, carers and community members to become governors. Governing body proceedings are accessible and parents are able to raise issues for discussion by the Governing body through personal request and letter. The school consults with parents and carers through newsletters and questionnaires.

Removing barriers

Physical:

School needs to get a physical access audit completed by the LA

Communication:

Personal information on all pupils is requested on arrival in school from their parents and this includes health problems and treatment, language difficulties, etc. Medical lists and SEN registers are kept up-to-date and information is obtained from previous schools. Personal information forms are sent out to all parents each year but parents are requested to inform the school of any changes. All records are kept confidential. Parent disability is often known due to the close relationship we gain with our parents. The many outreach support groups we run all have a vital role in developing good relationships with our families.

Curriculum:

The educational opportunities and achievements of disabled pupils will be monitored in the same way as all our pupils. A number of the pupils will have extra adult support to help in the classroom environment and the support will be relevant to the needs of the pupil. The nature of the support and its effectiveness is monitored by the school SENCO and through discussions with the teaching staff involved. Outside agencies may also sometimes be involved in discussions and additional training may be required and arranged.

We have, when appropriate, worked with colleagues from a local special school in order to best support the needs of individual pupils. Support may range from offering guidance on inclusion and curriculum issues to providing facilities for physical development.

We have a Sensory Room which provides a quiet, tranquil environment for children to access as and when required.

Eliminating harassment and bullying

St Martins C of E Primary School supports an ethos which encourages respect, a caring attitude to one another and the development of a community spirit within the school.

All referrals regarding behaviour or disciplinary issues are passed to the Senior Leadership Team where incidents are logged and followed up, pupils met with and relevant discussions take place. Disciplinary procedures will be taken if necessary. If issues arise due to disability, relevant pupils will be spoken to about their behaviour and education about the incident will take place. If incidents arise due to the medical condition of a student relevant advice will be sought also.

Relevant records are kept regarding all incidents within school e.g. harassment, racial, verbal, physical. The Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy are regularly reviewed as are the Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunity Policy, Accessibility Plan and SEN Policy.

At St Martins C of E Primary School, we endeavour to stop bullying whenever it occurs and to educate the pupils regarding behaviour. Our policy is to develop mutual respect and understanding. We have a School Council, and this is active in raising and

reporting concerns to the School Leadership Team. Any bullying or harassment of any staff will also be dealt with sensitively but firmly within the school. It is important that all staff feel supported and comfortable within the school.

Reasonable Adjustments

Curriculum:

Within school we have facilities in place to ensure that those pupils with a temporary disability are treated in a dignified and appropriate manner and relevant changes are put in place to help them overcome any difficulties that they may face during this period e.g. arranging lessons in a suitable classroom, making changes to the classroom environment, changing cloakroom arrangements, allowing more time to get ready for the end of the day and breaks etc.

Out of School Activities:

St Martins C of E Primary School actively encourages all pupils to have access to all areas of the curriculum and participate in trips and events. The school ensures through its EVC policy that staff plan well in advance, ensure that risk assessments are done and that relevant medical and dietary information is obtained to ensure that all pupils will get the most benefit from the trip. Medical advice is sought and training of staff is given, if required. Parents are not expected to accompany disabled pupils on trips. If special training has been given to staff, the school will obtain written permission from the parent regarding activities permitted and any medical treatment that can be accessed.

Information, Performance and Evidence

Pupil Achievement & Learning Opportunities:

The educational opportunities and achievements of disabled pupils will be monitored in the same way as all our pupils. Academic targets are set for all pupils at the start of each school year, based on expected progress and ability. Through assessments held at the end of each term the Assessment Coordinator supports the class teacher in tracking progress. Appropriate intervention strategies are introduced if there is a particular academic concern. Individual Education Plans are written for pupils on the Special Needs register and focus on academic and social targets. Progress is monitored and reviewed by the class teacher with support from the Special Educational Needs Coordinator. Where appropriate support from outside agencies is sought and strategies implemented.

Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions:

As mentioned before personal information on all students is requested on arrival in school from their parents and this includes health problems and treatment, language difficulties, etc. Medical lists and SEN registers are kept up to date and information is obtained from previous schools. Personal information forms are sent out to all parents each year but parents are requested to inform the school of any changes.

Pupils with disabilities are not over-represented in our exclusion figures.

Employing, promoting and training disabled staff:

Our recruitment process, induction and review processes are available to all members of staff and provide the same level of access. Disabled applicants are encouraged to attend interview if they meet the minimum criteria and are assessed at interview in the same manner as other applicants.

Impact Assessment

The school will annually review the impact of its DES upon disabled pupils, including the tracking of academic and social development, ensuring appropriate consultation with disabled members of the school community, pupils with a disability and also their parents and/or carers. This process will include the School Leadership Team and findings will be incorporated into the reviewed action plan and whole school development plan. This information will be summarised in an Annual Report.

Reviewing/Monitoring

Action Plan:

Our action plan has been drawn up to show how we will meet the General Duty and identifies our school priorities. The action plan links to the school's accessibility plan which is overseen by the governing body, who ensure that progress is monitored and reviewed.

The Action Plan details responsibility, resources, an indication of expected outcomes, timescales and a specified date and process for review.

The Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed and publicly commented upon each year and revised at least every three years.