



St Bridget's CE Primary School's Accessibility Plan 2023-26

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities are under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school/setting must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school/setting to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school/setting could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a

disability if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

It should be noted that this definition is *not just regarding physical difficulties* but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects

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- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk of physical danger

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage the pupil faces in comparison to his non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

There is as yet no clarity on what may be 'reasonable' although the Code of Practice will include factors that should be taken into account. It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities have to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a statement of SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school/setting.

As in the previous legislation we are not under a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our Accessibility planning.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body 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.

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.

Health, Safety & Premises:

- HS&P committee takes responsibility for the school accessibility plan and sets a clear direction for it, reporting to Full Governors for approval.
- How and when the plan will be reviewed and revised, including how anyone might contribute to that process, termly inspections fed into the plan,
- The plan will be reviewed bi-annually by the HS&P committee, who will submit a plan for approval to full governors.
- HS&P committee will inspect premises at least once a year but aim to inspect each term.

1A: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

St Bridget's CE Primary School offers an inclusive curriculum allowing all pupils to participate in education to the best of their ability.

The School aims to achieve this by addressing the three principals of inclusion outlined in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

The School recognises the premise of the Code of Practice that all staff are responsible for meeting the needs of the pupils.

The school has set the following priorities for the development of the vision and values that inform the plan:

- To ensure the highest quality of learning experience
- To provide an environment and community that is safe, stimulating and supportive
- To ensure that all pupils are fully involved in school life by identifying barriers to participation and finding practical solutions.
- To increase the confidence of staff and support staff when teaching or aiding a wide range of disabled pupils.
- To develop sensitivity and expertise in approaching the specific needs of a broad range of pupils.
- To develop strong collaborative relationships with pupils and parents or carers and to increase the satisfaction of disabled pupils and their parents or carers with the provision made by the school.
- To regularly review and evaluate standards of attainment for disabled pupils.

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1B: Information from pupil data and school audit

St Bridget's school buildings are well designed to meet the needs of disabled pupils:

- All classrooms are on the ground floor,
- All public-access rooms, toilets, library and the hall are on the ground floor, with no steps,
- A disabled toilet is installed,
- Ramps and handrails for access are installed,
- There is an issue however with access to the big yard from class 2 and 3 fire escape route as there are several steps,
- There is however access to the big yard for play, as an alternative.

St Bridget's CE Primary school has a history of inclusion.

- Pupils with the following disabilities have been successfully included in all aspects of school life – For example: Autism, Aspergers, Hearing Impaired, Mobility Impaired, Diabetes, Asthma, Nut allergies etc.
- Patterns of attendance for children with disabilities are good and there have been no exclusions,
- All areas of the curriculum are accessible to children with disabilities.
- Children with disabilities are invited to participate with all activities.
- All areas of the school have access for children with disabilities,
- All after school activities and breakfast club have access for children with disabilities,
- Children with disabilities participate fully in all ECM and PSHCE learning

1C: Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

As incidence is low, it is not efficient to plan to meet the needs of all disabilities in advance. Pupils, Parents, Carers, Social Care, Health Care and specialist teachers are consulted when difficulties are identified. Views of parents regarding to how the needs of pupils with SEN are met are gained through annual reviews, IEP's etc both formally and informally.

Priorities

2A: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

- Every pupil follows a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs, for pupil or one with learning difficulties. example through adaptation to meet the needs of a gifted and talented

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- Adaptations are made for pupils with physical difficulties in practical subjects and these are discussed with parents and the pupil where appropriate. There is no pupil who is not able to participate to the fullest extent in an appropriate and agreed curriculum.
- Children's literacy difficulties do not affect their participation in other areas of the curriculum. They will be given extra support with reading in other subjects. Teachers are careful to assess a child's ability in a subject eg. science, without disadvantaging them because of their weak literacy skills.
- Children with ASD participate in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers plan carefully, considering the child's individual needs. Children with such difficulties often struggle with a change of routine, so great care is taken to keep disruption to a minimum and prepare children for significant changes.

2B: Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

All areas of the school are accessible by wheelchair. The corridor to the ramp access to the big playground has a water cooler which narrows the exit. The fire evacuation procedure would need to be amended if a disabled child was in class 2 or 3 as they would not be able to get down the steps. They would need to go to the nearest exit either through class 1 or ramp to big playground.

Areas for improvement:

Fire Procedures would need to be amended

Water Cooler would need to be relocated

2C: Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled:

Pupils who have difficulty accessing text have it differentiated, read for them, photo-enlarged or copied onto coloured paper.

Where recording or organisation is a difficulty material is provided already written for them.

Children with general learning difficulties receive differentiated work within a whole class situation and teacher directed work in small groups from a teaching assistant.

Visual diaries are used for children for the children on the Autistic spectrum.

The school is aware of which parents may have difficulty with text and will make personal or telephone contact with these.

The school does not have or expect to have in the next three years any pupils requiring Braille, signing or the use of picture/symbols.

Areas for improvement:

Match delivery to parents and children when needed

Management

3A: Management, coordination and implementation

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The Governing Body will review this plan bi-annually, within the cycle of policy reviews. Any member of the community can approach the Governor with Responsibility for SEN, the Headteacher or the SENCo to raise issues relating to the plan.

The implementation of the plan will be co-ordinated by the Headteacher and Governor with Responsibility for SEN.

3B: Getting hold of the school's plan

The school makes its accessibility plan available in the following ways:
The Accessibility Plan will be available through the School Office.