

DISABILITY AND EQUAL ACCESS POLICY

This policy has been created to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the SEN and Disability Act (2001) and the Equality Act 2010 and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. .

At Beechwood Sacred Heart School we are committed to ensuring that all pupils and potential pupils are treated equally, as stated in our Equal Opportunities Policy. This policy clarifies our position with respect to those with disabilities, including learning difficulties (but see also our Learning Support Policy).

The Equality Act 2010 retains the previous definition of disability: ‘A physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse impact on a person’s ability to carry out normal everyday activities’. This has some overlap with the definition of ‘special educational needs’ in the Children and Families Act 2014 (which includes pupils with significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age, or a disability which means that a pupil cannot make full use of the general educational facilities provided for pupils of their age in mainstream state schools) but not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa.

Generally, impairments have to meet the statutory requirements set out in section 6 and Schedule 1 of the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations

The Equality Act’s definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of;

- Identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- Looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- Considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- Judging the impact of long term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

The clear starting point in the statutory guidance is that disability means ‘limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people’.

Substantial means more than minor or trivial. **Long term** means that the impairment has existed for at least 12 months or is likely to do so. **Normal day to day activities** can be determined with reference to pages 47-51 of the Equality Act. Study and education related activities are included in the meaning of day to day.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect.

- Persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person’s native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment
- Persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions.

Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include;

- Minor problems with writing or spelling
- Inability to fill in a long, detailed, technical document, which is in the person's native language without assistance
- Inability to concentrate on a task requiring application over several hours

A three year accessibility plan is reviewed annually. An accessibility plan is a plan for, over a prescribed period:

- (a) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum,
- (b) improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school, and
- (c) improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

We will address this through the following actions:

- Make written materials available in alternative formats, e.g., Braille, large print, as required by potential pupils, use of Read and Write Gold.
- Investigate the possibility of adding visual components to the existing auditory warning alarms throughout the School
- Seek advice on appropriate colour schemes to benefit visually impaired pupils, e.g., contrasting colour on edges of steps, handrails in different colours to walls, and consider the best colour and texture for any ramps fitted
- Review the improvement of wheelchair access throughout the School, providing ramps where necessary (but see note below)
- Seek to provide remote access to the Senior School Library through the use of the School intranet and a computerised library index
- Seek to provide remote access to the School's computer resources including, AlphaSmarts, appropriate software, and I-Pads.

At the same time, we will continue to address the needs of disabled pupils by:

- Applying a continuing programme of staff training on differentiation in the classroom which will be delivered by Learning Development, outside agencies and IT updates.
- Ensuring that all future building developments address the needs of disabled pupils with respect to access and safe routes of travel
- Ensuring provision for pupils requiring reasonable adjustments and special consideration in public and School examinations
- Ensuring that our Admissions Procedure does not discriminate against any potential pupils in terms of any disability, as long as it can be shown that they have the ability to access the curriculum with the level of support that we can provide through our Learning Development Department, Heads of Division, Director of Studies and the Headmaster.

However, the School recognises that many features of its buildings, particularly the small classrooms, narrow corridors and flights of steps in the main building, pose particular problems for pupils with impaired mobility.

This Policy and the associated action plan will be reviewed annually.

Date of next review September 2017

Disability and Access 3 Year Action Plan

Year	Term	Objective	Action
2015/16		<p>Improving Access for people with disabilities across the School</p> <p>To provide support for subject staff to enable them to identify, refer and differentiate for pupils with SEN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Ongoing review of school's access arrangements DP/KC. ✚ The planning and building of the Sports Hall will include disabled access and a lift to the Design Studio and upper level(s). <i>On-going</i> ✚ Overview of LD INSET for September 2016 ✚ Increased amount of 'Student Pursuit' – identify teachers that require help and support with planning for pupils with learning difficulties. Offer improved feedback to aid teaching and learning. ✚ <i>This took place successfully this year – on-going</i> ✚ Twilight training sessions for Departments ongoing. ✚ <i>New Staff training programme on Inset Days allow regular slots for LD training for Staff</i> ✚ Information on Access Arrangements to Staff and so improve teacher monitoring of pupil differences in the classroom. ✚ <i>Read and Write Gold (Enabling technology introduced in Years 10/11 – Exam monitoring system refined/LD teachers have Annual CPD on exam Access arrangement changes Use of Clicker 7</i> ✚ <i>Easier access to LD information through 3Sys.</i> ✚ <i>D.Hope working in Prep School to develop Mindfulness programme.</i> ✚ <i>Monthly Pastoral Team meetings attended by LD, School Nurse, Heads of Division and DHM. Pupil Watch issued out to all staff after these meetings..</i>
2016/2017		<p>Improving Access for people with disabilities across the School</p> <p>To provide support for subject staff to enable them to identify, refer and differentiate for pupils with SEND/ Pupils to be able to access the curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Handrail down steps outside the Maths Department ✚ Handrail down steps for outside access from Mater Square ✚ Up-grading of Drama Studio with Access arrangements review ✚ Further 'roll-out' to all Staff and pupils of enabling technology 'Read and Write Gold' ✚ Develop school response (staged referral system) and Policy for 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs':develop an understanding of the social, emotional and behavioural issues faced by learners, in order to promote empathy for learners and the development of good relationships within the school, provide strategies for teachers in promoting and developing resilience in both staff and learners, provide information about roles and responsibilities of teachers, school leaders with regard to SEND issues and provide a range of methods to identify learners who may be at risk and suggest whole-school structures for systems of identification and early intervention ✚ Inset programme for teachers – Read and Write Gold/Speech and Language Needs of Pupils/ Social and Emotional Wellbeing ✚ Continue to develop lap top provision and use across the school ✚ Continue to develop and implement bespoke Learning Developments Groups for pupils according to need ✚ Better provision for charging laptops.
2017/2018		<p>Improving Access for people with disabilities across the School</p> <p>To provide support for subject staff to enable them to identify, refer and differentiate for pupils with SEN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Annual Review of School Access Arrangements across the school by DP/KC –specific points to be decided ✚ Railings to be installed on the stairs down from Mater Square towards the Music Department. <i>Alternative provision made for disabled route to the Music Department. Handrails put up Auditorium staircase</i> ✚ The planning and building of the Sports Hall will include disabled access and a lift to the Design Studio and upper level(s). ✚ Up-grading of existing gymnasium - accessibility ✚ Audit of Staff confidence/awareness and training needs. ✚ Refining and reviewing SEND procedures and policies ✚ Continuing Inset programme for teachers on pupils with SEND (to be decided in consultation with Staff). ✚ Develop Learning Resources Centre.