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# Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan 2026 - 2029

Date: April 2026

Due for Review: March 2029

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## **PART 1. INTRODUCTION:**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a duty on all primary schools to promote disability equality. The Disability Equality Scheme imposes a duty on school governors and staff to have due regard to the following requirements in the performance of their everyday activities:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage disabled people's participation in public life;
- take into account people's disabilities - even when this action may provide more favourable treatment for the disabled.

Our Disability Equality Scheme will outline how we will fulfil this duty and include a set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bonded targets in the form of an action plan.

First however, there follows a brief description of the school's character in terms of its pupil population and the nature of the surrounding community, and a comment on the school building's facilities; then a statement of the Schools Aims and Values; and finally there follows in Part 2 a detailed description of the Ottershaw C of E Schools Disability Equality Scheme.

### **School Context**

The village of Ottershaw has a long history of church school education, with the old village church school being located elsewhere for many years. Ottershaw Schools moved location and first first opened in their current locations in 1967 as separate infant (Marshfields VC Infant School) and junior (Christchurch VA Junior School) schools, with separate staffing and governance arrangements, but both with links to the church. Both schools formally federated in 2007 to become Ottershaw Infant School and Nursery School and Ottershaw Junior School, both with Voluntary Controlled status.

Both schools joined The Good Shepherd Trust in March 2019 and have Academy status.

Due to the age of our buildings, and the fact that the Junior School is built on a slope with an additional 'M Block', both sites are not as accessible as more modern sites. Where possible we have ramps for access, but do still have steps on our Junior site. Neither site is fully adapted in all areas for people with a physical disability but we are able to provide access from the grounds to the buildings if required.

Essentially we offer nursery and Primary Education across both sites for a capacity of 460 children.

The School's catchment area is wide and extends beyond the village. Families come to us from the neighbouring towns and villages of Woking, Addlestone, Chertsey, Rowtown, New Haw, Chobham, Lyne and Longcross. Because of this mix, our catchment is more mixed than the village of Ottershaw itself.

The number of disadvantaged children attending our school is low in comparison with most other areas in Surrey.

### **Pupils and Staff with Disabilities:**

The percentage of pupils with SEN is broadly in line with other Surrey schools. There are generally more boys than girls on the register of Special Needs.

### **Pupils and Staff with Disabilities (cont'd):**

Within the group of Special Needs children, there are pupils identified with specific disabilities. These disabilities include: Autistic Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, learning difficulties, language and communication difficulty, physical disability and visual impairment.

Each school has a part-time, qualified SENCO who are senior members of School staff responsible for monitoring all pupils with additional needs and disabilities.

## **PART 2. THE OTTERSHAW C OF E SCHOOLS DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME:**

### **Our Vision**

**We are excited by Jesus' invitation to 'live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) and wish to create a loving community where, by serving God, excellence is pursued and individual achievement is celebrated, so that all children are inspired and empowered to flourish as successful adults.**

“What the Spirit brings is; Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Trustfulness, Gentleness and Self-control.” Galatians 5:23

### **Our Values**

***Ambition, Compassion, Courage, Responsibility, Resilience, Respect, Honesty and Trust.***

### **Our Aims**

To prepare them for the next stages of their education and beyond we want all children to be ambitious in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding and be proud of their achievements.

In an ever-changing world, we want our children to develop the resilience to learn, the perseverance to problem solve and the courage to do their best and try new things.

To prepare children for adult life and support their personal well being and development we will teach our children to be responsible, respectful, trustworthy and honest in their relationships.

**We want our children to become compassionate citizens of the world.**

- At Ottershaw C of E Schools we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for staff, pupils and all others receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability;
- We aim to provide our pupils with a firm foundation that will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of disability;
- We seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against pupils and staff by adhering to our commitments as a caring and responsible employer.

### **Our School:**

- believes that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit the School;
- aims to identify, and to then remove, barriers to disabled pupils in every area of school life;
- has high ambitions for its disabled pupils, and expects and encourages them to participate in all aspects of school life;
- strives to promote equality among pupils and staff regardless of disability;
- declares a commitment to equal opportunities as articulated by the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement.

In this respect the School:

- sets appropriate learning challenges;
- responds to pupils' diverse needs;
- strives to overcome potential barriers to learning that may be encountered by disabled pupils and others.

Throughout, our assessment procedures will allow us to check that our efforts to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching are sufficient and effective.

## **THE SCHOOL'S DUTY UNDER THE ACT REQUIRES THAT:**

The School's Local Committee must:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people who may be pupils, staff, parents or carers, together with any other disabled people who either use the school facilities now, or are likely to use them in the foreseeable future;
- produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan to demonstrate how they will meet these duties;
- regularly monitor the School's performance in establishing, and maintaining, the requirements of the Scheme and the Plan.

The School's Headteacher and the Leadership Team must:

- support the Local Committee's Scheme and Plan including their programmes and plans to promote equality of opportunity and accessibility for disabled people at all times in their day-to-day activities in School;
- provide regular feed back to the Local Committee regarding the success, or otherwise, of the Scheme and Plan, and offer proposals for further improvement as may be necessary from time to time.

All members of School Staff must actively support the implementation and subsequent operation of the Scheme and Plan.

**The validity of this fifth issue of the Scheme and Plan will be from April 2026 to March 2029.**

**THE SCHOOL'S ORGANISATION FOR ADDRESSING THE SCHEME AND PLAN WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:**

**School Roles and Responsibilities:**

**(a) General:**

- The prime responsibility for promoting Disability Equality and raising the achievement of disabled pupils rests with the Local Committee and the School's Leadership Team;

**(b) Specific:**

**The Governing Body will:**

- monitor the School's performance in maintaining the requirements of the Scheme;
- include "Disability Equality" annually as a specific item on the agenda for the Resources Committee autumn meeting, allowing the Local Committee to question progress, and to seek evidence that the Scheme and its associated plans are proving to be effective;
- review (at the agreed intervals) all school policies and ensure that they promote equality for the employment opportunities available to disabled adults, and the learning achievement of disabled pupils.

**The Headteacher and Leadership Team will:**

- Regularly monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of support being provided by the School for disabled pupils, and staff.
- promote equality of opportunity;
- seek opportunities to foster social relationships between disabled and non-disabled pupils;
- take effective action in eliminating discrimination;
- encourage disabled pupils, parents and staff to participate in all appropriate activities - in School, and in public life;
- strongly promote positive attitudes by the School community towards disabled people;
- include "Disability Equality" in the School's Induction arrangements for all new staff in the same way as Child Protection, Health and Safety, and Behaviour policies continue to form part of the School Induction process;
- require Staff to remain alert to any infringements of this document's requirements, and to actively monitor pupils' behaviour towards disabled fellow pupils and others;
- ensure that disabled pupils, and the Parents and Carers of disabled pupils, are provided with regular opportunities to report on the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the School's performance in pursuing its policy of Disability Equality;
- meet disabled persons' needs - even when, on occasion, so doing may require more favourable treatment.

**THE SCHOOL'S ACTION PLAN WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:**

- (a) The Leadership Team will maintain a Confidential Register that identifies:
- (i) The pupils and adults in the School community who match the definition of "disabled" provided in Appendices 2 and 3;
  - (ii) The pupil year groups and staff positions in which they are they represented.
- (b) Using the Checklist in Appendix 4, the Leadership Team will identify, and classify as follows, the potential barriers preventing the listed disabled pupils/adults from achieving equality with those in the School community who are not disabled:
- (i) If the impairment is physical and is substantial and long-term, the difficulties encountered within the school building and the surrounding school areas;
  - (ii) If the impairment is mental and is substantial and long-term, the difficulties encountered within the school learning environment.

- (c) The Local Committee and the Leadership Team will establish firm and actionable plans to eliminate - or at least to significantly reduce - the barriers to achieving equality that have been identified in (b) above. These plans will identify:
- (i) What, precisely, needs to be done to eliminate, or at least to mitigate, those barriers affecting pupils and/or staff with a physical impairment;
  - (ii) As in (i) above for pupils and/ or adults with a mental impairment;
  - (iii) In each case, the date when the School will commence taking remedial action against those barriers - and the date when all the planned actions are to be accomplished.

**(d) Review and Revision:**

The Scheme and Plan as described above will be valid for the 3 Year period April 2026 to March 2029.

The School will review and revise these at three-year intervals - or more frequently if analysis of the effectiveness of the provision in action identifies a need for change.

**Training:**

Staff members will be apprised of their responsibilities, and a summary will be included in the staff handbook.

The SENCOs will ensure that staff members working with children with physical disabilities are properly trained in how to accommodate their needs.

Pupils are reminded frequently of the need to consider others, and the school's stance on discrimination of any kind. These reminders take place through assemblies, circle times, formal and informal discussions, and are central to the values of the school.

**CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS AND Local Committee**

**Information Gathering**

- Are disabled pupils actively encouraged to participate in school life? How is this shown through representation in normal, everyday, school events?  
Response:
  
- Is information collected sensitively on disability with regard to both pupils and staff? How is this information used to improve the provision?  
Response:
  
- Are disabled pupils and staff given access to opportunities to participate in a range of activities, both in and outside of normal school hours?  
Response:
  
- Is any bullying and harassment of disabled pupils monitored and strongly discouraged? What action is taken to prevent recurrence?  
Response:
  
- Are stereotype comments in terms of disability actively and strongly challenged in both the classroom environment and in the playground?  
Response:
  
- Is the school environment as accessible and welcoming as possible to disabled people? Are open evenings and other events, which parents or carers attend, held in an accessible part of the school?  
Response:
  
- Are disabled parents and carers encouraged to participate in their child's education e.g. attending parents' evening, taking up parent and family learning courses, and assemblies?  
Response:
  
- Does the school take appropriate steps to meet disabled people's needs even if this may require more favourable treatment?  
Response:

## DEFINING DISABILITY

The disability discrimination duties and the planning duties are owed to all those who are defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (the DDA) as being disabled.

The DDA 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.’*

### 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.

### *Mental and physical impairments*

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

It should be noted however that some progressive conditions, such as cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, are specifically included in the definition before they have an effect on the pupil’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### Normal day-to-day activities

An impairment effects normal day-to-day activity if it inhibits any one 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.

### Special Educational Needs and Disability

Though the definition of disability comes from the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, and the definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN) comes from the Education Act 1996, there is a significant overlap between the two groups of children. The definition of SEN includes many, but not necessarily all, disabled children: a disabled child has Special Educational Needs if they have a disability and need special educational provision to be made for them in order to be able to access the education which is available locally.

## IS TOM DISABLED?

1. Does Tom have a difficulty with any of the following ‘normal day-to-day activities’?

*Mobility:* getting to/ from school, moving about the school and/ or going on school visits?

*Manual dexterity:* holding a pen, pencil or book, using tools in design and technology, playing a musical instrument, throwing and catching a ball?

*Physical co-ordination:* washing or dressing, taking part in games and Physical Education?

*Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move every day objects:* carrying a full school bag or other fairly heavy items?

*Continence:* going to the toilet or controlling the need to go to the toilet?

*Speech:* communicating with others or understanding what others are saying; how they express themselves orally or in writing?

*Hearing:* hearing what people say in person or on a video, DVD, radio or tape recording?

*Eyesight:* ability to see clearly (with spectacles/ contact lenses where necessary), including any visual presentations in the classroom?

*Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand:* work in school including reading, writing, number work or understanding information?

*Perception of the risk of physical danger:* inability to recognise danger e.g. when jumping from a height, touching hot objects or crossing roads?

2. Is Tom’s difficulty caused by an underlying impairment or condition?
3. Has Tom’s impairment or condition lasted, or is it likely to last, a year or more?
4. Is the effect of Tom’s impairment or condition ‘more than minor or trivial’?

***If you have answered ‘yes’ to questions 1 to 4, then Tom is probably disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act. If Tom receives medical or other treatment to reduce or remove the effects of his condition, he may still be disabled. The test is whether the effects would recur if he were to stop his treatment.***

## **ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING (Statutory Requirement)**

### **1. The Law:**

#### **Introduction:**

From September 2002, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA): Sections 28D and 28E outlawed discrimination by schools and LEAs against either current, or prospective, disabled pupils in their access to education. The new duties required of schools by this Act builds on, and complements, best inclusive practice. One of these duties is for schools to plan to increase, over time, the accessibility for disabled pupils. This plan does not require a separate planning process: a school can, for example, include its Accessibility Plan within the School Improvement Plan, and report its progress on accessibility planning within the SEN report.

#### **Statutory Responsibilities:**

The DDA, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001, places a duty on all schools and LEAs to plan to increase, over time, the accessibility of school for disabled pupils and to implement those plans when the need arises.

The LEAs are required to prepare accessibility strategies covering the maintained schools in their area.

Each school is required to produce its own accessibility plan, and the plan must be in writing. The nature and content of the plan will depend on, and reflect, the size of the school and the resources available to it.

Schools are required to establish strategies and plans for:

- **increasing access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum.** This covers teaching and learning, and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities, and school visits;
- **improving access to the physical environment of schools.** In addition to the physical environment this plan will also cover physical aids to access education;
- **improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils.** This includes planning to make written information which is normally provided by a school to its pupils to also be made available to disabled pupils - but presented to them in a manner appropriate to their specific disability. Examples would be handouts, timetables, textbooks and information on school events that are presented in pupils' and parents' preferred formats and made available within a reasonable timeframe.

### **The Law (Continued):**

#### **Definition of Disability:**

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

#### **Publishing Plans and Strategies:**

- Maintained schools have a duty to publish information on their Accessibility Plans in their Annual Report to parents.
- LEAs are required to make their strategies available for inspection to interested parties.

#### **Monitoring Progress:**

As part of their inspections, OFSTED will monitor the schools' Accessibility Plans.

## **2. Accessibility Planning by Ottershaw C of E Schools:**

Both schools were built in the late 60s to early 70s. Because of this, recent changes in legislation with respect to the fabric of the schools, are more difficult to accommodate. However, appropriate changes were made when the new legislation was introduced to allow wheelchair access to all buildings and a disabled toilet was installed. The Headteacher, School Premises Manager and appointed Local Committee member ensure that all reasonable provision is made in the design and construction of any new building and its surrounding games and play areas to allow safe access, use and passage by disabled pupils and adults.

Appropriate design features of the new stand-alone building at the juniors include wheelchair access to all teaching, learning and recreational spaces; and consideration for the needs of disabled pupils and adults in the design of toilet cubicles and washrooms. In addition, care has been taken in the design of the "escape" and other types of information signage, and the emergency alarm and lighting systems, to consider the needs of disabled persons using the building.

Clearly the above "hardware" provisions are mainly beneficial to pupils and adults with physical disabilities. Pupils with mental disabilities will rely on personal interaction and carefully designed information presentation.

The Checklist on the following two pages is intended to assist in the identification of barriers that may be limiting disabled pupils' and adults' access to the School's learning and physical environment.

## ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING BY OTTERSHAW C OF E SCHOOLS

## IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO ACCESS FOR DISABLED PUPILS

## CHECKLIST

**This checklist should help to identify barriers to access that exist in school. The list is not exhaustive: it is designed to encourage a flexible approach to the questioning of the accessibility of our school's teaching and physical environment.**

**Section 1. How does the school deliver the curriculum?**

	YES	NO
do we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils currently attending our schools?	x	
are our classrooms organised to meet the need of disabled pupils currently attending our schools?	x	
do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?	x	
are lessons responsive to pupil diversity?	x	
do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups, and the whole class?	x	
are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama, and physical activities?	x	
can staff recognise and allow for the mental effort expended by some disabled pupils; for example, using lip-reading when required?	x	
can staff recognise and allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	x	
can staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities; for example, some forms of exercise in physical education?	x	
can we provide access to computer technology appropriate for pupils with disabilities?	x	
can school visits, including overseas visits, be made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	x with revisi ons	
are there high expectations of all pupils?	x	
do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	x	

**Section 2. Is the school designed to meet the needs of all pupils?**

	YES	NO
in the school building, does the size and layout of areas – including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities, classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium, and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?  <i>These are 1960s constructed schools and not all areas are designed to meet the needs of all pupils. Future builds have, and will, take this into account.</i>		x
in the school building, can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by steps and stairs and some doorways, toilet facilities and showers?  <i>Not given the current construction in the original build..</i>		x
in the school building, are pathways of travel around the school site, and parking arrangements safe, routes logical, and well-signed?	x	

**Section 2 (Continued):**

	YES	NO
In the school building: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are emergency and evacuation systems employing auditory and visual components</li> </ul>		x

appropriate to inform ALL pupils including those with SEN and disability? <i>Not in the current design.</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are any non-visual guides (e.g. tactile signs) used to assist pupils to safely navigate their way around the building?</li> </ul>		<b>x</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorienting for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?</li> </ul>		<b>x</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are all areas to which pupils should have access well lit?</li> </ul>	<b>x</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are arrangements made (such as considering rooms' acoustics, and appropriate treatment of noisy equipment) to reduce background noise for hearing-impaired pupils?</li> </ul>		<b>x</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?</li> </ul>	<b>x</b>	

### Section 3. Can the school deliver materials in other formats?

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
can we provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audio-tape or in Braille for pupils, and prospective pupils, who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?	<b>x</b>	
can we ensure that information is presented to groups in a way which is user-friendly for people with disabilities (e.g. by reading aloud overhead text projections and describing diagrams)?	<b>x</b>	
do we have facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	<b>x</b>	
can we ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist pupils with disabilities?	<b>x</b>	