



Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan

Date: September 2022

Due for Review: September 2025

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.

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.

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 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. In March 2019, the Schools joined the Good Shepherd Trust as separate Academies (although they continue to share a Senior Leadership Team and Local Committee so that close links and continuity of education between the two schools are maintained).

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. Despite a recent refurbishment of the main Junior building where some additional resource was added to improve overall accessibility, neither site is adapted well for people with a physical disability.

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

The Schools' 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, 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 similar to that nationally, with an average percentage of pupils with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP). There are generally more boys than girls on the register of Special Needs.

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

The Inclusion Leader is the senior member of School staff responsible for monitoring all pupils with disabilities.

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

Our School's Values and Vision:

Our Values:

Our Christian foundation underpins everything we do. God's love influences how we learn, grow and play together, supporting our community spirit. Through Christian example we teach children the values of Respect, Compassion, Ambition, Courage, Responsibility, Perseverance, Resilience, Trust and Honesty.

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.

Our School:

- believes that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit the Schools;
- 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 SCHOOL'S ORGANISATION FOR ADDRESSING THE SCHEME AND PLAN WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

School Roles and Responsibilities:

The Local Committee will:

- monitor the Schools' performance in maintaining the requirements of the Scheme;
- include "Disability Equality" annually as a specific item on the agenda, allowing Governors 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:

- appoint a senior Staff member with responsibility for regular monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of support being provided by the Schools for disabled pupils, and staff. (The School Inclusion leader was appointed with this remit in September 2009);
- 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 Schools' 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 Schools' 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 Inclusion Leader will establish and 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 represented.
- (b) 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 (including submitting annual bids for SIF funding to the Good Shepherd Trust if necessary).

(d) Review and Revision:

The Scheme and Plan as described above will be valid for the 3 Year period September 2022 to September 2025.

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 inclusion leader 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.

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.

The planning duty came into force in September 2002 and, by April 2003, schools and LEAs were required to have in place their first written strategies and plans which are to be valid at least until March 2006. Schools and LEAs have a duty to review and revise their plans and strategies over this 3-year period.

Schools and LEAs 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.

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 LEA's Accessibility Strategies and the schools' Accessibility Plans.

2. Accessibility Planning by Ottershaw C of E Schools:

The Surrey Education Authority's DDA strategy requires its maintained schools to plan to take all reasonable steps to make provision for disabled pupils.

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 governor 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 Schools' learning and physical environment.

ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING BY OTTERSASHAW 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? NB This is more easily provided at the Junior School where the classrooms are larger and more accessible. Space is tight at the Infant School, particularly in the main building and we cannot say that, should a disabled pupil join our school in the future, that we can easily meet their needs without substantial capital investment to the structure and size of the building.	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, particularly at the Infant School</i>		x
in the school building, are pathways of travel around the school site, and parking arrangements safe, routes logical, and well-signed? (Yes, although we would always expect to review this with a specialist teacher and ensure this meets the needs of a child joining one of our schools with a known disability)	x	

Section 2 (Continued):

	YES	NO
In the school building:		
• are emergency and evacuation systems employing auditory and visual components appropriate to inform ALL pupils including those with SEN and disability?	x	
• are any non-visual guides (e.g. tactile signs) used to assist pupils to safely navigate their way around the building?		x
• could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorienting for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?		x
• are all areas to which pupils should have access well lit?	x	
• are arrangements made (such as considering rooms' acoustics, and appropriate treatment of noisy equipment) to reduce background noise for hearing-impaired pupils?	x	
• is furniture and equipment selected, adjusted and located appropriately?	x	

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

	YES	NO
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?	x	
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)?	x	
do we have facilities such as ICT to produce written information in different formats?	x	
can we ensure that staff are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist pupils with disabilities?	x	