Disability Non Discrimination Policy
St Mary's Horsforth Catholic Voluntary Academy

"Happy together in God's family,
we love, grow and learn."

Approved by:	Jessica Wilkinson	**Date:**	September 2021
Last reviewed on:	September 2025		
Next review due by:	September 2028		

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors to share this commitment.

Introduction

Our school's mission statement talks of striving for and achieving full potential in all of our children. We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

The Equality Act 2010 and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 is a law that makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled persons in various areas of life such as employment, education and access to goods and services. Since 2002, it has been unlawful for schools and Local Education Authorities to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in admissions and exclusions, in education, and in associated services.

From 1st October 2004 it is unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities by preventing them from having access to premises. Along with all other public buildings, our school is required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable access.

Our Accessibility Plan details the changes required to our buildings and to other aspects of our school, so that we fulfil our legal requirements, and remove barriers to inclusion for all pupils and staff with disabilities.

What is disability?

The Disability and Discrimination Act states that 'a person suffers from a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to-day activities'.

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday lives.

Disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

Aims

Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children, and this of course includes pupils with disabilities.

- We will ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils to benefit from the education our school provides.

- We will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his or her disability.
- We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage.
- We will do our best to anticipate the needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities before he or she joins the school.

Removing barriers

The school must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils and members of staff and of the public are not disadvantaged.

Disabilities can limit the extent to which children are able to participate in the curriculum, and can impede the delivery of information. So, for example, if a child suffers from hearing loss, the teacher will always try and face the child when addressing the class, or, in severe cases, the teacher may wear a microphone and transmitter.

The Accessibility Plan covers the measures we have already taken, and are still taking, to improve our school.

The physical environment

We will endeavour to improve provision for disabled pupils and staff by developing the physical environment of the school, within the limits of the resources available. Where necessary, we will try to improve the following:

- access to the school, by installing setting-down and picking-up points, ramps, handrails and lifts;
- movement around the building, for example by adaptations, such as improved colour schemes, for people with impaired sight;
- accommodation within the building, by providing toilets for disabled pupils, sound-proofing for pupils with impaired hearing, and medical rooms;
- furniture, by procuring rise-and-fall tables, sinks and ovens;
- information and communication technology, by selecting appropriate hardware and software;
- signage, by putting it in clear print.

The curriculum

We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We plan our out-of-school activities and school trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.

We use language that does not offend, and we make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language.

Our library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities.

The school regularly reviews the way resources are matched to the needs of all the children. If necessary, to improve our provision, adjustments will be made to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training.

Many of the adjustments we make are dependent upon individual needs, and we are moving towards more individualised approaches and personalised learning. Individual Education Plans are effective and manageable.

We seek and respond to guidance from the parents and the children.

Information

Information normally provided in writing (lesson content, texts, library resources and information about school events) will be made available in alternative formats that are clear and user-friendly, such as Moon, Braille, audio tape, and large print, or it may be transmitted orally, or through lip-speaking or sign language, or through a recognised symbol system, or through ICT.

We always take account of disabilities, be they the pupils' or their parents'. For example, communication with a parent who is visually impaired may need to be by telephone rather than by letter.

Staffing

When advertising posts, or interviewing applicants, or deciding on appointments, the governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures, and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.

Should a member of staff become disabled, the governing body will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements, or to the premises, in order to enable them to continue in post.

All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training, and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.

This school will liaise with specialists to support individual pupils. Among these specialists are the following: physiotherapists, educational psychologists, speech therapists, doctors, the school nurse, social workers, and the staff of the voluntary and statutory agencies. We benefit from the LEA's advice, and its provision through the Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired services.

Health and safety

Members of staff follow the school procedures both for the storage and for the administration of medicines to pupils. We also have procedures for when blood or other bodily substances have to be cleared away.

The school has members of staff qualified in giving first-aid treatment, and the emergency services will be called, should they be required.

Policy into practice

The Governing body is responsible for the school's duty not to discriminate. A named Governor and a designated member of staff jointly discharge the responsibility of ensuring that we meet our obligation not to discriminate.

The Headteacher will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception. All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents or staff with disabilities.

Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues, so that we can work towards resolving them.

Monitoring

We have high expectations of all our pupils. We monitor a range of data to make sure that all pupils are making the best progress possible, and that no groups of pupils are underachieving.

We monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parental and pupil questionnaires.

Evaluations based on these data are then reported to the governing body, and an action plan will be drawn up if necessary.

Monitoring and review

The governing body has a named governor for SEND and equalities with responsibility for matters of disability discrimination. It is this governor's responsibility to keep the governing body informed of any new regulations, and to ensure that the school regularly reviews its processes and procedures.

The Headteacher implements the school's disability non-discrimination policy on a day-to-day basis, and ensures that all staff are aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them.

The Headteacher reports to governors termly on matters regarding disability.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies available on the school website:

- Accessibility plan
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school
- SEND policy
- Safeguarding and child protection