

Gladstone Primary School

Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments Policy

This policy applies to all staff and children from EYFS to Year 6 (including Nurture Provision)



Chair of Governors: Mrs Christine Bartley

Headteacher: Mrs Elaine Preston

Policy update: March 2016

Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Aims of the School

The school seeks to create a learning environment that is positive and caring and where children feel safe, secure, valued and understood.

To ensure equality of entitlement and access to a curriculum which is broad, balanced, relevant and enjoyable and which meets the requirements of the Early Learning Goals, the National Age Expectations, Religious Education and Statutory Assessment procedures.

To provide high quality teaching within a supportive and stimulating learning environment, which enables children to develop positive views of themselves as enthusiastic, lifelong learners.

To inspire children to become independent thinkers and learners by providing opportunities to participate in a wide range of exciting and where appropriate, practical learning experiences.

To promote pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual education, within the broad framework of the Christian Foundation of the school, whilst maintaining a positive understanding, appreciation and respect for other faiths and their celebrations.

To promote positive attitudes towards regular attendance and punctuality.

To promote positive attitudes towards personal safety, health and hygiene.

To promote equality of opportunity, regardless of age, sex, race, culture, language, religion or special needs and to help all members of the school community achieve their full potential.

To set high standards for personal behaviour and self-discipline, with consideration, courtesy and respect for other people of all ages, races and cultures.

To promote a fair and just school community, where all are able to distinguish between right and wrong and act with a sense of personal responsibility, integrity and citizenship.

To promote positive race relations within the school and the community at large and to challenge all aspects of discrimination and stereotyping.

To encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's education through the positive partnership promoted in the Home-School Agreement.

To foster genuine dialogue among pupils, staff, parents, governors, outside agencies and the wider community and provide opportunities for the school community to share and celebrate its successes and achievements.

To value all school members and seek to maximise their success in terms of personal and collective achievement, attainment and moral, social and spiritual development.

The definition of disability is:

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

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

The Policy

This policy covers all three main strands of the planning duty:

i). Improving the physical environment of school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities are able to take advantage of education and associated services.

This strand of the planning duty covers aids to improve the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes things such as steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs and furniture. Aids to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, and way-finding systems.

ii). Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access and participate in the school's curriculum.

This strand of the planning duty will help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training.

iii). Improving the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities.

This part of the duty covers planning to make information normally provided by the school in writing to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to disabled pupils.

The school will also consider the needs of parents and wider community who may themselves have a physical, sensory or learning disability to determine how they can be supported in accessing essential information about the school.

Although it remains the responsibility of the parents/carer to make the school aware that they require adjustments to printed materials.

Other related school policies:

All school policies take account of the three main strands.

- Equal Opportunities
- Child Protection
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Toilet and Personal Care

Aims of the Accessibility Plan:

School aims to include all pupils, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to achieve this will include:

- having high expectations of all pupils;
- finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music, and drama;
- planning out-of-school activities including all school trips and excursions, so that pupils with disabilities can participate;
- setting an admissions policy and criteria which do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities or treat them unfairly;
- devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities;
- planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities;
- raising awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through a programme of training;
- providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user friendly;

The 'reasonable adjustments' Duty

The school is expected to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable disabled pupils as far as is reasonably practicable to overcome any disadvantage felt by a disabled pupil.

The 'reasonable adjustments' duty was first introduced under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The 'reasonable adjustments' duty under the Equality Act 2010 operates slightly differently and has been extended to cover the provision by a school of auxiliary aids and services.

This duty towards pupils sits alongside the school's duties towards special educational needs under Part 4 of the Education Act 1996. In some cases the support a disabled pupil may receive under the special educational needs framework may mean that they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage, and so there is no need for additional reasonable adjustments to be made for them. In other cases disabled pupils may require reasonable adjustments in addition to the special educational provision they are receiving.

There are also disabled pupils who do not have special educational needs but still require reasonable adjustments to be made for them. The level of support a pupil is receiving under Part 4 of the Education Act 1996 is one of the factors to be taken into account when a school considers what it would be reasonable for the school to have to do.

When it is reasonable to make an adjustment

Where disabled pupils are placed at a substantial disadvantage by a provision, criterion or practice or the absence of an auxiliary aid, the school will consider as soon as reasonably practicable whether any reasonable adjustment can be made to overcome that disadvantage.

The school's starting point in determining what a reasonable adjustment might be is to consider how to ensure that disabled pupils can be involved in every aspect of school life, and to introduce and maintain 'adjustments' that the school considers are effective both in fulfilling the aims of inclusion and in within the potential costs occurred, does it reflect value for money. When in a school setting, the school will also need to measure any negative disadvantages of the adjustment that could impact on the learning of the other students.

The school will take into account the Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Commission (EOHRC) advice that often effective and practical adjustments involve little or no cost or disruption.

The school considers that it is good practice to work with disabled pupils and their parents in determining what reasonable adjustments can be made.

Although the school will not expect disabled pupils to suggest adjustments, the school will encourage them to make suggestions and will have regard to any suggestions made that might help to overcome the disadvantage. The school will determine

whether the suggestions are reasonable for the school to implement in all the circumstances.

Factors that the school must take into account

The school is required to take reasonable steps to avoid substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.

This duty is owed to:

- existing pupils,
- applicants for places, and,
- in limited circumstances, to disabled former pupils in relation to the following areas:
 - deciding who is offered admission to the school as a pupil,
 - the provision of education, and access to any benefit, service or facility.

The factors to take into account when making an adjustment are:

- how effective the adjustment would be in overcoming the disadvantage
- how practicable it is to make the adjustment
- the financial and other costs incurred and the extent of any disruption to activities
- the extent of the employer's financial and other resources
- the availability of financial and/or other assistance in making the adjustment
- restrictions on adjustments due to listed building status/planning
- any negative impact which the adjustment makes on the effective teaching and learning of the other pupils

The duty does **not** require the school to make reasonable adjustments to avoid the disadvantage caused by physical features as this is covered by the planning duties. As Gladstone Primary is a new building, it meets all current building regulations and it is fully accessible to disabled people.

How will the school decide whether an adjustment is reasonable?

When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, the school will consider the following factors:

- whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering;
- the practicability of the adjustment;
- the effect of the disability on the pupil;
- the cost of the proposed adjustment;
- whether it will be provided under an assessment for an Educational, Health and Care Plan from the Local Authority;
- the school's resources;
- health and safety requirements;
- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and
- the interests of other pupils (and potential pupils).

Responsibilities

The 'Governing body' of a school is responsible for ensuring there is no discrimination in relation to education or access to any benefit, facility or service.

The Governing body is the 'responsible body in this school.

The 'Governing body' has determined this policy and delegated the implementation to the Head.

The Head, or a person with delegated duties (Usually the SENCo), will make decisions about the reasonableness of the provision of auxiliary aids and resources.

All staff must co-operate with the school as far as is compatible with their contractual duties in discharging the school's responsibility.

The school understands that it is not expected to anticipate the needs of every prospective pupil but acknowledges that it is required to think about, and take reasonable and proportionate steps to overcome, barriers that may impede pupils with different kinds of disabilities.

Informing the school of a disability

Employees

Staff are questioned about any disabilities they may have through the LA's application for employment. The school adheres to the Safer Recruitment guidelines and two governors have completed relevant training. The school keeps a record of staff who have declared a disability.

The decision whether or not to disclose a disability lies firstly with the person themselves. The school will not treat any staff or potential member of staff less favourably due to a disability. The school aims to promote an ethos where the benefit of informing the school of a disability is favourable for all. If a person wishes to maintain confidentiality then the school will endeavour to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made.

Pupils

The decision whether to disclose disabilities lie with the pupil and their parents. However Gladstone feels that the greatest benefit for all pupils is informing the school of disabilities to empower the school to make reasonable adjustments.

If a child with a disability requires a care plan, this will be drawn up with the parents and relevant medical professionals.

Monitoring and Review

The school will make regular reviews of its practices, policies and procedures to ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments are made to alleviate the effects of a pupil's disabilities.

The policy will be reviewed every two years.