

Paulton Junior School

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

January 2022 – January 2026

FOREWORD

Valuing diversity is central to achieving the overall aim of Paulton Junior School to provide every child with an equal opportunity to succeed.

The governing body of Paulton Junior School is therefore pleased to publish its first Disability Equality Scheme. In developing the scheme, we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving disability equality and tackling discrimination and come to a better understanding of the challenges still to be tackled. We will ensure that this Disability Equality Scheme is effectively implemented and scrutinised so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Disability Discrimination Act. We intend to use it to make real and tangible changes to how we conduct our business that will make a positive difference to the lives of disabled people. Promoting disability equality in our school will be a continuous process. It will be undertaken in partnership with the wider community and of course with disabled people themselves. We would like to thank those who have been involved in developing the scheme and we hope that we can continue to work together with disabled people to achieve disability equality at Paulton Junior.

Mr Simon Memory, Chair of Governing Body

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The duty to promote disability equality

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was a landmark in equality legislation, making it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of his or her disability. It also required organisations to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that a disabled person could take a job, continue to work for an organisation or access services.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 amended the 1995 legislation. It introduced the duty to promote disability equality, which partly parallels the duty to promote race equality introduced under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The duty to promote disability equality contains two elements – a general duty for all public bodies and a specific duty, which applies to a more limited number of specified public authorities, including maintained schools. The Code of Practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) states that the “overarching goal of the duty is to promote equality of opportunity”. In many cases the disadvantage and discrimination that disabled people experience arise from attitudinal and environmental barriers. The duty to promote disability equality aims to overcome these barriers.

This Scheme sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life in the wider community and in the non-educational services they might provide.

This Scheme builds on our accessibility plan and develops our work further to include:

- A definition of both disability and inclusion that is wider than special educational needs (the legislation includes in the definition of SEN any pupil who has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of peers or a disability preventing or hindering access to educational facilities) and applies to all vulnerable groups.
- Taking a proactive approach in making reasonable adjustments
- Work with pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Involving the views of disabled pupils, their carers and staff where appropriate in identifying priority actions within the school improvement plan.

1.2 The general duty

The general duty to promote disability equality places a duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

1.3 The Specific Duty

The specific duty requires a designated public authority (which includes schools) to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), setting out how it will fulfil its general and specific duties to promote disability equality. Disabled people must be involved in the development of the Scheme. Our Disability Equality Schemes should be published in December 2009 and should last for three years with an annual review of progress.

2. PAULTON JUNIOR SCHOOL - VISION AND VALUES

2.1 Our vision and values

We believe that every child has by right an equal opportunity to succeed. In order to deliver this aim we embrace the principles of inclusion, of global citizenship and of community cohesion.

Our values are embedded in the UNICEF convention on the Rights of the Child and we are a Rights respecting School.

2.2 Who do we mean by "disabled people"?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition of a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes 'hidden' impairments, such as mental illness, dyslexia, autism, speech & language, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes, or epilepsy. Substantial means "more than minor or trivial" and long-term means lasting or expected to last 12 months or more.

Disability is said to have an adverse effect if it affects one or more of the following

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech
- Hearing
- Eyesight (unless brought to functionally useful level by spectacles or lenses)
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk or physical danger.

In considering what might constitute a substantial disadvantage, the school has taken account of a number of factors, eg

- The time and effort that might need to be expended by a disabled child
- The inconvenience, indignity or discomfort a disabled child might suffer
- The loss of opportunity or the diminished progress that a disabled child may make in comparison with his or her peers who are not disabled.

Another way of considering whether particular special educational needs are disabling is illustrated in the table below:

	Physical, hearing, vision	Speech, comprehension	Learning	Perception of risk or danger
Autistic spectrum		☐	Some	☐
Behaviour		Some	Some	☐
Dyslexic-type needs			☐	
Other learning needs		Some	☐	Some
Physical sensory	☐	Some	Some	Some

Although disability and special educational needs are not the same thing, the 2009 PLASC return for our school, showed **51** as having special needs met at School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The school governing body and senior managers collect information regarding staff and pupil headcount by gender, disability, age and ethnicity, including data and other information on staff recruitment and progression. The school seeks to collect this information sensitively and confidentially, while encouraging disclosure.

2.3 Discrimination Disabled People Face

Disabled people are discriminated against in a number of different ways. These include

- Discriminatory attitudes
- A lack of accessible information
- Inaccessible environments
- Services that have not been designed to take account of the needs of disabled people.

2.4 Action to Date

Our Disability Equality Scheme will take a fundamental step in removing these discriminatory barriers for disabled people in Paulton Junior School. The Scheme builds on what we have done already to promote equality for disabled people:

We have adopted:

An Accessibility Plan which aims to

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
- Improve the physical environment in the school to increase opportunities for disabled pupils
- Ensure that disabled children are provided with information in formats that are accessible for them

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■ **An Equal Opportunities Policy** which aims to respect and value all children as individuals, meeting their needs so they reach their full potential and taking appropriate action where there are differences in progress and attainment. We are committed to challenging and preventing all forms of discrimination, including racism, and to preparing pupils for living in a multi-ethnic society.

Through the curriculum we offer, children are given opportunities to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others. Curriculum resources are carefully selected to help children to develop self-respect and respect for others, avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

Discriminatory behaviour and/or remarks are unacceptable in school. Most incidents will be dealt with within the framework of the school's behaviour policy. Where a situation cannot be dealt with in this way it will be referred to the governors' Parents and Pupils Committee.

We have also:

- Employed the SLIP team for 1 days per fortnight as a means of supporting children's speech and communication development throughout the school.

- Provided specific material and human resources to ensure equal access for all to the curriculum (e.g. teaching assistants, sloping desks, tape recorders, computers etc.)
- Produced a provision map as a means of detailing the ways in which we modify and differentiate the curriculum to ensure equality of access and support.
- Provide physical access to arrangements for 5 classrooms in the 'lower school corridor'.
- Provided adults, boys and girls disabled toilets.

3. INVOLVEMENT

3.1 Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers

School Council and class circle times provide an opportunity for everyone's views to be heard and for everyone to play a part in the decision making process. Through an ethos based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and our status as a UNICEF Rights Respecting School we engage children in developing a democratic approach which actively fosters representation for disabled pupils on the Schools Council as the main discussion and decision making forum for pupils.

3.2 The Governing Body

Governors' meetings and minutes are accessible to parents on request. The SEN Governor takes a keen interest in all Learning Difficulty and Disability (LDD) issues and regularly reports to the Governing Body on new requirements and the school's response to these.

3.3 Eliminating harassment and bullying

The school provides a framework for its Behaviour Policy through a Values Statement based on the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools approach. This approach teaches children about their rights, the rights which all children have as a result of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the responsibilities which accompany those rights. It sets out the way in which the school deals with bullying issues in all cases, including those involving LDD pupils.

3.4 Reasonable Adjustments

The school endeavours to make reasonable adjustments in order that all its pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed in all areas of the curriculum. The school's provision map details the teaching approaches and resources which underpin our curriculum and through which the adjustments are delivered.

The effectiveness of the adjustments is monitored by outside agencies e.g the

mobility officer, the LA and Ofsted, as well as through the school's self evaluation processes.

Adjustments to school visits and residential trips are discussed on an individual basis with the involvement of the parent/carer and the child to ensure that all our pupils can participate and benefit from the experience. LDD children's participation in clubs is monitored through the SSSCo scheme as well as through school self evaluation processes and every opportunity is taken to provide clubs which meet specific as well as general needs.

3.5 School Facility Lettings

The current lettings agreement is under review with the aim of incorporating a means by which hirers can request adjustments, such as more disabled parking, for specific community and PTA events.

3.6 Information, Performance and Evidence

The school gathers information about the performance of the school on disability equality under the following headings:

a. Pupil Achievement

Pupils are tracked individually and our assessment system is capable of providing assessment data on individuals and a range of different groups, including children with LDD.

b. Learning Opportunities

We plan learning opportunities to deliver our aim that every child should have an equal opportunity to succeed. This means that we do not treat everyone the same but rather that we personalise our provision to meet individual needs.

c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions (including Behaviour cases)

Admissions are centrally managed. For the past five years the school has not excluded any pupils.

d. Social Relationships

Our status as a Rights Respecting School provides a framework for our PHSE provision. It is underpinned by the use of SEAL materials throughout the school.

e. Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

Our staff is representative of job applicants if not entirely of the school community. Staff with disabilities receive the same training and promotion opportunities as non-disabled staff.

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

We recognise the importance of assessing the impact of our current policies and practices on disability equality, in order to ensure that they do not have an adverse impact on its disabled stakeholders and to inform future planning.

Paulton Junior School therefore regularly monitors the impact of school's policies. This is captured by means of the school's equalities monitoring process which involves;

- Consultation with disabled stakeholders, in order that areas for change can be identified
- Analysis of information from data collection relating to disability.

This Disability Equality Scheme is a working document and therefore one which will be subject to review and alteration in response to the school's impact assessments, and views expressed by its disabled members, and will be used to drive forward the promotion of disability equality. It will therefore be key to the review and development of all school policies and practices in order to achieve the school's vision of a welcoming and diverse community.

5. OUR PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE ACTION PLAN

Access to the curriculum

Behaviour and exclusions

To clarify the support which is provided for the 'victims' of bullying?

Teaching and Learning

The school will ensure that all teaching staff are aware of the QCA General Inclusion Statement and the school's Inclusion Policy and that they apply it in their planning and teaching.

Curriculum

In order to further develop existing positive attitudes we are currently reviewing our provision to ensure that the curriculum, including our scheme of work for sex education, raises disability equality issues in every year group.

Data collection, monitoring and assessment

The achievement of disabled pupils is monitored individually, as a group and by impairment. We track their achievements, using appropriate reporting frameworks such as P levels, as well as their general attainment levels. All disabled pupils are identified in our database but we do not currently have ways to identify all disabled parents and their access needs unless they tell us.

Participation and engagement

Engaging disabled pupils, staff, parents, the governing body

and the local community in developing a voice.

To develop a proactive approach to the inclusion of disabled representatives on the School Council through our work on citizenship and democracy within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

To ensure that all governors are aware of their statutory responsibility to promote disability equality by involving them in the setting up and monitoring of the scheme.

Eliminating harassment and bullying

The school's anti-bullying policy makes reference to bullying which can be directed at specific groups within the community, including disabled children and adults.

Employment

Employing and promoting, training disabled staff

The school keeps record of staff who count as disabled people under the DDA 2008 and provides reasonable adjustments to enable them to carry out their requirements of their job.

The school allows disabled staff additional time off for treatment for their condition without penalising them.

Access to information and services

Lunchtime or after school clubs and trips

To take every opportunity to provide an increased number of extra-curricular clubs which are non-competitive or which more closely meet the needs of disabled pupils. This relies on creative solutions to our space limitations rather more than on our commitment to greater participation.

Medical and personal care needs

Disabled children and their parents/carers are consulted on how they want the procedure or administration of medication carried out through data sheets. They complete medication request forms when they opt for school staff to administer medications prescribed by a UK GP.

School staff have annual allergy and Epipen training as well as training arranged on a needs basis for specific conditions such as epilepsy, sensory impairment, ASD disorders etc. Care Plans are put into place for all children with high level health needs which require the regular or specialist administration of medication.

Health and Safety

Evacuation procedures have been developed to take full account of the needs of disabled people, including the deployment of specific members of staff in an emergency.

Admissions and Transitions

We have strong existing procedures for identifying and supporting disabled pupils before they start school. Where necessary this includes early communication with external health and other agencies who may be involved to ensure that we have appropriate support systems in place.

We use transition books and social stories to prepare children for a change in class or teacher.

In order to improve further our parents would welcome more notice of any day to day changes which may occur.

Physical access

Lettings and use of building by community

The school's lettings policy is currently under review. The revised policy will specify the type of adjustments that the school and other local services can provide as well as giving hirers the opportunity of requesting reasonable adjustments to meet specific requirements.

The school works with the LA to ensure that all new capital projects maximise access and reasonable adjustments are made appropriately.

Information we will collect

This scheme will monitor -

Disabled pupil attainment

Effectiveness of reasonable adjustments

Recruitment, retention and career development of disabled staff

Admissions of disabled pupils

Exclusion of disabled pupils

We will use the results of our monitoring and assessment activities to make reasonable adjustments and review the effectiveness of this plan and identify future priorities.

Looking ahead

We are aware of the following major challenges for our school that may impact on our work to promote disability equality.

Physical space limitations

Increasing pressure on the school's capacity to maintain existing high delivery standards due to the growing number and complexity of LDD pupils we are welcoming and including.

Action plan

Our priority actions are detailed in this section of our Disability Equality Scheme and in our Accessibility Plan and will be built into our school self evaluation and improvement planning cycles.

6. MAKING IT HAPPEN

6.1 Implementation

This Disability Equality Scheme represents the school's vision backed up by key actions which will be carried out within the next four years. There will be:

- Clear allocation of lead responsibility
- Clear allocation of resources
- Indication of expected outcomes
- Clear timescales
- Specified time-scale for process and review:

The school's Governing Body, Staff and School Council and will monitor and review this scheme on a regular basis. The school governing body will present significant findings to all members of the school community and make them available in alternative forms of communication which are appropriate to the needs of its disabled members.

6.2 Physical access

To ensure that our current access arrangements can continue. Therefore;

- No children with physical access issues will be placed in the new build.
- They will continue to access the school through the main entrance and will be situated in one of the five classrooms in the 'lower school corridor.'
- As they move up through the school they will continue to be educated in one of those five classrooms that have the best and most appropriate access. (Meaning their classroom will remain constant even as their year group number changes.)

6.3 Evaluation

There will be regular internal evaluation of this scheme as above in addition to joint evaluations with the school improvement partner and OFSTED. Evaluation of this scheme will therefore be incorporated into the OFSTED SEF, as will the data giving information on the number of disabled pupils in the school, and their achievements.

6.4 Publication

This document is published in conjunction with the school's Access Plan and forms part of the school's development plan and equal opportunities policy. It will be published:

- On the school's website and
- Be available to all school members in hard copy, and in the form of alternative communication where necessary.

6.5 Reporting

There will be an annual report to the Governing Body on this scheme demonstrating:

- Progress made
- Outcomes achieved
- Work in progress
- Amendments to the scheme.

6.6 Links with other school plans and policies:

This Scheme is to be read in conjunction with the School Accessibility Action Plan. Together, they are intrinsic to:

1. The School Development Plan
2. The Equal Opportunities Policy
3. Equalities Monitoring procedure
4. Anti-Bullying Policy
5. Protection of Employees and associated documents (including Bullying and Harassment)

Reviewed: January 2022

Next Review Date : January 2024

Senior Member of Staff Responsible: Matt Grosvenor, Headteacher.

Designated Member of Staff: Rachel Anderton, SENCO

Governor Responsible: Sarah Johnson, SEND Governor and John Harvey, Governor responsible for Safeguarding.