

## The Willows Primary School

### Accessibility Policy

#### 1. What do we understand by “disability”?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 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**’.*

- ‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairments
- ‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness
- ‘substantial’ means more than minor or trivial
- ‘long-term’ is defined as 12 months or more

The definition covers 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 person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term as defined above.

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement.

There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with special educational needs and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. Behavioural difficulties arising from physical or mental impairments or from mental illness are also included.

‘Normal day-to-day activities’ covers one or more 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 the risk of physical danger

#### 2. Our strategic priorities

The governing body will promote positive attitudes to disability and will not tolerate harassment of people with any form of physical or mental impairment. We will ensure that disabled people are not treated any less favourably in any procedures or practices, or in any services received from

the school. We will take steps to take account of difference even where that involves treating some people more favourably than others.

We will continue to develop a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers.

This policy supports the school's mission statement and our aims to improve the learning capacity of all our pupils and to promote social inclusion.

### 3. The General Duty

Duties under Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) require the governing body to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to; and
- prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties.

The scheme, incorporated in the Equality Action Plan, sets out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Duties in Part 4 of the DDA require the governing body to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

#### 3.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme

We are committed to including the views and opinions of disabled people in all aspects of our Equality Scheme. We recognise that we will not be able to identify and prioritise what we need to do to promote disability equality unless we consider the views of disabled people affected by the Scheme. We plan for the involvement to be meaningful, resulting in positive outcomes.

We have and will involve disabled people to:

- Identify the barriers faced by disabled people
- Set priorities for action plans
- Assess the impact of existing and proposed policies
- Monitor the success of initiatives undertaken
- Review and revise the Scheme.

Our key disabled stakeholders are:

- Pupils
- Parents
- Any disabled member of staff
- Members from the wider community e.g. disabled groups

Our school has experience of many disabilities, some of which are listed below;

Allergies that trigger anaphylaxis

Asthma

Aspergers syndrome

Cerebral palsy

Diabetes

Down's Syndrome

Dyslexia

Epilepsy

Leukaemia

Sight and hearing problems.

We appreciate that in aiming to gather full and accurate information to support the development and monitoring of this policy the following considerations will need to be taken into account:

- Reassuring pupils, staff and parents about confidentiality
- Ensuring that the ethos of the school is conducive to trust and openness
- Emphasising how information may lead to beneficial adjustment being made

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

We will ensure the views of pupils, staff and parents/carers inform the Equality Scheme and action plan through:

- ✓ Interviews with pupils
- ✓ Discussion and suggestions from the School Council and pupils representing different groups within the school
- ✓ Individual interviews with pupils involved in incidents of discrimination
- ✓ Individual interviews with pupils experiencing reasonable adjustments
- ✓ PSHE lessons
- ✓ Informal interviews with staff
- ✓ Meetings with union representatives
- ✓ Regular staff meetings with specific agenda items
- ✓ Individual discussions with staff as a part of performance management
- ✓ Communication with parents to gather information
  - Text to be inserted into communication with parents: *“your support for your child’s education is crucial to their progress. Please tell us if there is any adjustment we need to make to help you support your child, for example: letters in large print Braille or a different language; wheelchair access; explaining things over the phone; a discussion with a school colleague of the same gender.”*
- ✓ Feedback through Governing Body meetings
- ✓ Feedback through PTA meetings and social functions
- ✓ Feedback from questionnaires
- ✓ Feedback from parent-teacher interviews

### **3.3 The Governing Body**

The Governing Body has strong representation from the school community with five parent, three staff and three community governors. All parents are informed of parent-governor elections and encouraged to stand for election. A governor attends the annual new intake parent meetings to outline the role of the governing body. There is a named governor with responsibility for SEN.

### **3.4 Removing Barriers**

The school has disabled access at the rear entrance and the tarmac pathway to this entrance is straight. Within the building, there is access to all areas and there is also a disabled toilet. All external doors have low-level push-handle or push-button exit systems. We have a hearing induction loop in the hall and a portable induction loop system should it be required. We have also improved the disabled parking facilities and access to the main entrance.

Children and adults who may need emergency medical care are listed, and routines to facilitate speedy medical intervention are rehearsed regularly. (see Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions policy)

The school's catering staff work closely with us to cater for individual dietary requirements.

We work hard to ensure that all pupils have access to all aspects of the curriculum.

We make every effort to provide information in ways that are accessible to all members of the school community with a disability.

### **3.5 Disability in the Curriculum**

The school continues to provide appropriate learning opportunities for disabled pupils. This includes full access to the curriculum and the use of positive images in curriculum resources and materials used in teaching and learning. Work is differentiated so that all children can enjoy the curriculum and learn at a level that suits their needs. Where possible, curriculum enrichment opportunities are provided through the use of specialists, both able-bodied and disabled.

### **3.6 Eliminating Harassment and Bullying**

The school anti-bullying policy details how we reduce discrimination, bullying and harassment of our pupils, including those who are disabled. All incidences of bullying are investigated by a senior member of staff and any racist incidents would be reported to the LA (None to date). School Council is proactive in suggesting ideas and systems to reduce conflict and the Year 6 Playground

Squad also supports staff outdoors to encourage co-operative play and reduce incidents of bullying.

### **3.7 Reasonable Adjustments**

We continue to make appropriate adjustments according to individual situations e.g. access to school trips, making provision for disabled parking and disabled seating at school events, adjusting the physical environment where funding and space allows, specific resource materials, lunchtime provision for disabled pupils, access to the curriculum, etc.

In deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable the following factors need to be taken into consideration:

- ✓ The extent to which the adjustment would prevent the disadvantage suffered by the disabled person
- ✓ The practicality of the adjustment
- ✓ The availability of financial assistance
- ✓ The financial burden of making the adjustment

The main strategies to bring about reasonable adjustments in the next three years are described in the Action Plan.

### **3.8 School Facility Lettings**

The premises are used throughout term time by a breakfast/after-school club owned by our HLTA. Again, appropriate adjustments are made to enable use by disabled pupils, eg extra staffing/resources. We will ensure that facilities are available for any other specific lettings to the community and work to improve disabled parking.

### **3.9 Information, Performance and Evidence**

#### **a. Pupil Achievement**

The Senior Management Team (including SENCo) analyses data generated by assessment and attendance records to support school improvement and performance management. This process includes pupils who are identified as having specific medical needs or those who are disabled. In addition, class teachers consistently monitor the performance of all pupils within their classes and outcomes are recorded and reported in the class assessment file and transferred to the school's tracking system. This analysis results in whole-school and individual pupil targets during the next academic year.

All staff work together to consider:

- ✓ analysis of end of key stage results
- ✓ attendance at/achievements in extra-curricular activities
- ✓ attendance data
- ✓ exclusion data
- ✓ participation on school trips
- ✓ Every Child Matters outcomes based on evidence such as pupil surveys, parental feedback
- ✓ Staff health and wellbeing information.

## **b. Learning Opportunities**

The 2023 PLASC return for our school, showed 12.5% of pupils as having special needs met at School Support or through an EHCP. The school collects information regarding staff and pupil headcount by gender, disability, age and ethnicity, including data and other information on staff recruitment and progression.

We seek to collect this information sensitively and confidentially, while encouraging disclosure. For example, on admission, parents are asked, 'Does your child have any learning difficulty, medical condition or disability?' We provide a safe and reassuring environment in which pupils and parents/carers feel comfortable in discussing their concerns and these are logged and monitored.

Progress data is kept and analysed as outlined above and in the Equalities Scheme.

## **c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions**

The school nursery admissions procedures reflect the Local Authority admission procedures for primary schools, in order to ensure continuity from one phase to the other and to facilitate prospective parents' understanding of the admissions process. All children, regardless of their family background, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, gender or disability are eligible to be considered for places within the nursery. Instances of exclusion are monitored and reported to the LA.

## **d. Social Relationships**

Our school is an inclusive school and much emphasis is placed on this through our PSHE work, ethos (with staff as role models) and curriculum in which we use positive images of pupils, characters and adults with disabilities to deliver the programmes of study. (Kapow Scheme of work)

## **e. Employing, promoting and training disabled staff**

The school's Equality Scheme ensures the equality of opportunity in employment for all, and takes positive action to avoid discrimination, using high standards of employment practice. Equality of opportunity for all staff is an integral part of this commitment. Adjustments and support are put in

place to enable disabled employees to return to work, eg. phased return, reduced duties, special seating arrangements.

Current staffing is representative of the school community, which is predominantly white British, and disabled employees are represented across the staffing groups.

#### **4. Impact Assessment**

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

Questions the school needs to think about are:

- What are the training needs of the school regarding the DES?
- Who will be involved in assessing impact and how will the school involve disabled people?
- How will the school determine priorities?
- Will the school need external expertise?
- Who will the school report the results to?

We will therefore regularly monitor the impact of our policies through the school's equalities monitoring process, which involves:

- Consultation with disabled people in our community, 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; it 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 improve disability equality in our school.

#### **5. Implementation**

The Accessibility Policy is incorporated into the school's Equality Scheme which represents our vision, backed up by key actions to be carried out within the next three years. There is:

- Clear allocation of responsibility and resources
- Indication of expected outcomes
- Clear timescales

#### **6. Evaluation, Reporting and Publication**

Evaluation of this policy will be incorporated, in conjunction with the Equality Scheme, into the



school's annual self-evaluation process, as will the data giving information on the number of disabled pupils in the school, and their achievements. Reporting will be in the form of the annual Equality Scheme report.

This document is published in conjunction with the school's Equality Action Plan and forms part of the school's improvement plan.

## **7. Links with other school plans and policies:**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Equality Scheme and Action Plan. Together, they are intrinsic to the School Improvement Plan.

**Senior Member of Staff Responsible – Head Teacher**

**Designated Member of Staff – SENCo**

**Governor Responsible – SEN Governor**

**Updated September 2023**